

Webex Events (formerly Socio)

# The biggest event trends of 2023

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## Introduction

As the events industry enters 2023, there are five key trends that we predict will have a significant impact. These trends have been identified through our own event experiences and research, as well as input from event planners and professionals gathered through polls and surveys.

In this guide, we'll explore each trend, sharing data and insights on how you can use them to inform and shape your events this year.

From the resurgence of in-person events to the importance of attendee networking, join us as we take a closer look at the trends driving the industry forward in 2023.

# Registering is one thing, showing up is another

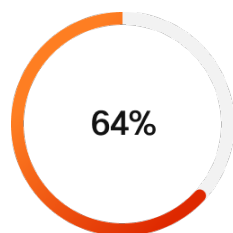
60% of event industry professionals are most concerned about event attendance.

Are you finding that your events just aren't getting the turnout you were hoping for? You're not alone – a lot of event organizers felt the squeeze in 2022. But don't worry, with the right strategy and a little creativity, you can give your events the boost they need and attract the attendees you want.

Defining a content strategy and robust promotion plan are key elements to attracting registrants and getting them to show up. When marketing your event, it's important to highlight how your event is unique and how it stands out from all other events in your industry. The easiest way to deliver that message starts with knowing exactly who your target audience is and where they hang out.

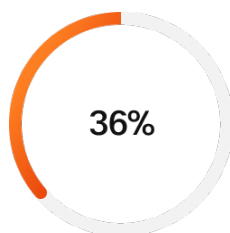
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## Data you don't want to miss



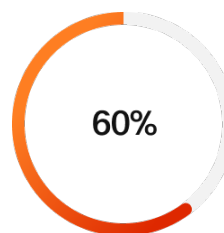
**of event industry professionals find it challenging to identify the right content to keep attendees interested and engaged**

Without the promise of engaging content, attendees will be less likely to show up to your event when the time comes.



**of event organizers are focused on innovative content development and delivery**

Creating unique and engaging content is where you should be spending most of your time.



**of event organizers say creating a compelling call to action**

Pre- and post-event CTAs are an important part of your overall event strategy.



## Webex Events tips for success

1

Personalize messaging to match the specific stage of the registration process a potential attendee is currently in, in order to make their event experience more personalized and relevant.

4

For pre-event CTAs, try asking your speakers to promote their presence at your event.

5

Once your event is over, focus your CTAs on continuous engagement.

2

Ask your audience what they'd like to see and use that data to help inform your content strategy.

3

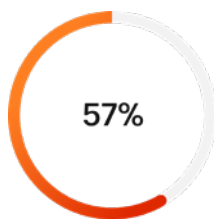
Now that you know what your attendees want to see, design your promotions to match attendee expectations.



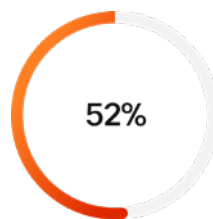
# Trend #2 Attendees expect more out of event engagement

60% of respondents say they are most excited about event engagement technology as an emerging industry trend.

While [engagement](#) has become a top events industry buzzword over the past three years, it has also served as a challenge that requires creative solutions. Engagement doesn't mean the same thing it did four or five years ago. Attendee expectations have evolved. So, how do you create meaningful and intentional collaboration that doesn't take away from your event focus? Let's get into it.



**of event industry professionals find it challenging to garner attendee participation during engagement and collaboration activities**



**of event organizers say it's difficult to find new ways for attendees to collaborate**

According to Webex Events data, over half of event professionals struggle to engage with attendees and find it difficult to encourage attendees to engage with each other. This could have an impact on attendees' feelings toward the event and their likelihood of registering for future events.

To combat this, think about your attendees' perspectives. Ask yourself how you would want attendees to experience your event and how they should feel. Why are they attending the event in the first place? What do they want to get out of it?



## Webex Events tips for success

1

Focus on creating an event community where everyone is together sharing an experience. This is easy for in-person events, and with the right event management software, it also works well for hybrid and fully virtual events.

2

Encourage audience participation as much as possible with Q&A and polling tools like Slido, available in your event app.

3

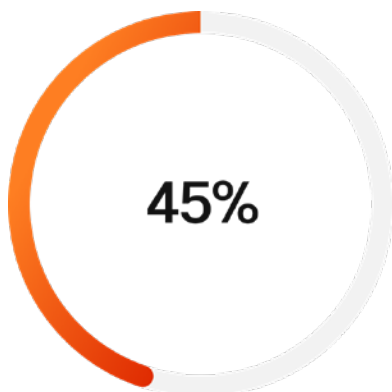
Include interactive elements such as [event games](#), virtual puzzles, photobooths, and whiteboarding into your event whenever possible.

4

Be intentional! Make sure you plan engagement opportunities. Ask yourself when it makes the most sense to use collaboration tools to garner the most participation.

*For example, use an event game as a way for attendees to get to know the platform, agenda, speakers, or sponsors. Incorporate polls that fit into the topic or content you are discussing at the time and address the results live during the session.*

# Shorter, more niche events are driving better results

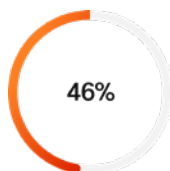


## 45% of event organizers struggle with attendee virtual event fatigue

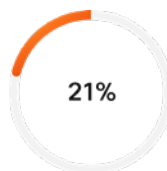
Curated, personalized events were all the rage in 2022. And the emergence of this trend taught event planners that there are tremendous benefits to creating immersive experiences with shorter sessions and hyper-focused content.

Gone are the days of high-level abstracts and aloof session learnings. Event attendees want to know exactly who they will hear from, what they will learn, how it will benefit them, and what they will gain from attending.

The trend of shorter, more niche events will continue to be popular in 2023, as they provide a more efficient and fulfilling experience for attendees. These types of events offer concentrated, specific content in a shorter time frame, allowing attendees to optimize their time and gain more value from the event.



of event industry professionals are planning a 50/50 mix between virtual and in-person events



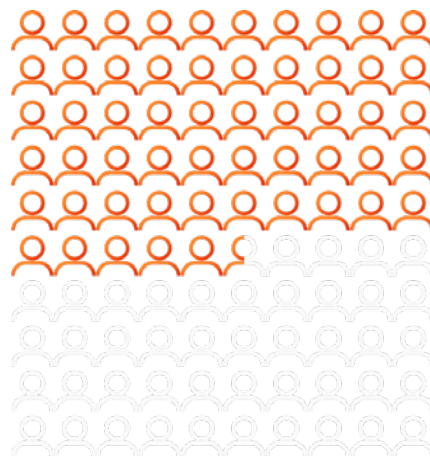
of event organizers have already introduced smaller, more intimate events into their event plans

## 55% of event organizers find it challenging to strike the right event format balance

Finding the right mix of event formats will likely continue to be a challenge for event professionals in 2023. When trying to decide what formats you'll use and how much you'll use them, it helps to focus on two key elements: **personalization** and **intentionality**.

**Personalization** should be top of mind regardless of the event type. Focused experiences are driving attendee interest, and event organizers should start thinking of themselves as event designers.

In 2022, the events industry shifted to shorter, more frequent events to support virtual audiences. As a result, we're seeing the industry incorporate a healthy mix of event lengths and sizes. These events offer highly targeted networking opportunities, where organizers can fine-tune their content to a single topic or solution. This is what it means to [design events with intentionality](#).







## Webex Events tips for success

1

Design your event from the perspective of the attendee.

2

Think through how they can become more engaged during the event.

3

Plan for ways they can create connections either with subject matter experts or with their peers.

4

Use your [registration tool](#) to gather all attendee information and ask any questions that could help you form groups or interest categories (*geographic location, industry, organization size, role, hobbies, etc.*)

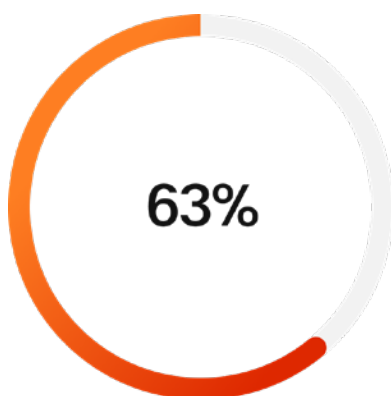
5

Use the data you collect to create hyper-focus sessions and personalized agendas.

Check out [The Complete Guide to Event Data Strategy](#), which showcases how you can make informed decisions with data that you gather pre, during, and post event to create the **personalization** and **intentionality** your audience craves.

# Immersive and experiential events are in

Attendees don't just want to hear about your brand, they want to experience it. In 2022, we saw more attendees than ever looking for connection, collaboration, and networking opportunities. In 2023, we expect to see this trend continue, with a focus on attendee experience. As event planners, it's our job to consider how the industry has changed and to meet our attendees where they are. Enter immersive and experiential events.



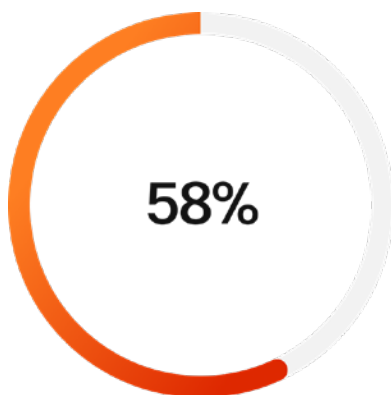
## 63% of event organizers say it's challenging to design exciting experiences that create organic conversations

Many event planners find it challenging to create exciting event experiences. Your event should feel like an extension of your brand, but that's not always easy to do with timeline and budget constraints and an ever-changing list of priorities to juggle.

So how do you go above and beyond attendee expectations and provide an experience that they'll remember for years to come? Activations.

Activations are activities that allow attendees to engage directly with a brand and its products. We've seen everything from oyster shuckers and circus performers to photo booths and interactive games with amazing prizes.

Not only are activations fun, they're also a fantastic way to encourage attendees to register for your event or visit a sponsorship booth.



## 58% of organizers say that budget constraints are the top event industry challenge they are facing for 2023

The best part about activations is that they can fit any budget. If you're looking to save on activations, designing an interactive quiz or game costs very little and is a great way to encourage conversation among attendees. If you're ready to splurge on attendee experience, food trucks and custom screen-printed swag are always fun choices.

While activations help create an immersive experience, they can also help with sponsorships and ROI. Sponsors want meaningful connections and conversations over booth traffic and high-volume leads that are interested in their products or services. There is little value in scanning badges for people who are only stopping by to grab a pen, but there is huge value in the powerful conversations that happen because of a shared experience.

Activations and experiential elements help foster those organic conversations that lead to driving ROI for both the event and its sponsors. If you can drive ROI for your sponsors, they will invest more into your event so you can provide a better experience for your attendees.



## Webex Events tips for success

1

Fun experiences aren't only for in-person events – introduce them into your virtual events too.

3

Have fun activations planned? Tease them on social media to encourage attendees to register for your event.

2

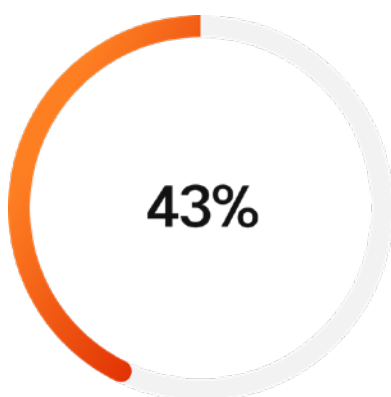
To make activations successful, ensure the activity is easy to understand. Complicated activities could drive attendees away.

4

For inspiration, [check out how 1331 Events creates unforgettable immersive incentive event experiences.](#)

# Digital-forward in-person events are the new “hybrid”

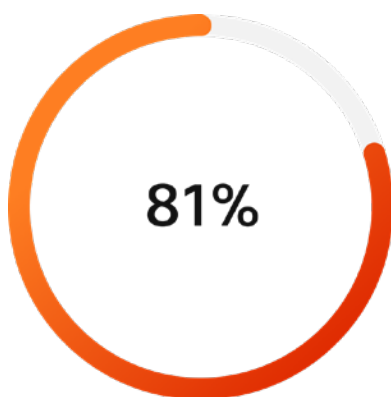
As we mentioned previously, in-person events made a huge comeback in 2022 and will likely remain popular in 2023. But that doesn't mean hybrid events are going away.



**43% of event industry professionals love hybrid events and say having a virtual offering is a must-have**

We still live in a hybrid world. In fact, most large in-person events have a digital component like a mobile event app. Incorporating digital elements into an in-person event essentially makes the event hybrid, whether you choose to call it hybrid or not.

No matter how you're hosting your event, event tech should be top-of-mind, and a mobile event app is critical for making in-person and virtual attendees feel engaged and connected.



**81% of event organizers have seen improvements and usability in event tech since 2019**

When you are in a sea of people at an event, it can be hard to meet others or to even know what's happening and where. Event tech provides a seamless way to connect and consume content, as well as create a positive attendee experience. With a mobile app, you can leverage features such as attendee connections, video breakout rooms, and direct messaging to help attendees feel more connected.





## Webex Events tips for success

- 1 Use a [mobile event app](#) to host extra resources like on-demand videos and free content downloads.
- 2 Help facilitate long-lasting connections between in-person and hybrid event attendees by encouraging them to connect and network via a mobile event app.

- 3 Incorporate a mobile event app into in-person events from the very beginning. If something happens and you must switch to a virtual format, you'll have everything you need available.
- 4 Use an end-to-end event management platform that powers the event from start to finish and avoid having to piece together multiple tools to form a cohesive experience.





# With these key event trends in mind, we hope you feel equipped to create successful and impactful events in 2023 and beyond.

As you plan and execute your events, remember to stay up to date on the latest trends and technologies and consider how you can incorporate them into your strategy. By staying ahead of the curve and adapting to the evolving needs of your attendees, you can create truly memorable and meaningful events.

[socio.events](https://socio.events)