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WHAT'S NEXT? The Future of Hybrid Events

It has been a crazy 6 months for our industry, here we are living in a world of "virtual" being our reality. Our team at Gold Coast has been fortunate to make the shift and be able to step up to the challenge to deliver best in class virtual events to our clients while live events are on hold.

But...what's next? Virtual is surely not a replacement for live events but when will companies feel comfortable being back in hotels and conference centers? When a vaccine becomes available, will people be ready to get back on airplanes and sit in General Session rooms? Industry experts say it will be years until we are back to the 2019 way of holding meetings. In the meantime, hybrid events that combine both in-person and virtual experiences, will be an essential part of the new normal.

It is essential that companies and planners begin to prepare for planning live and virtual events concurrently as we look ahead at the coming years. Hybrid events will be a balancing act. Content will be more important than ever because you need to engage both attendees within the meeting rooms as well as those that are in front of a computer screen. Agendas will look different, virtual attendees will experience fatigue with a traditional 8-hour meeting day, especially without the distraction of delicious treats and networking.

Having a partner that is experienced in the virtual and streaming space will be more critical than ever. You will have to deliver your content differently to both groups and ensure that your presenters are prepared to deliver both live and via camera. Remember, this is one event with two different delivery platforms, it is important not to isolate one group from participation.

In the production space, we have already embraced this new virtual normal, but when the opportunity for in-person events return, we will be up against another learning curve that comes with "dual-presenting" both live and digitally. Having a pro by your side during this transition has never been more important. That comes with a unique opportunity to be proactive and start to think about how we can navigate successfully in the new hybrid world.

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