

**SHOW
CASE**

return to live events

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AWARDS 2021

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And we're back to live events!!!

Whilst COVID challenged us all, it has also been an amazing journey. We launched new data products, a fresh strategy for industry event companies, and continued to challenge our technical capabilities for hybrid and streamed events.

We set up green screen rooms and studios in two prestigious London hotels enabling our clients to create unique virtual and hybrid experiences - immediately stepping away from Zoom-based events and personalising the experience for attendees, whilst also providing eCommerce capabilities to those hosting the events.

But as fun, as that is, we are producing some amazing live events even with current event restrictions and COVID guidance in place. We're enjoying the buzz and electricity you feel when great speakers take the stage, old friends meet for drinks to talk business and when new relationships are formed during breaks.

So, in line with the great content we've been sharing with you, please take the time to digest our latest guide to a return to live events. We look forward to sharing some great tips and advice for your foray back into live event production.



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eaas in live

Let's talk EAAS or in its long-form, Events-as-a-Service.





EVENTS AS A SERVICE

This was one of our big strategic ideas in 2021. We looked at the way the industry was working and could clearly see that COVID had unexpectedly forced innovation but also demanded a new approach to events as a whole.

It's no longer simply live vs streamed vs hybrid; it's all about how you weave your events across the three event styles for maximum engagement, keeping your audience engrossed and at the heart of your business decisions.

In many ways, by trying to force attendees into *your* desired way of delivering events you make it so much easier for them to leave and churn the associated revenue.

SO WHAT DOES EAAS REALLY MEAN?

Events as a Service is a culture shift that has partnerships, strategy, community, revenue and the planet at its core. It's a framework for B2B events organisations to take forward and redesign the business model for events 2.0.

The key elements of events as a service are:

- Customer experience
- Technology and innovation
- Community building
- Always-on annual events programme
- Supply chain
- Relationships



STRATEGY



Events as a Service keeps the organisation completely **customer-centric in its approach** with an annual stream of content and events at its core instead of an event-to-event model.

[For more in-depth detail of EaaS, check out our ebook here.](#)



It focuses on **building experiences for your audience and transforming audiences into communities** by adopting the latest technologies. It looks beyond live, streaming or hybrid and into platforms, apps and **365-day engagement for your community**, not necessarily the brand.



It **requires organisations to vet suppliers differently**, rejecting the traditional RFP/tendering process and focusing on quantifying the value of relationships in addition to the value of your contract.



EVENT PRODUCTION

Design and production go hand in hand in events. Staging and visuals are key to the audience's ability to follow the show but you now face new challenges with the multi-format types of live, hybrid, virtual events.

By adopting an EAAS approach to the design, production and events programme you can create slick, consistent design themes that manifest in both the live and virtual arenas.

OUR TOP 10 TIPS FOR EVENT PRODUCTION WHEN YOU CONSIDER A MULTI-PLATFORM APPROACH ARE:

- 01** Engage the audience right from the start:
 - Pre-event, not just mailshot - but a community focus and approach (pre-event events?).
 - How will you engage both the at-home audience and live in person? Consider tailoring your in-person event to suit the streaming audience, e.g. keep sessions to 25 mins rather than 45.
- 02** Ask yourself: if you were attending the event how/what would you like to achieve from attending and base the design/look and feel on that - think about how the audience engages e.g. seating - is it comfortable or collaborative?
- 03** Go all-out crazy/creative - throw ideas out and see where they end up.
- 04** Make events/designs interactive and ask why the event is happening/what themes/type of presenters. For instance, depending on the audience level or content, does the design need to reflect a certain level of prestige or can it be wacky and crazy?



- 05 Sustainable - see how your event programme can best use/reuse parts of the design and visual elements across a series of events.
- 06 Think about the content to be produced for in-person and online and what is available to who and how.
- 07 The production partner of choice to ideally have a live and digital department to aid with all elements of the multi formats.
- 08 Customer/delegate engagement that can be two-way between live and digital. Neither audience should feel like a second class citizen.
- 09 Creative design that runs across both live and digital.
- 10 Ultimately the most important is a production partner that is able to cover all elements in delivery for EAAS across multiple platforms. The long term gain with a production partner that can fulfil all disciplines makes it a cost-effective and seamless solution, especially in the current climate of supply and demand shortages in the UK and the wider industry.



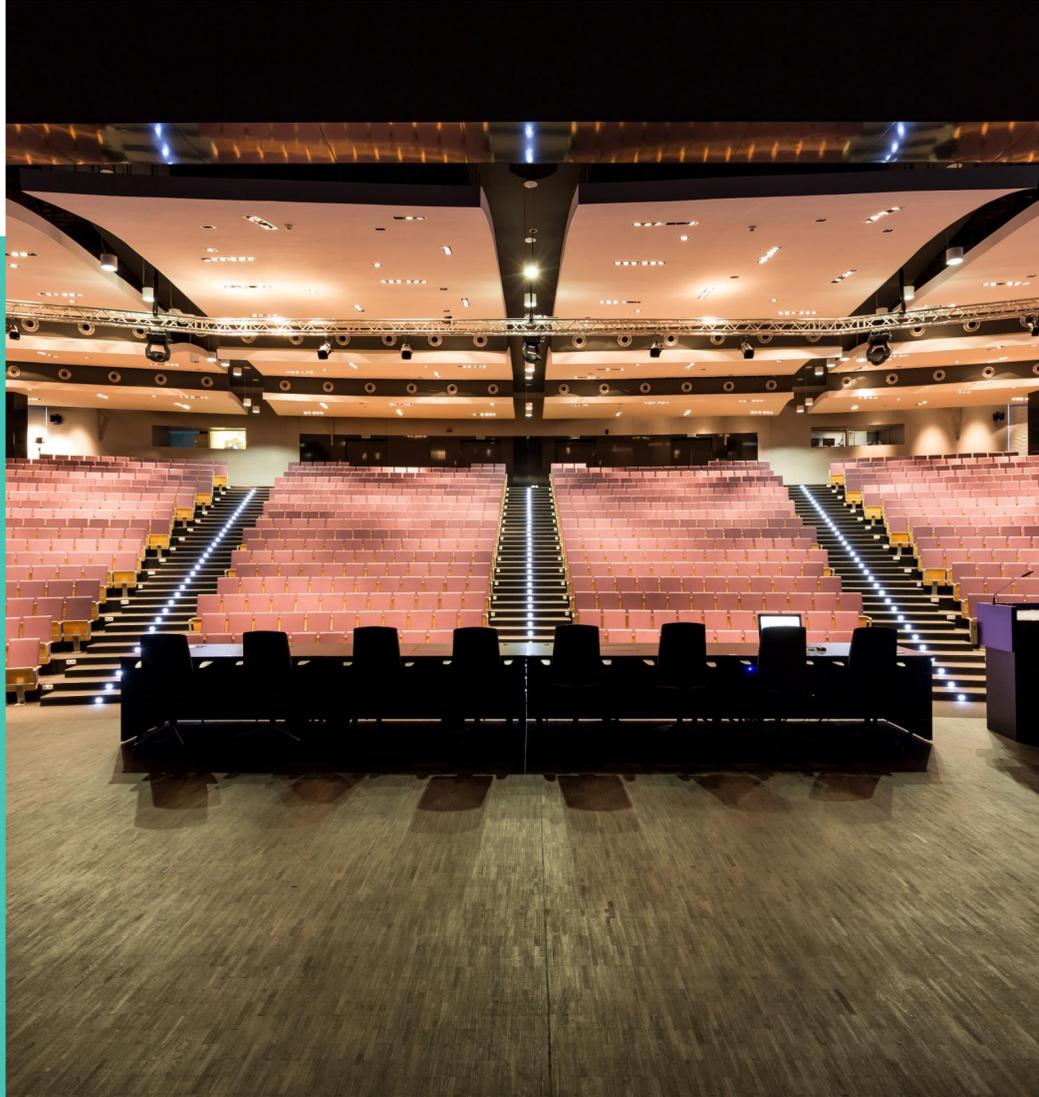


customer experience

The customer experience has always been at the heart of an event but in many cases, it's "customer experience within budget", which is a double-edged sword. Of course, fiscal management must take place in any business, but we often see the frustration for EDs (and the impact on customers) when the budget is tight, but the event is making millions of dollars.

Surely cutting £50k, which directly impacts customer experience, is moot when you go on to make £2-4 million in profit? Clever budgeting is to be commended, but severe cuts could also mean that those with more demand for a good experience fail to return.

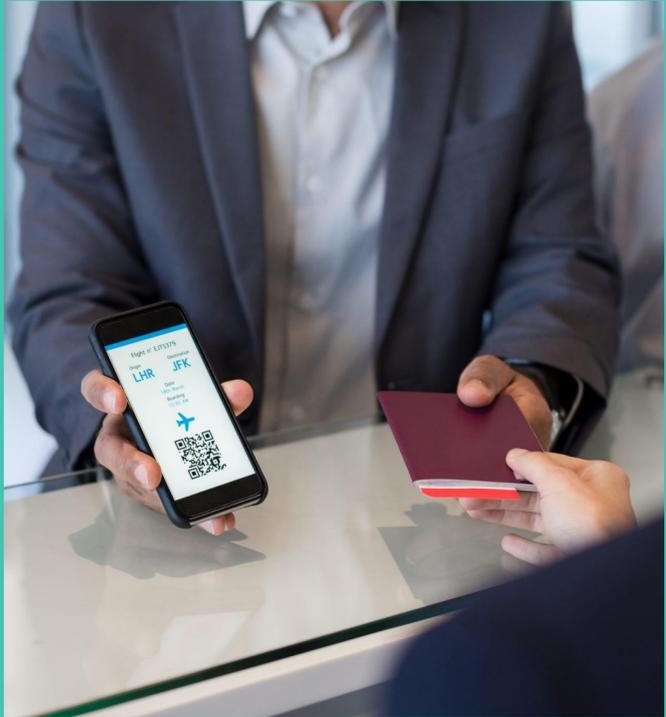
If those same customers tell 10-20 of their peers about their negative experience how does that then impact your revenue streams? In an ever more competitive environment, with digital events now competing with in-person, experience is more critical than ever.



MANAGING EVENT SPACE

One of your key pressures in the return to live event hosting is managing the event space. Keeping up with the latest government guidelines around COVID restrictions is an added risk element to the production.

Ensuring plenty of space for attendees and social distancing goes without saying as well as plenty of sanitiser stations, but that isn't all you should worry about.



GOING PAPERLESS

Paper tickets, guides and agendas are old fashioned and not environmentally friendly. More and more people expect e-tickets or an app as it reduces your environmental footprint and allows for a non-contact entrance to the venue. Think QR or bar code entry for attendees over handled paper tickets and an app that allows for directions and “what’s on”.

STAGGERED ARRIVAL TIMES

In addition to paperless events, you should try to organise a staggered arrival time. This can be set at the time of booking or at a later date as long as you plan to advise your attendees well in advance.

Remember to mix the arrival times up for your guests if your event is over a number of days - we are not sure being on the 8 am arrival every day would go down well unless requested in advance.



CONTACT TRACING

Contact tracing is still important for events. The guidance for managing events at venues [has changed in some cases](#) but on the whole, [you can still find advice online](#).

Build-in track and trace to your event app, ask attendees to download the NHS app or use the electronic registration for attendees to notify if there is a COVID-related incident.



planning your event



Planning is the key element for any event no matter the medium of delivery. Speakers, content, visuals, opening and closing parties, online gifts, networking etc. - its all part of the process. So why are we talking about a fundamental part of the event planning process?

Well, it's simple. Given the EAAS approach to multi-platform events with always-on event content, how you plan will be what your success looks like. So taking away the content piece, which is what you event brands build, let's focus on the experience.





STREAM YOUR EVENT LIVE

Live events will always be here so discussing how to do those in any more depth than we have doesn't make sense. What does make sense is to talk about what else needs to compliment them.

To capitalise on your live event, you should be streaming the same content. That should be payable and anything that is then live-streamed should be recorded and made available as quickly as possible for on-demand replay. This is what today's event customer expects as standard.

Streaming can be as engaging as live attendance, with a little more effort. It shouldn't be left to Zoom and yes, you can customise your online look and feel to keep branding consistent. However, let's not forget that making live events interactive isn't some new discovery of 2021; other industries have been doing it for years, take auctions for example (online, on the phone and in-person).

Speak to our design team at any time to understand how we can help you manifest your new ideas and weave your online/offline experience together for a better customer experience.

BUILD A COMMUNITY APP

Apps are a key part of the event experience but are you underutilising them by keeping them to a per-event basis?

“Networking” apps are often found out to be underutilised and under-invested with “out of the box” solutions often seen as cheap, inefficient and uninteresting.

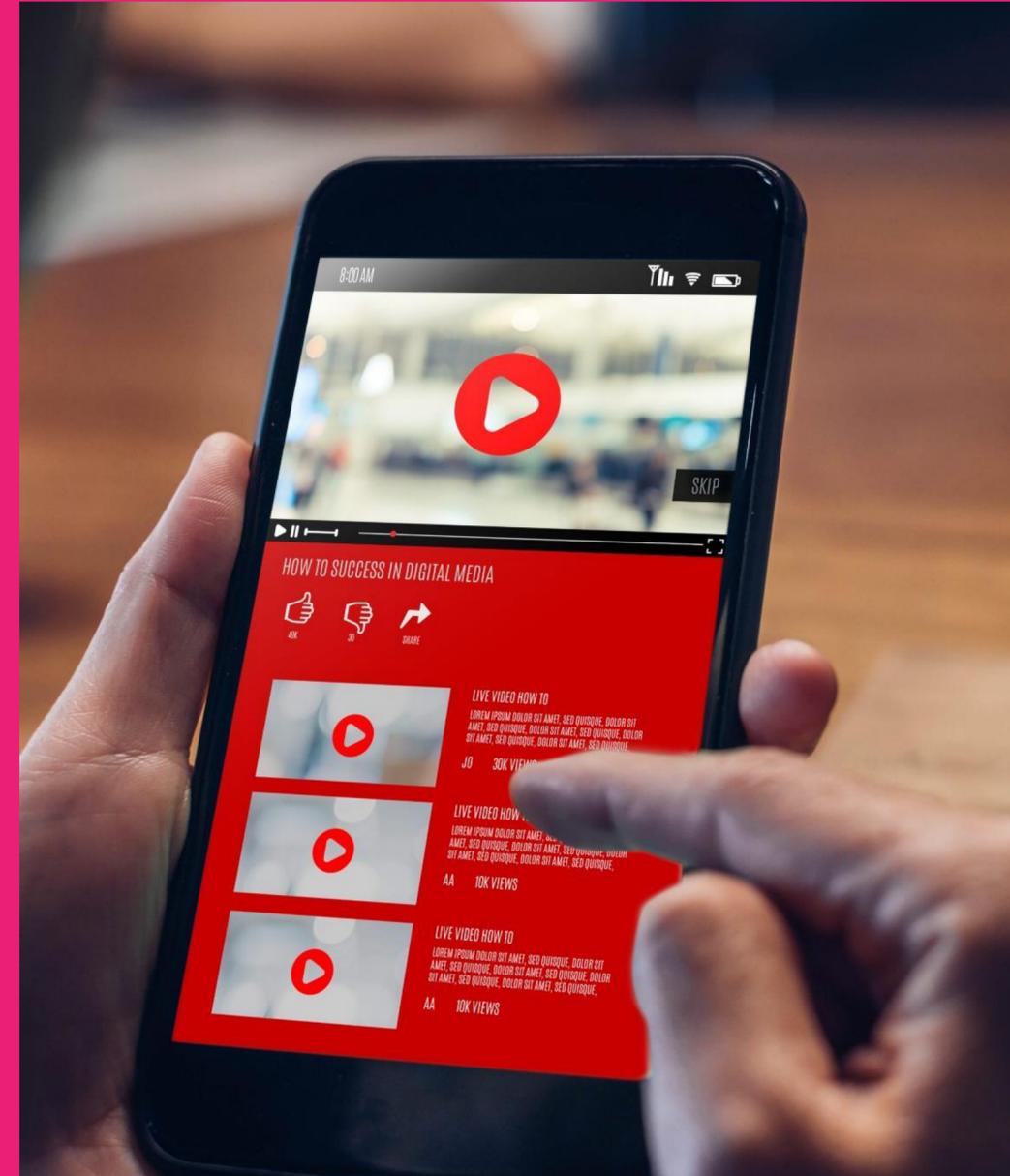
But what would happen if you focused on apps as an event strategy?

Building out a mobile experience that is always on, moving your events company into an information company?

Imagine how optimised your company would be around relevancy in your niche and how you can become a daily destination rather than a periodical one. You can be a brand that encapsulates thought leadership, a driver for change, excellence and innovation through facilitation and constant industry updates. You could host firesides, micro-events and much more and believe me: your EDs and ODs would likely relish the challenge and the pivot.

Community goes beyond networking, but keep that as an added feature or a subscription feature so that you can monetise the application, as much as you would pay for The Times or a similar online news site.

Ultimately the return to in-person shouldn't be a return to the status quo. The turbulence in the industry has been relentless but out of the bad has come a lot of good. The question is, how good do you want to be?





how covid challenges us

The return to live events still isn't without additional challenges. Forget strategy visuals and attendance, think supply chain and logistics. With so many firms going bust during the pandemic, combined with the rush to deliver a live event as restrictions lifted, there simply isn't enough supply of materials to go around.

We're talking about furnishings, electric appliances anything physical that is needed on-site to produce the event is massively over-ordered and back-ordered, suppliers simply cannot fulfil demand.

SO, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT THAT?

Planning your event now HAS to consider how far out you can cement your design and delivery plans to ensure that the materials and furnishings needed will be available to rent. In addition to that, you need to know how stable that provider is, in case they too go bust holding your cash deposit and you lose out ££££'s or more.

We often talk about less restriction of budgets to create better events but being fiscally responsible brands means that you are now caught between a rock and a hard place. You have to choose the most stable partners in order to mitigate risk to your brand both reputation and financial standing, this means sticking to those with a proven history and pedigree of delivery.

But supplies can also run into provisions for opening and closing parties. Food and beverages are caught up in the global supply chain issues and as we have been warned at the national level of potential supply chain issues, all we can suggest is to plan, plan, plan.





Ben
Founder & MD



Dave
Strategic Account Director



James
Head of Technical & Operations

WHO WE ARE

The team



Matt
Digital Project Manager



Hannah
Designer



Kieran
AV Technician



Bethany
Operations Support



Katie
Project Support





Let's talk strategy

Showcase are consultative on top of delivery, and we are actively seeking new partnership opportunities.

We are looking for brands that are in the early planning stages of the event to offer strategic and creative guidance.

[Click here to schedule a discovery call with the team](#)

