

The future of business events in a post Covid-19 world - Survey Results

Introduction

The events industry has changed beyond recognition as Covid-19 has swept the globe and restricted movement and gathering for so many of us.

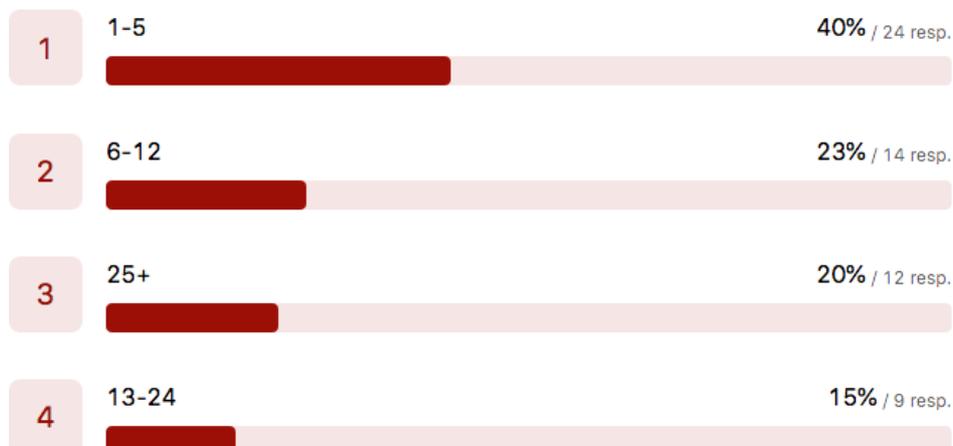
Autumn Live was keen to understand the thoughts and behaviours of people within the business world around the topic of events in the future (gatherings of more than 6 people - training, networking, conferences, exhibitions, business festivals). So, we created and promoted a 10-question survey in April 2020 to gather insights into what people thought would happen next and to find out what people missed most about face-to-face events and what they liked about the video-based / live-stream events they'd attended so far.

A total of 60 people completed the survey and below are the results, including some simple thematic analysis of the 3 free text questions.

Results

1. How many business or work related events do you attend in a year?

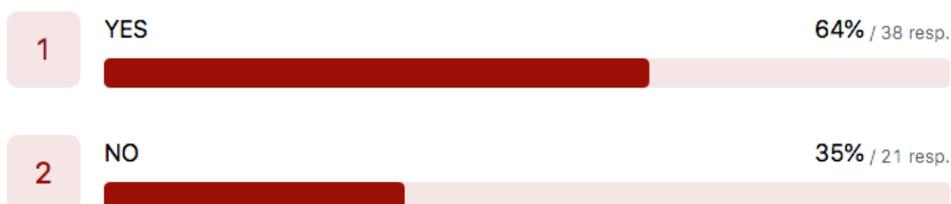
[59 out of 60 answered]



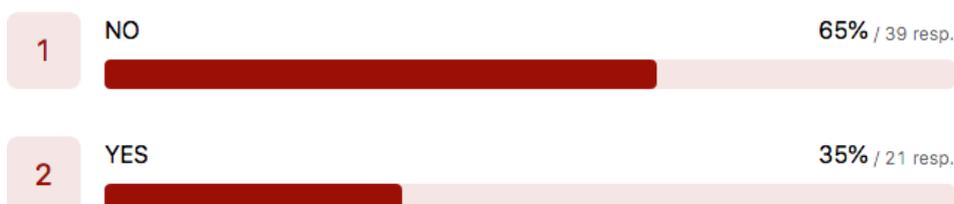
2. When lockdown is released and we are able to meet freely again at events, do you think YOU WILL: [60 out of 60 answered]



3. Do you think you will be cautious about meeting people in large numbers (over 50 people) ? [59 out of 60 answered]



4. Do you think you will be handshaking / greeting others in the same way you used to? [60 out of 60 answered]



5. Do you think live-streaming will become a standard part of events?

[60 out of 60 answered]



6. What is it that you currently miss most about face-to-face events?

[60 out of 60 answered]

The most popular themes within respondent's answers were:

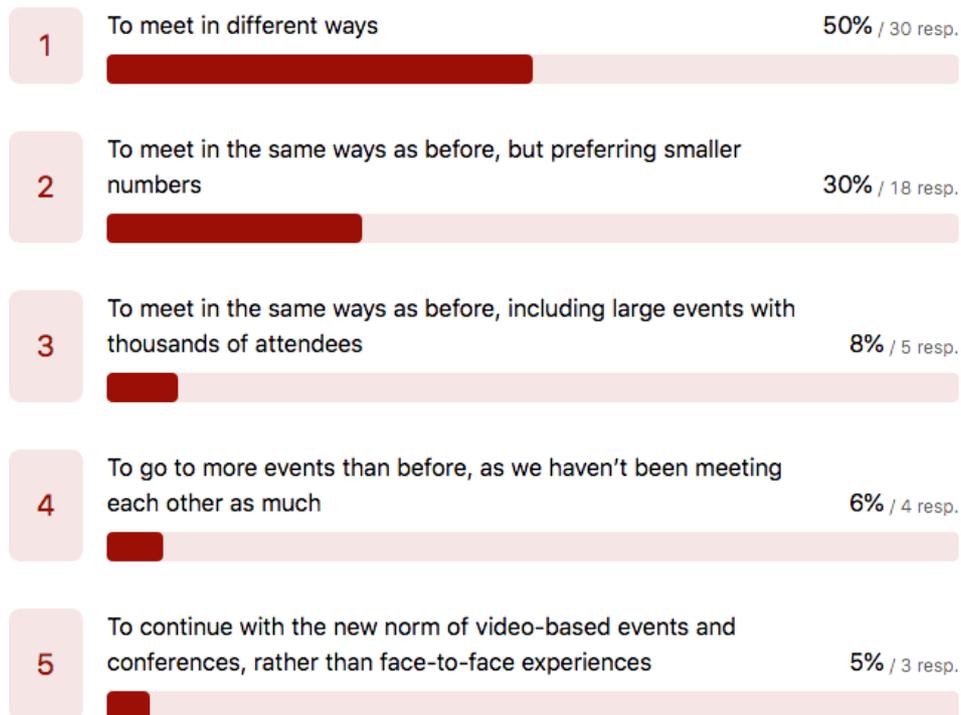
1. Connecting – being able to connect with people came up far more than any other theme
2. Networking – being able to meet new people for business outcomes
3. Side conversations – respondents are missing the opportunity to have quiet, less public discussions with individuals or small groups during virtual events
4. Body language – being able to read body language was seen as a key benefit of meeting face to face that is missing from virtual events
5. Atmosphere – respondents are missing the shared experience of a live event

7. What have you liked about the video-based / live-stream events and conferences you've attended, rather than face-to-face experiences? [60 out of 60 answered]

The most popular themes within respondent's answers were:

1. No travel involved – respondents really enjoying the ability to attend a virtual event without having to spend time travelling back and forth to venues
2. It's easier – the simplicity of clicking a link and engaging remotely was a big theme and a powerful one to consider
3. They're quicker – respondents valued the shorter amount of time video-based / live-stream events and conferences took out of their day
4. They open up opportunity – online delivery has lowered the barriers to accessing quality content and people
5. They're cheaper – the price of attendance, whether that's ticket costs or travel costs, have been substantially lower, a big benefit for companies but especially freelancers

8. When lockdown is released and we are able to meet freely again at events, what do you think the MAJORITY OF PEOPLE will want? [60 out of 60 answered]



9. Do you think the MAJORITY OF PEOPLE will be cautious about meeting people in large numbers (over 50 people) ? [58 out of 60 answered]



10. Finally, please share with us any other thoughts you have about what events post COVID-19 will look or feel like? [51 out of 60 answered]

The most popular themes within respondent's answers were:

1. Future events will feature video links / streaming options – enabling people to choose if they attend in person or virtually. This was by far the biggest theme
2. Future events will have to include health measures, increased physical distancing and PPE
3. Future events will have smaller “live” audiences, often as a result of many choosing to log-in remotely
4. Future events will get back to normal eventually, this will pass and things will be back to how they were
5. Future events will be more local, requiring less travel

More about Autumn Live:

We are passionate about **technology, education, inspiration, wellbeing** and **equality**. We deliver change through strategic events, programmes, consultancy work and marketing campaigns, specialising in the tech, digital, health and creative sectors.

If you want to explore how you can make effective change happen through events and experiences, now and in a post Covid-19 world, just get in touch.



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