

Ep 128: How Virtual Events Can Spark your B2B Marketing

with Jonathan Kazarian, Founder & CEO of Accelevents

- You grow your credibility as a thought-leader.
 - We may have new lenses, filters, approaches, experiences or tools, but the concepts of what most of us do have been around for a long time.
 - A key way of differentiating is by becoming a recognized thought-leader. When people believe you know what you are doing, trust is built. And a way you show you have your pulse on the industry is to host an event.
 - You elevate your stature and status by taking the lead on the topic you are focusing your event on. This is true even if you are just the curator. This is a big way many business coaches and consultants have built their practice, by being curators. It makes sense that curation has clout.
- Creates a comfortable space for building relationships.
 - Thought you would think virtual is a lot more in-personal, it can be anything but. There is something really interesting happening in the world of virtual. Just like our kids can be just as happy if not happier face-timing, group chatting, snap chatting their friend versus seeing them in person, many people (especially introverted ones) find engaging virtually to be freeing. More apt to be themselves. There is a veil of anonymity to it where you can passively engage and still feel part of something. People adding comments and chatting during talks. Making connections based on what's brought up in the chat with complete strangers. Feels intimate and it builds community. That never happens in live keynotes except in secret when you are texting the people you came with about the stupid thing the person just said.
 - Not to mention, once in the virtual space, many who participate are more apt to adopt virtual tools that facilitate engagement. Where as in live events, people are less likely because they expect the connections to happen when they see people in person. So, the amount of community you can build is hampered to your sphere of live engagement.
- Can be more economical and easier to facilitate, which means you can have more of them.
 - Before, you had to count on that one big event to do a lot of heavy lifting, now you can sub-divide your effort over multiple events creating more opportunities to have connections with your target customers and clients. Now you can have series content or hit on different areas of your expertise and offerings.
 - And when you partner with a platform like Jonathan's that can manage all the operations and logistics in a one-stop shop, you can focus more on creating the event and its content which is more important for your business.
 - It is also an easier way to disseminate your content as people are consuming it in the forum in which they can download it. Versus collecting brochures, etc from booths, or waiting for the links when the event is over.
 - This is actually what we do in the world of PR to generate new news and keep us top-of-mind with journalists as well as those they influence. Giving them value in the moment to write their stories and because you give them that value, they keep coming back. It is like a fire you keep throwing kindling on that continues to burn versus a bonfire that seems really impressive but burns out quickly because you can't keep it fueled.
- Maximizes attendance by reducing barriers to commitment.
 - The three biggest barriers to live events are usually: cost, travel and time commitment.
 - Since virtual events generally have less pass through costs, you now have more flexibility in the cost of the event. This now becomes a strategic choice based on who you want to attend and how many you want to attend. And because there are no physical rooms, you don't have to worry about capacity.
 - You cut down on the cost and time of traveling as well as the other costs of being away from home or the office.
 - Time commitment is the double-edged sword. Some would say that live events are more beneficial for capturing and hold an audience. But one look at the corridors of people taking calls, doing some emails, or actually coming late and leaving early to accommodate other work matters, and I would say I don't think live events are any better at creating a captive audience than virtual events. It is solely based on the value of the content.
 - So, expect people to come in and out, multi-task, skip portions and plan your agenda and content accordingly.

