

SMITH BUCKLIN
VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE DESIGN FRAMEWORK
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DESIGN PRINCIPLES:

Our VXP framework is designed to guide discussion and planning related to developing virtual experiences. A virtual experience is a program designed to meet the same/similar needs of an in-person event via virtual delivery.

- The experience should be designed as a new and distinct service offering that addresses a market need/provides a desired solution.
- The experience can be monetized, and may need to be done so in a way that is different than more familiar exhibit and sponsorship models used in in-person events.
- The experience can serve as a natural/more seamless gateway to year round programs and areas for ongoing member engagement.
- The experience should have specific, measureable goals for both the organization and stakeholders.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS: FIVE STEP PROCESS:

- 1) **Defining our “Reason to Convene”:** What unique and relevant value can be gained and received by our association designing and hosting a new program?
- 2) **Financial Return:** What is our needed return on investment on the new virtual experience?
- 3) **Member Needs:** What do our members and community need from us this coming year?
- 4) **Experience Design:** What is the best design to deliver value to our members?
- 5) **Technology Platforms and Support:** With whom will we partner, or build to effectively and efficiently enable our design?

DISCUSSION GUIDE:

1) **REASON TO CONVENE:**

- What has been most important tangible, and intangible aspects of your in person event?
- What will members miss the most by not being able to attend an in-person event?
- How have our members been impacted by Covid19 and what impact does it have on their ability to attend a new virtual experience?
- New Opportunities or Needs- what role should we play to best serve our member community at this time?

2) FINANCIAL IMPACT:

- What financial return did you budget for your in-person event, and what would need to be generated from a virtual experience?
- What is the net financial impact to the association from Covid19 and how might a new experience mitigate any unfavorable impact?
- What current exposure do you have with facilities, registered attendees, exhibitors/sponsors for what was a planned in-person event?
- What exposure do you have with contracts that cannot be cancelled, deferred?

3) MEMBER NEEDS:

- What is your purpose for convening members with a virtual experience?
- Which community members (speakers, attendees, sponsors etc) have specific and defined needs, and what are their needs?
- Why are they convening?
 - Education
 - Information
 - Certification
 - Recognition
 - Networking
 - Job Sourcing
 - Enjoyment/Entertainment
- What will success look like?

4) EXPERIENCE DESIGN: After inputs in steps 1-3, what is the best design to deliver value to members/stakeholders?

- What programs or topics will deliver the best member engagement?
- How should the new virtual experience be similar or differentiated from other association offerings?
- Consider and rank potential design elements against member needs:
 - Session Format*: Live, Pre-recorded, Panels, Lectures etc
 - Program Scheduling*: Multiple time zones, dates/duration, level of speaker and attendee interaction, peer to peer networking, access to sponsors
 - Pricing*: Paid, or free, pricing tiers for different member tiers, non-member?
 - Sponsor/Exhibitor value*: Level of interaction, lead generation, thought leadership opportunities, solution demonstrations

5) TECHNOLOGY PLATFORMS AND SUPPORT: Considerations:

- Revenue development features (registration, sponsorship
- Platform Costs + Association staffing costs
- Content and interaction forms/formats needed to support
- User Experience, Look and Feel, Brand consistency
- Engagement needs: Gamification, Networking, Chats, Breakouts

-Integrations Needed: Existing LMS, AMS, registration systems
-Reporting and analytics needs

- GENERAL CONSIDERATION: For smaller groups, is a more robust platform needed vs leveraging Zoom?