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Focused fundraising
Engaging events

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO

HYBRID FUNDRAISING EVENTS IN 2021



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THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO HYBRID FUNDRAISING EVENTS IN 2021

The ultimate step-by-step guide to creating a successful hybrid event experience in 2021 & beyond.

As we look toward getting back to a new normal, we know that the communities your organization serves still need to raise funds and navigate what the new normal looks like. Powered by Professionals is here to guide you through producing a successful hybrid event.

In this guide, you'll learn:

- What a hybrid event is, plus the benefits
- How hybrid events are different from, and similar to, virtual & live events
- How to plan an event that caters to both in-person and virtual attendees
- The different types of non-profit & fundraiser events
- Pitfalls that you will want to avoid in your event planning process.

SCHEDULE A FREE CONSULTATION

If you are interested in setting up a free consultation to discuss how we can help you plan a successful hybrid event that exceeds your fundraising goals, [contact us](#) for all of your event planning needs.

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HYBRID IS HERE

Welcome to 2021 (and beyond) where the hybrid event, in-person and virtual event, has entered the picture. In these times, when COVID-19 lockdowns and stay-at-home orders are lifting, non-profit supporters remain uneasy towards attending large, in-person fundraising gatherings. And, it may be a trend we continue to see for some time.

Pivoting to virtual events proved to be successful in 2020, but where do we go from here? Many non-profits are considering moving forward with Hybrid fundraising events. Which is why we have been preparing for the hybrid event concept as our template for the near future.

We created this in-depth guide for you that highlights a few of the things you should keep in mind when deciding if a hybrid event is right for your non-profit. But first, let's uncover what a Hybrid event is, and the key strategies you need to plan and execute a successful hybrid event.

WHAT IS A HYBRID EVENT

Hybrid events are, as the name might suggest, a mix between a live event and a virtual event. Essentially, you take your audience and exclusive content, and mix them together to provide an immersive online experience.

**HYBRID EVENTS
ARE ESSENTIAL TO
YOUR FUTURE
EVENT STRATEGY.**

Hybrid events became an increasingly important and successful method of hosting events way before the COVID-19 pandemic took hold. They are commonly used to good effect when large corporations are looking to bring employees or their key audiences together for an event, but it isn't possible for everyone to meet in person.

However, due to our current situation with COVID-19, the spotlight is increasingly turning to hybrid events as a means for organizations to hold an event while still adhering to the social distancing rules around the pandemic. But, aside from the obvious health implications, what other benefits are there to hosting a hybrid event?

THE BENEFITS OF HYBRID EVENTS

- ✔ **Increased Reach & Attendance:** Hybrid events allow you to increase your reach and capture more attendees.
- ✔ **Increased Engagement:** Hybrid events open up a great deal of opportunity to increase engagement, both during and after the event itself.
- ✔ **Flexibility:** Hybrid events are flexible & can be tailored to your needs.

So now that we've established the benefits of hybrid events, it's time to discuss how they're different from, and similar to, virtual & live events.



THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF NON-PROFIT EVENTS:

VIRTUAL EVENTS

It may seem obvious, but a virtual event is an event hosted online with a goal to raise funds. So instead of gathering together physically, guests attend through a live-streaming platform, such as Zoom, and donate via online giving platforms.

Virtual fundraising events come in all shapes and sizes. Some are short, live-streamed events that attendees log into from wherever they are. Others take place over several days. Some organizations also choose to pre-record their virtual events and make them available to attendees to watch on their own time.

IN PERSON/LIVE EVENTS

When planning a fundraiser event, the common goal is always to bring people together for a shared purpose. Traditionally, live in-person events have been the best way to accomplish this goal. But in today's world, when COVID-19 lockdowns and stay-at-home orders are lifting, non-profit supporters remain uneasy towards attending live, in-person fundraising gatherings.

And, it may be a trend we continue to see for some time. If the easing of restrictions in 2021 allows you to have an in-person gathering, we can help you incorporate that with a robust virtual component and allow you to meet or exceed your fundraising goals.

HYBRID EVENTS

Hybrid events are a mix between a virtual event and a live/in person event. Hybrid events consist of the more traditional in-person gala/5k/concert/etc. (much smaller in scale), coupled with a virtual program. Hosting a hybrid event allows your donors to participate in the way they are most comfortable with whether that's attending an in-person gathering or supporting your organization from the comfort of their own home.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF FUNDRAISERS

Now that we know the different types of events, we can take a look at the different types of fundraisers. Yes, there are a number of different types of fundraisers - most of which are tailored to specific goals and/or purposes. Here are the main types of fundraisers:



Galas, Tastings & Cocktail Receptions

A gala is a large-scale fundraising event that usually includes dinner, dancing, entertainment, silent auctions or raffles to benefit a cause. Fundraising galas are one of the most common nonprofit events.



5k Run/Walk

5K runs/walks are a staple of fundraising campaigns because they can offer significant return (both in terms of revenue and engagement) on your invested time and resources. Overall, data indicates that runs and walks are the easiest to plan and deliver a high return on investment for organizations of all sizes.



Auctions

One of the most effective ways to get supporters to spend more money at an event is by incorporating an auction. An auction fundraising event not only gives your guests a reason to open their wallets, it also gives them something to do while socializing.



Benefit Concerts & Runway Shows

Benefit concerts aren't just the celebrity performer-packed events you see on television. Concerts can also be smaller scale, featuring local talent. The benefit is that these performers are more accessible and likely to bring their family and circle of friends to the event.



Charity Sporting Events (e.g Tennis, Golf)

Charity events utilizing sports activities have become a popular and successful method used to raise funds for nonprofits. Charity sport events provide participants with a meaningful event experience, and the opportunity to support a charitable cause is a critical component of this experience.



HOW DO YOU KNOW WHICH APPROACH IS THE BEST FOR YOUR EVENT?

It boils down to a number of different factors—including your event size, budget, timeline, etc. Each event approach provides its own unique benefits. If you want to get some free, expert advice on which format would work best for events you are planning, contact us for a free consultation on best practices for both hybrid and virtual events.

We do thousands of live, virtual and hybrid events every year for our clients and we'd be happy to share our expertise with you to help you make the best decisions to meet your event-related goals.

[CLICK TO SCHEDULE A FREE CONSULTATION](#)

THE ESSENTIAL CHECKLIST

FOR HYBRID EVENT PLANNING

We created a hybrid event checklist for you that highlights a few of the things you should keep in mind when deciding if a hybrid event is right for your non-profit. While there are many benefits to hosting a hybrid event to fundraise for your charity, we also included a few possible pitfalls that you will want to avoid in your event planning process.

■ Tech Partner

Finding the right tech partner is now more important than ever. Look for a partner that will excel at both the in-house A/V as well as the livestreaming to an online event page. You can find more info on what to consider when picking your tech platform in our tech solutions blog post.

■ Incorporate The Live Event Into The Virtual Event

How will your in-person program translate to a virtual setting? Will you pre-record portions (or all) of the program or will you have a live stream from the venue for your viewers at home?

■ Incorporate The Virtual Event Into The Live Event

This is not the same as above and may be more important! For maybe the first time, your charity's in-person event will be broadcast to a much larger audience. How can you connect the folks in the room with those who are at home? Remember a hybrid event is one event, so we want to make sure to link everyone who is coming out for the same important cause together on this special evening.

■ Location

Should all your speakers be in the same room at the venue? Make sure you are respectful of your speakers' comfort level with being in a larger group. As always, safety protocols should be strictly adhered to!

■ Tech Support

This is really taking the time to stress AGAIN how important your tech partner is. Consider pre-recording any live speakers just in case. Cover all of your bases ahead of time including confirming that your venue has the bandwidth for any live streaming you will be doing.

■ Attendee Options

Be very clear about the various levels of attendance and what each option entails. Will there be exclusive opportunities only available to in-person attendance? What if government restrictions change, or someone's travel plans do? Be as flexible as you can to allow for the maximum number of attendees.

■ Consistent and Compelling Messaging

It should not matter how or where you attend meaning that you want to have consistent same messaging throughout your event experience. Virtual attendees now are more virtual-event savvy, so you've got to make sure that the content online is engaging, while also allowing the in-person attendees to connect, network, and take advantage of any features your tech platform may have.

■ Twice the Price, Three Times the Work

And lastly, the costs may stack up very quickly as you once again pay for a venue, catering, AND tech platform. Plus, there will be two guest lists now – one for in the room, and one for online. Ease some of that burden by building out a comprehensive timeline and sticking to a budget.

DON'T LET HYBRID EVENT PLANNING LEAVE YOU ANXIOUS ABOUT WHAT TO DO

Having vast experience in in-person, hybrid and virtual events, Powered by Professionals is perfectly positioned to help your charity produce an event that maximizes your fundraising while highlighting the mission and messaging of the future of your nonprofit.

Whether you are looking to go hybrid, virtual or in-person for your annual fundraising gala, awareness run/walk, or benefit concert, we are here to help you deliver a top-notch experience for your donors.

Just because your donors may not be face-to-face doesn't mean you can't forge connections with them and expand your donor base in the process. Times are changing, and so is fundraising.

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HEAR WHAT OUR CLIENTS HAVE TO SAY:



"This past fall, PBP helped us plan and execute a successful hybrid in-person/virtual event and a virtual 5K. The PBP team was cognizant of any health concerns and updates and took that into account throughout the event planning process. They worked with us to create a fundraising and cultivation strategy that included both a socially distanced in-person gathering, as well as a virtual program that honored brain tumor survivors and showed our appreciation for the doctors and nurses in the brain tumor community. They also helped us transition our raffle to an online platform in order to allow for participation from those at home."

Chris Cusano,
Executive Director,
Connecticut Brain Tumor Alliance

"Powered by Professionals has the ability to maneuver where and when we need them to: whether that be creating a roadmap for turning a live event to a virtual one or identifying creative ways to engage our audience like smaller scale digital events. We consider PBP a valued, creative and strategic partner."

Nancy J. Logan,
Director of Corporate Partnerships & Philanthropy, Look Good Feel Better Foundation

"During these unsettling times, Powered by Professionals is guiding our foundation in how best to leverage technology and plan our first global virtual campaign utilizing a peer-to-peer fundraising platform that will culminate in a livestream event. PBP is honing our social media and fundraising efforts to pivot to the virtual event space as we continue to raise funds for our critical research and patient care initiatives."

Tracey IracaMDS Foundation,
Executive Director