Ensuring virtual customer success on a global scale.

- **400%** increase in registrations
- **1000+** engagement points in mobile app
- **4.5** average session rating
As the twenty-year market leader, Cvent knows the value of in-person events. There’s no denying the “power of live” in driving exceptional attendee experiences, accelerating pipeline, and creating unforgettable experiences. When faced with the global pandemic, Cvent reacted quickly to ensure the safety of their employees and their attendees by shifting key aspects of their event strategy to a virtual experience.

Pivoting Customer Success Groups to Virtual

One specific event series Cvent produces is the Customer Success Groups (CSG’s). These free, half-day seminars operate as a global program in cities across the world, providing an ideal opportunity for Cvent customers to network with one another while hearing about the latest in industry trends and Cvent product development. These topics change quarterly in order to provide the most up-to-date information for customers.

Internally, CSG’s require significant global collaboration between Sales, Marketing, Planning, and Client Services teams. Working across departments and time zones, the global program is typically launched during the quarter preceding a scheduled event. Each individual Customer Success Group, unique to a specific region, is launched and marketed at least ten weeks prior to the event. When the global pandemic hit, this process had to be restructured in a matter of weeks.

In early March, Cvent’s marketing team had already launched their Q2 CSG’s. Kate Stowell, Assistant Team Lead for Customer Marketing Programs and Campaigns at Cvent, knew the program needed a strategic plan to meet the changing global directives around the pandemic. Kate’s team initially responded by alerting registered attendees to important updates, working with Cvent’s Corporate Communications team to determine what new regulations would need to be followed.
At this point, each state and country was adjusting their safety guidelines on a daily basis, creating conflicting processes for in-person events in different regions. In areas like New York City, some events had to be cancelled while others were postponed. The Cvent team needed to figure out the best approach as far as cancelling, postponing, or moving these events virtual. After gathering strategic input from various teams, the decision was made to move all CSG’s to a virtual environment for the foreseeable future.

Navigating the New Normal

The Cvent team first needed to fully understand the various facets of a virtual experience. As CSG’s typically consist of networking, education, and discussion-based round tables over a luncheon, the team didn’t want to lose these valuable aspects of the in-person event. Finding a way to center the experience on educational content while incorporating engagement functionality was key. As a typical CSG takes place across a half-day seminar, the virtual format would need to be pared-down with content tailored to current industry concerns. Kate’s team decided to format the virtual experience as a one hour session with dedicated Q&A to discuss industry trends and relevant topics.

Using Cvent’s Event Marketing and Management platform for registration meant they could easily update virtual registration with existing attendees and expand their marketing reach to target new attendees. “What was nice about using Cvent was that all of our live events were already launched within our account, so we were able to target those folks who had already registered or had come to one of our events in the past to send them an invite to this new virtual experience,” says Kate. With Cvent as the singular data source, retargeting these registrants was a simple process. The rapid pivot was not only about ensuring program success, but also providing thought leadership during the early days of the pandemic. “We wanted to make sure that we were getting these best practices and solutions out there as soon as possible to our customers,” she explains.
Expanding Marketing Reach with Event

No longer restricted by localized in-person experiences, Kate’s team was able to quickly spin up new registration sites that offered multiple sessions across global regions. They could easily retarget their segmented lists with the new virtual offers across marketing channels, thereby reaching more potential registrants while managing fewer sessions overall. “We were able to leverage all of our existing website and email templates that were already built out in our account so it didn’t feel like we were having to start from scratch, which was really nice,” Kate notes. Due to the typical size and scale of the in-person program, Cvent operates an average of thirty global sessions with around 350 attendees. With an incredible response to their virtual offering, they tracked over 1,500 registrations across four unique sessions in just one month. They were able to use qualifying questions to ensure attendees met necessary criteria for the virtual event.

The events were executed across four live webinar sessions through Cvent’s integration with ON24. They used the virtual platform’s custom widgets to ensure a seamless user experience for the internal presenters, all of whom were working from home in different locations. With ON24’s screen sharing functionality, they were able to execute the webinar and incorporate additional engagement points for attendees. Regional hosts tailored the content to their respective attendees, ensuring a more personalized experience.

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Creating Powerful Virtual Engagement with CrowdCompass

By executing live webinars, the team could engage with attendees in real-time with the CrowdCompass mobile app. Prior to the event, attendees received automated reminder emails with details on how to download and use the mobile event app. Using the dynamic event guide ensured key icons, information, and updates were front and center during the event. Kate notes, “Because this was a shorter event, we did highlight leveraging the desktop version of the app for those who perhaps didn’t want to download to their phone.”

They also incorporated live polling and Q&A into the webinar using CrowdCompass, allowing hosts to gain insights, answer questions, and interact with attendees. From a logistics standpoint, the screen sharing functionality allowed the event hosts to pull in the web version of the app and show attendees the changing poll results in real-time. The hosts could then shift or tailor their talk tracks to the poll findings, thereby creating a more personalized experience. They could also field questions throughout the event to better curate responses during the open Q&A. The hosts could easily communicate with attendees via push notifications if any issues arose.

Moreover, the team used CrowdCompass to provide virtual networking opportunities. Attendees could choose to make their profiles public and share contact information with other attendees. “That way, they could message each other, engage with others who were interested in the same topic, and connect with those who they might not have met at a live event because they included people from all over the country,” explains Kate. The app remains open even after the event has concluded, allowing attendees the opportunity to continue to network and access content. Icons within the app provided additional resources related to virtual events, crisis management, venue sourcing, and other relevant topics.
Proving Virtual Event ROI Technology

The overall event performance helped prove the value of the fully virtual experience. “We had a 60% adoption rate with the mobile app and saw over 1,000 points of engagement,” says Kate. Her team was able to share the feedback survey at the close of the event via the mobile app through push notifications, encouraging a high number of survey responses. Overall, the event performance was strong. “We had a 4.5 out of 5 rating, which was super high,” Kate adds.

Using Cvent’s integration with Marketo and Salesforce, the session and event-level data flows between Cvent and the integrated systems. Sales tasks are assigned and marketing attribution is tracked via Marketing Qualified Leads (MQLs). On-demand reports in Cvent allow the sales and marketing teams to gauge the effectiveness of the virtual events across regions. “Overall, the event went really well. The content was well received and the technology worked seamlessly together,” Kate insists. “I think the biggest benefit of going virtual is we’re now able to reach a much wider audience.” Whereas a typical month garners around 300 registrations, the virtual program saw over 1,500 global registrants in just one month’s turnaround time. Internally, fewer sessions with higher overall registrations helped streamline workflows, saving added expenses and valuable time.
Shaping the Future of Events

In the near future, the CSG team plans to continue to leverage virtual as a valuable option for connecting attendees across the globe. Kate adds, “What’s amazing about this new virtual world is customers are able to meeting industry peers from across the globe who they might never have met at a live event. We’re learning a lot about how Cvent technology can work with our various partners to deliver those intimate experiences while reaching a broader audience, so I’m excited for what we’ll be rolling out in the near future.”

As Cvent looks to evaluate the state of events in 2020 and beyond, virtual events will continue to be a valuable means of engaging attendees on a broad scale. As the twenty-year market leader in event technology, Cvent does foresee the return of in-person and hybrid events as well. Kate explains, “We’re really navigating this new normal together. As we start to learn more about event technology, we’re learning exciting ways to deliver a truly unique experience.”

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Cvent is the global meeting, event, travel, and hospitality technology leader.

Cvent provides easy-to-use, integrated technology solutions to maximize the impact of meetings and events of all sizes. We help organizations plan and market events, execute onsite, engage audiences, and measure and analyze results.

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