Benchmark Report for Webcasts & Virtual Events

Analyzing the Impact of a Record-Breaking Year in 2020

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

Overview

Virtual events and webcasts are more important than ever. At Notified, we've seen a massive increase in the number of clients hosting virtual events and webcasts in 2020, and the benefits are clear.

Virtual events and webcasts became business-critical tools, allowing companies and organizations to continue engaging with their internal and external audiences. Growth in client bookings for 2021 has proven it.

Organizations are choosing virtual due to global reach and engagement potential, the benefits of reducing your carbon footprint, plus the abundance of data webcasts and virtual events provide.

As we look ahead, creating a virtual complement to a physical event will be a necessity in 2021 and beyond. Event attendees will expect a hybrid component.

For this year's benchmark report, we took a look at year-over-year change to analyze the impact of COVID-19 and the trends it holds for the future.

We used proprietary data from Notified's webcasting and virtual events platforms, to provide relevant attendance and engagement analysis.

Methodology

Date Range:

We analyzed client virtual events and webcasts conducted between March-September 2019 and March-September 2020

Analysis Included:

- Standalone webcasts
- Virtual events with 1-2 scheduled live days, excluding 365-day environments
- Attendance, timing, duration, viewing and audience engagement data

Highlights

There was a **362% increase** in the amount of client virtual events and webcasts from 2019 to 2020. **1.8 billion minutes** of virtual events and webcasts were viewed on our platform, a 350% increase from the previous year. To put this number in context, that's more than 39 million NBA games!

Audience engagement has also grown tremendously within virtual events and webcasts. For example, over **1.3 million games** were played in client virtual events in 2020. That's a 995% year-over-year increase.

In the following report, we'll share even more data to help you plan improved programming in the weeks and months to come.

The Big Picture

362% increase
in client virtual events and webcasts

Over 1.8 billion
minutes viewed of virtual events and webcasts

Over 1.3 million
games played within virtual events

Registration & Attendance
Webcasts

Live Unique Viewers

2019	510% Increase →
2020	

Total Registrants

2019	268% Increase →
2020	

2019

35% attended live

19% attended on demand

2020

58% attended live

12% attended on demand
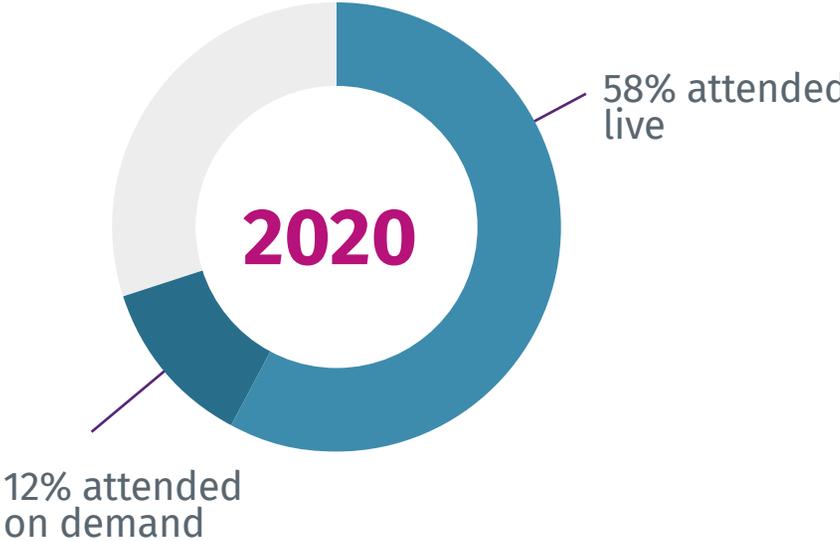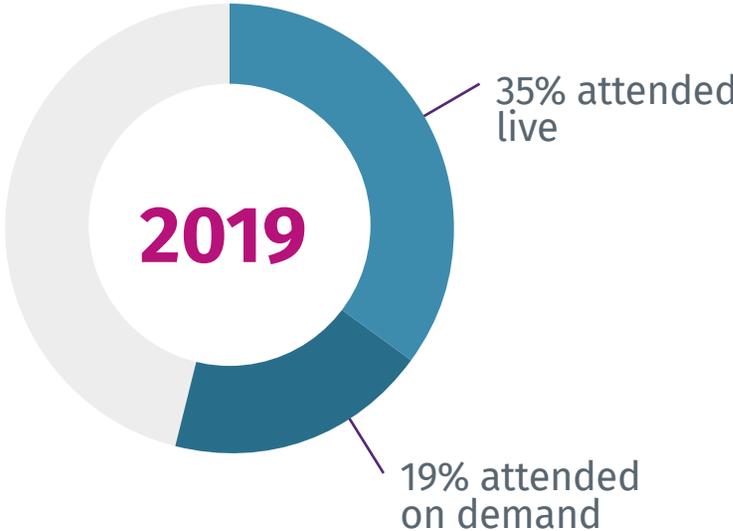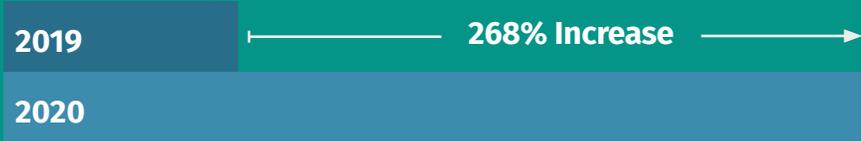
Registration & Attendance
Virtual Events

2019

38% attended live

11% attended on demand

2020

43% attended live

13% attended on demand

Live Unique Viewers

| 2019 | 398% Increase |
| 2020 | |

Total Registrants

| 2019 | 239% Increase |
| 2020 | |

Notified.com
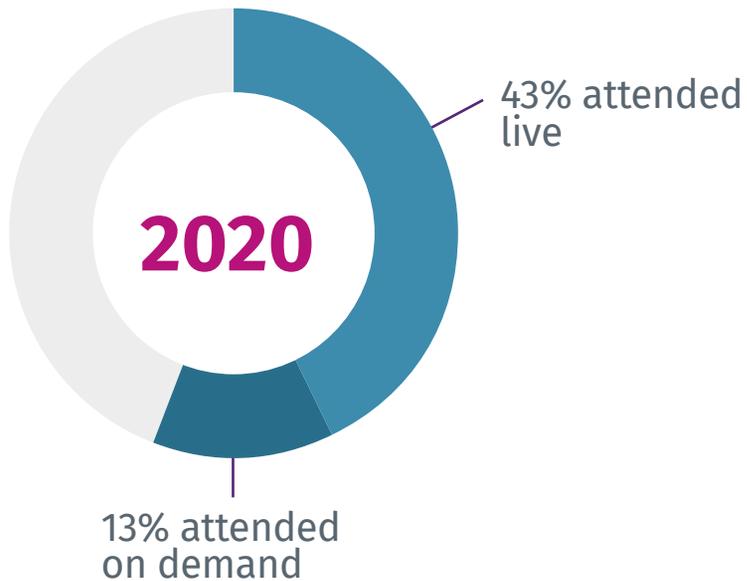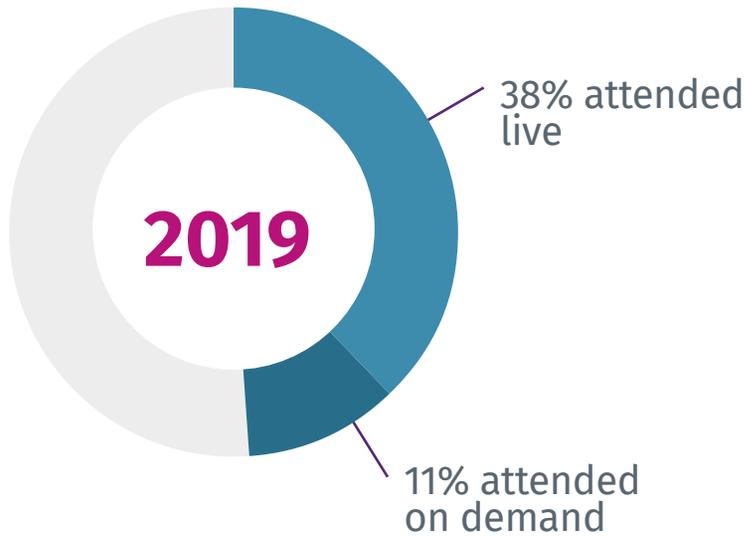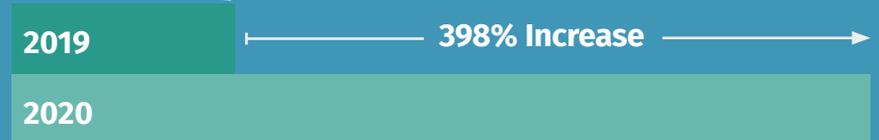
Top Tip

Email is the #1 driver of event registration

Map out a detailed email promotion schedule before your next virtual event or webcast

Sample Email Schedule

Save the Date

Registration Confirmation

New speakers added

Agenda update

1 Week Reminder

Day Before Reminder

Live Event Day

Post-Event Promotion
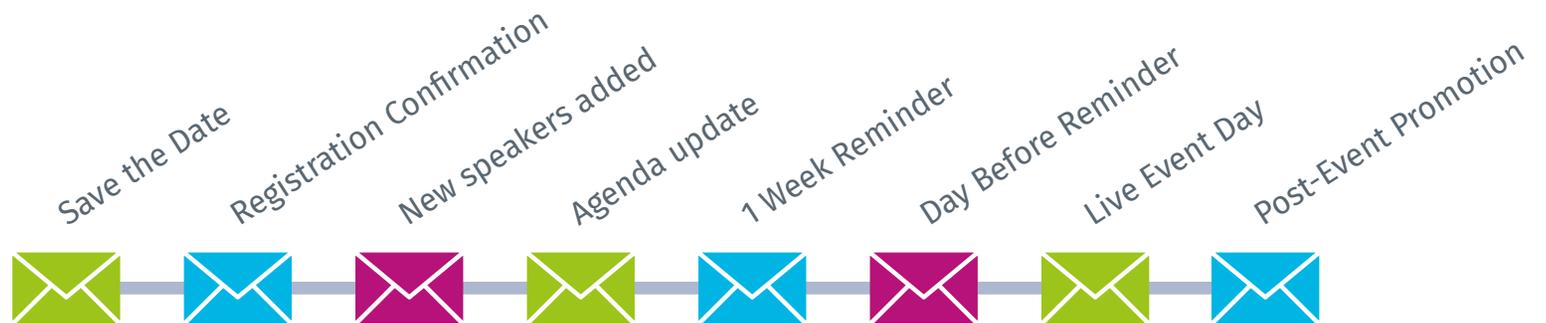
Most Popular Days
Webcasts

Thursday
continues to be the most popular day to schedule a webcast (27%)

Wednesday
is the second-most popular (25%)

2019

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
0%	12%	25%	25%	27%	10%	1%

2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
0%	11%	24%	25%	27%	11%	2%

Even with the massive growth, we're seeing a consistent trend in webcast scheduling

2019

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
0%	10%	30%	31%	20%	7%	2%

2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
4%	21%	25%	24%	17%	6%	3%

The number of weekend events grew from 6 in 2019 to 65 in 2020, a 938% increase

Most Popular Days
## Virtual Events
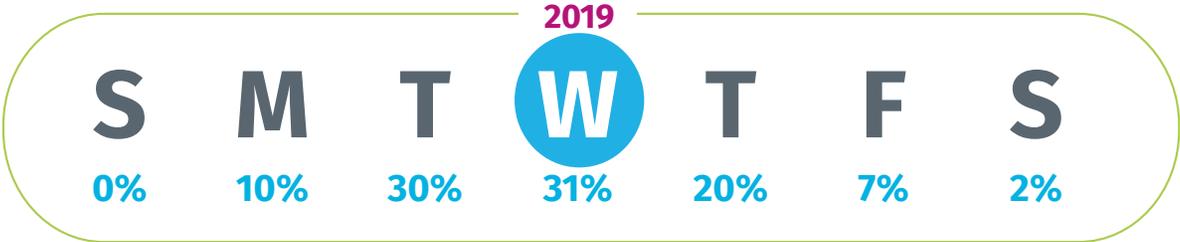
Tuesdays and Wednesdays
are the most popular days to hold a virtual event

Weekend Events:
Organizations are choosing weekends in greater numbers

Viewing Trends
Webcasts

Live View Rate

29% (2019)

131% Increase →

67% (2020)

On-Demand View Rate

28% (2019)

114% Increase →

60% (2020)

- More content is being consumed within live and on-demand webcasts

- Audiences are more engaged for longer periods of time

Average duration of live webcasts viewed

29%

2019

67%

2020
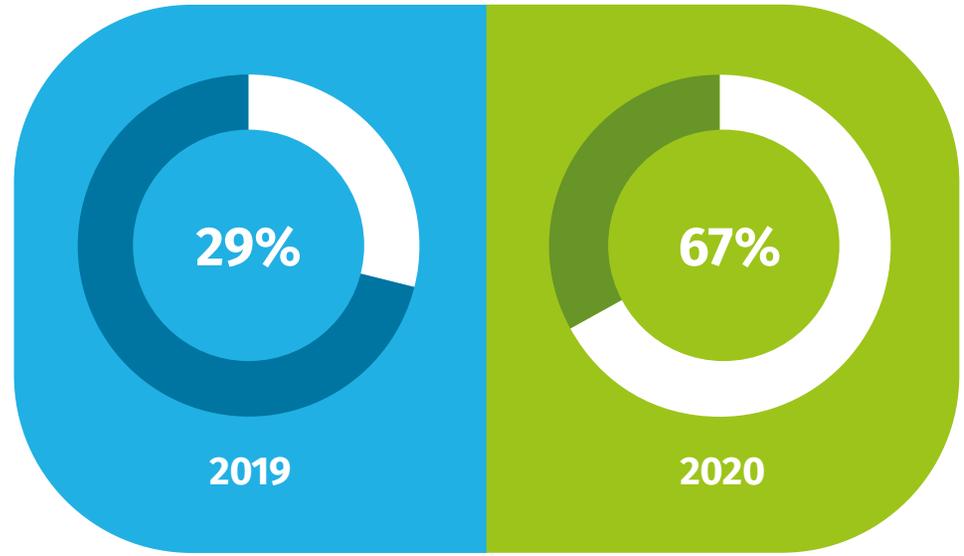
Average duration of on-demand webcast viewed

28%

2019

60%

2020
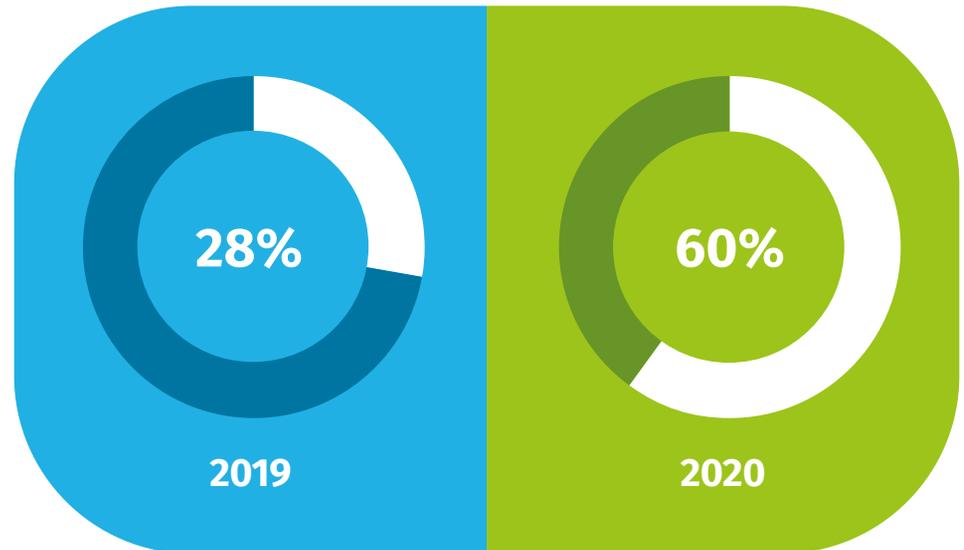
The Use of Video Continues to Grow

74%
of webcasts
use video

- Organizations are becoming more comfortable hosting video webcasts

- You must strive to provide a premium experience for viewers

Think broadcast-level quality

You're no longer competing with just the companies in your industry - you're competing with the likes of Netflix!
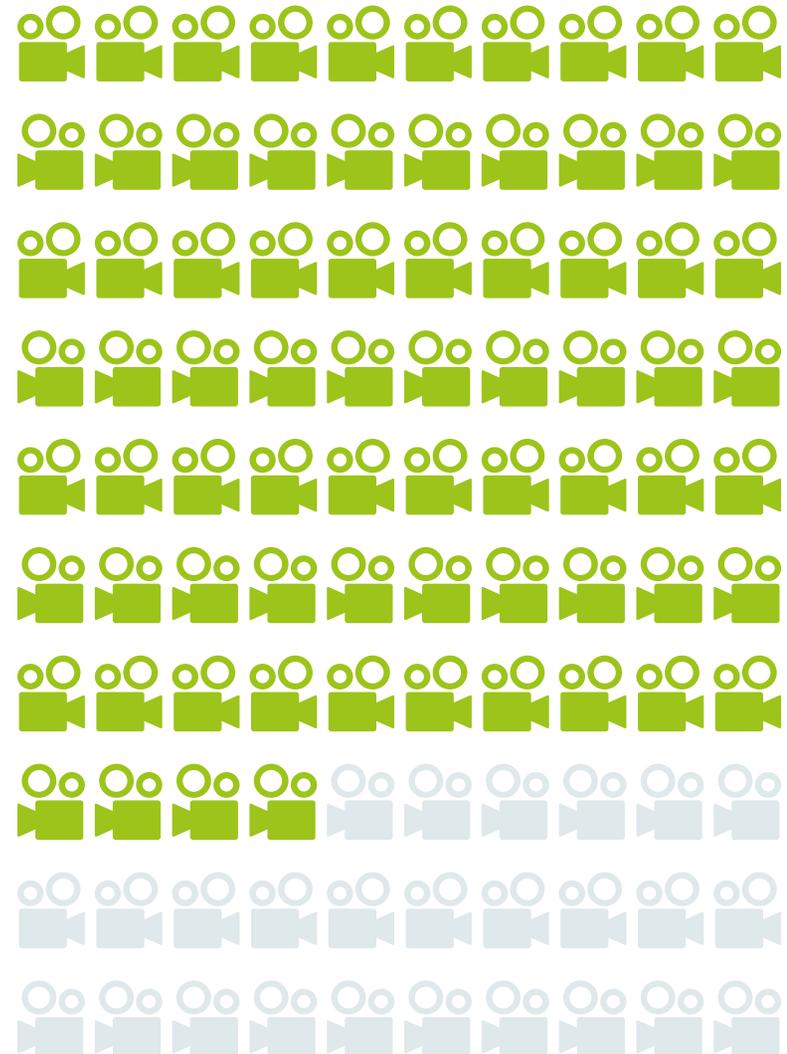
Top Tip

On-Camera Speakers

- Speaking to a 100% virtual audience can be challenging
- It's important to embrace the nature of LIVE and keep it real when speaking through video

Best Practices
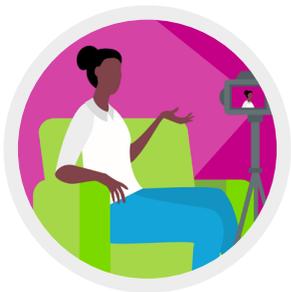
Practice multiple times

Have adequate lighting and headroom

Ensure a clutter-free background

Avoid distracting or unprofessional clothing

Content & Engagement
Webcasts

- More in-webcast engagement is taking place than ever before

- People are seeking two-way dialogue with participants and hosts

- You need to allow time for Q&A, polls and more

Q&A

Total number of questions asked in webcasts

151,355 (2019)   278% Increase

571,773 (2020)

Total number of webcasts that featured Q&A

4,111 (2019)   264% Increase

14,965 (2020)

In 2020, an average of 38 questions were asked in each webcast

Handouts

Total number of webcasts that included handouts

3,981 (2019)   204% Increase

12,108 (2020)

Total number of webcast handout downloads

589,686 (2019)   198% Increase

1,755,737 (2020)

In 2020, 60% of webcasts included handouts

Chat

Total number of chat messages in webcasts

135,718 (2019)   334% Increase

588,448 (2020)

Top Tip

Webcast Lead Scoring

- Integrating key data into your marketing automation and CRM platforms is critical

- Use this data to establish lead scoring and follow-up strategies, to qualify leads and move them down the funnel

Sample Lead Scoring Model

Activity	Score
Registered for Webinar	10
Attended Webinar On Demand	15
Attended Webinar Live	20
Engaged Attendees (e.g. asked questions, commented in chat or downloaded a handout)	30

- Webcast engagement and behavioral data can guide email nurturing

- Lead scoring can be based on registration and attendance

- Scores can be increased based on how engaged attendees were during the webcast

Content & Engagement
Virtual Events

- Audiences are more engaged within virtual events - specifically at booths

- This provides more opportunities for lead nurturing as well as monetization and sponsorships

Booths

Total number of virtual event booths

3,721 (2019)   599% Increase

26,006 (2020)

Average number of booths in each virtual event

19 (2019)   53% Increase

29 (2020)

Total number of virtual event booth visits

7,901,695 (2019)   472% Increase

45,169,716 (2020)

Webcasts

Total number of webcasts in virtual events

4,519 (2019)   501% Increase

27,161 (2020)

Average number of webcasts in each virtual event

23 (2019)   30% Increase

30 (2020)

Total number of webcast views within virtual events

3,499,948 (2019)   293% Increase

13,737,234 (2020)

Top Tip

Gamification

- Gamification can be used in virtual event platforms to drive traffic to sponsor booths, increase session attendance, improve networking and more

- Game mechanics include points, levels, challenges, virtual goods, leaderboards, gifting and charity

Badges are used to recognize, drive, and award participants for engaging in pre-defined activities throughout the virtual environment

Over 1.3 million games played in client virtual events in 2020

995% increase year-over-year

Case Study:

How Red Hat Shifted From In-Person to Virtual Events

Use Case

Each year, Red Hat hosts a summit for thousands of IT professionals. In 2020, the conference was scheduled to be held as an in-person event. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Red Hat decided to rebuild its annual summit and take its global conference online.

Approach

Using Notified's virtual event platform, Red Hat's virtual summit was its biggest annual conference yet with more than 82,000 registrations. For the summit content, Red Hat featured over 300 sessions with guest speakers from around the world, using a mix of live and pre-recorded video. This included keynote presentations, product announcements and educational programs.
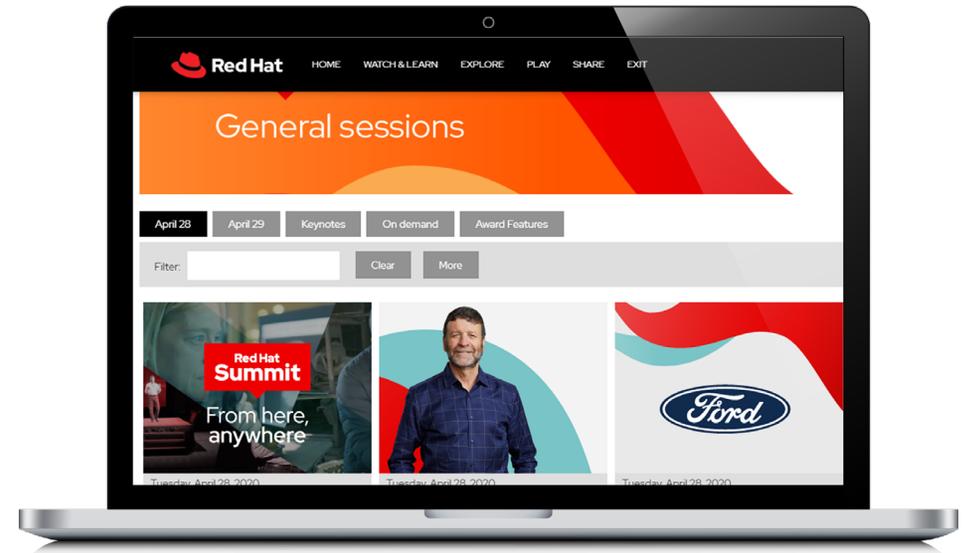
Results:

82,009
Total summit registrants from around the world

56,063
Unique attendees

321
Total unique sessions

"In our first purely online Red Hat Summit, we not only successfully transitioned our in-person experience to virtual, but also we reached a far greater audience than we ever could at the physical event. As a result, we see great value including a virtual component to every in-person event strategy moving forward."

Emmett Helmes
Global Online Events Lead | Red Hat

5 Key Takeaways
& Recommendations for 2021

1. Live Attendance Growth

The webcast attendee live conversion rate increased by 66% and the virtual event attendee live conversion rate increased by 13%. **Viewers are embracing the nature of LIVE virtual events and webcasts in greater numbers.** This creates more opportunities for you to collect audience data for lead scoring through the use of engagement tools.

2. More Virtual Event Engagement

Over 1.3 million games were played in virtual events in 2020, a 995% increase from the previous year. This data suggests that **audience appetite for in-event engagement is growing,** placing a greater responsibility on event organizers to keep up.

3. Monetization & Sponsorship Opportunities

There was a 53% increase in the average number of booths at each virtual event and a 472% increase in total booth visits. This increase in user activity suggests **more opportunities for monetization and attractive sponsorship packages offered to exhibitors.** Popular virtual event sponsorship packages usually include content tabs within booths, sponsorship of a single webinar or panel discussion, featured placement in the exhibit hall and ads throughout the virtual event.

4. Increased Personal Interaction

The total number of webcasts that featured Q&A increased by 264% and the total number of questions asked in webcasts increased by 278%. When it comes to webcast planning, you must allow ample time for your audience and speakers to interact. For virtual events, **new features such as breakout rooms and 1:1 video chat will further personalize the user experience** and allow for greater networking opportunities.

5. Use of Video Continues to Grow

The percentage of webcasts that incorporated video grew from 70% to 74%. **Organizations continue to become more comfortable using video, and audiences are expecting it.** When it comes to video, organizations must strive to provide a broadcast-quality experience for viewers. You're not just competing with the companies in your industry. You're competing with the likes of Netflix.

▌About Notified

Notified is the world's only communications cloud for events, public relations, and investor relations to drive meaningful insights and outcomes.

Notified Event Cloud lets you create unforgettable experiences to build brand and community engagement. It's the world's most comprehensive end-to-end event technology and related services to power the creation and management of events.

Notified PR Cloud helps you optimize brand value, increase earned media, and drive meaningful business impact. Reach global audiences, monitor brand sentiment, send GlobeNewswire press releases, and measure success.

Notified IR Cloud lets you manage stakeholder communications and regulatory requirements to maximize shareholder value. Tell your investment story with high-impact, multichannel solutions – earnings announcements, press releases, webcasting, virtual events, and IR websites.

Visit Notified.com to learn more.

notified