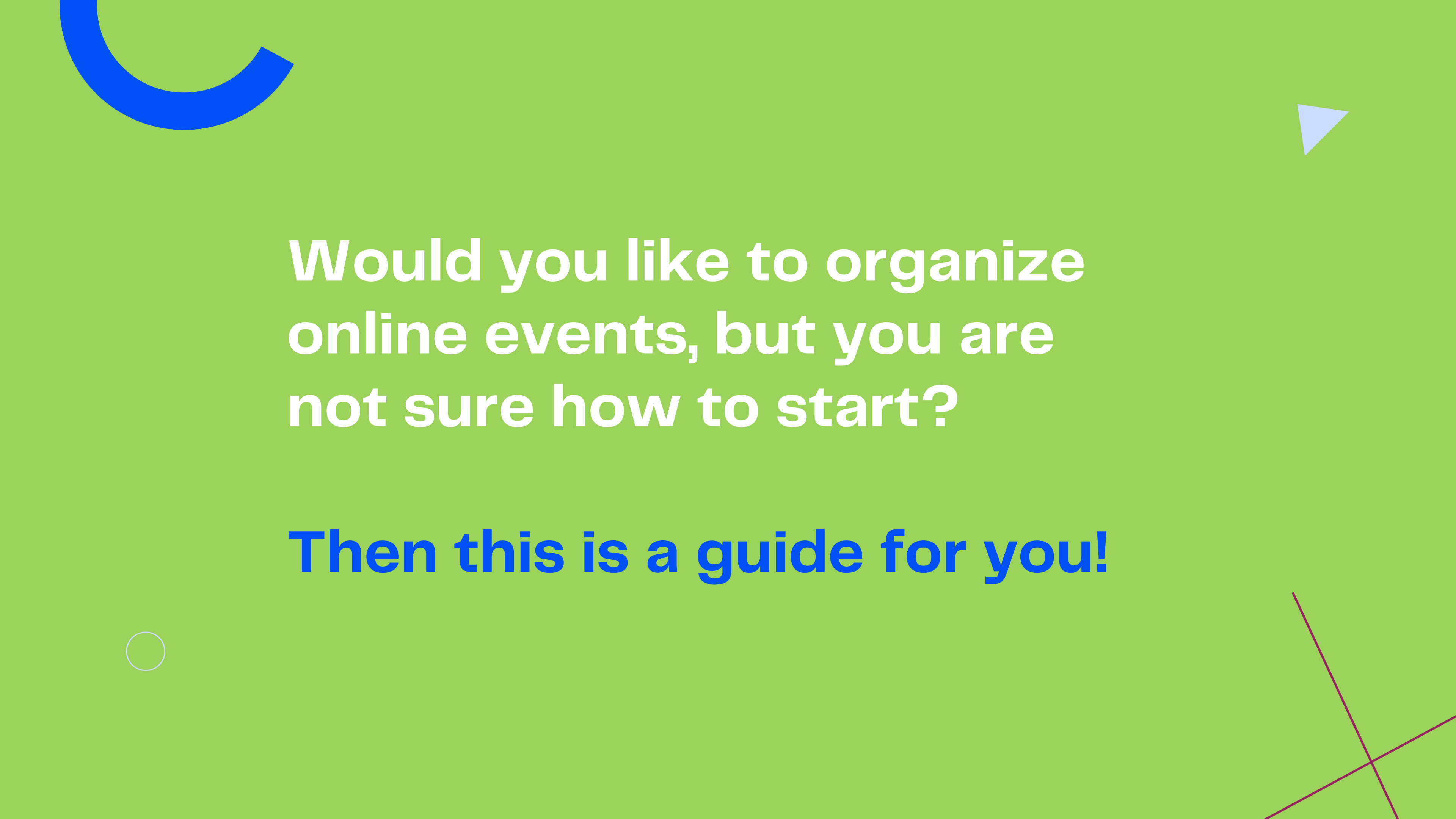




TIPS AND TRICKS ON HOW TO DO EVENTS ONLINE





**Would you like to organize
online events, but you are
not sure how to start?**



Then this is a guide for you!



Have you also attended more online events than ever before as a consequence of the current COVID-19 pandemic? Did you discover the many opportunities that come with organizing events online? Digital channels can allow us to connect and discuss with people from all around the world.

However, far from all online events are engaging and exciting to be a part of. Maybe you struggled to follow some online session and turned off your camera and took time to answer some emails while you followed a webinar? Maybe you found it difficult to know if you could ask questions, if you should use the camera or perhaps felt it was stressful to speak into the camera and not really know who is listening.

So, what is the secret behind a successful online event? We are by no means leaders of online events however, throughout the pandemic, we have had to adapt. This tool entails some tips and tricks on how we went about organizing online events, we hope that they can be useful guide for you too. This guide is not an exhaustive guide but can provide you with some key considerations for what you can do before, during and after the online event to ensure that it reaches your ambition and purpose.



GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS



- Choose a concise program to ensure that your participants don't lose interest (usually, maximum 2 hours);
- Ensure that the event is interactive and don't solely rely on a 'lecture-style' methodology;
- A popular idea for planning an event is to imagine it as a dramaturgy: introduce the 'why', then the 'what', then the 'how' and end with a lot of 'energy' of the session (Brotte 2020);
- Understand the audience (consider who will be attending, what are their interests, challenges and goals of attending this webinar) and adapt your online event to connect to their needs and interest (Eventbrite 2020);
- Keep in mind that most work related to arranging events happens before the events take place so ensure that you give yourself enough time to prepare.

PREPARATION

WHAT TO DO BEFORE THE EVENT



01 Content preparations

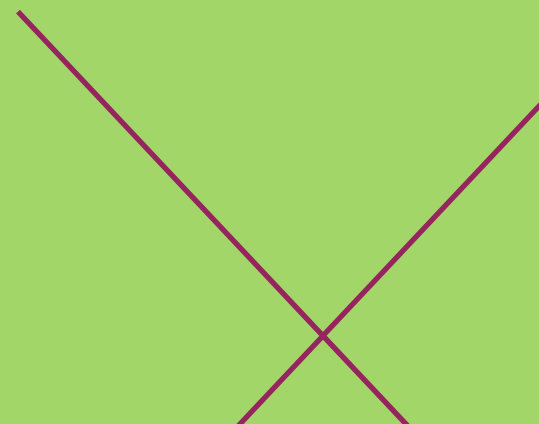
- Consider the content of your event to be the most important part – this will be the reason why people would like to attend. Spend enough time to think about what you would like to achieve and how it can be done in the format of an online event:
 - Consider what is the purpose and aim of the event, and consider the ambition level that you would like to achieve (Brotte 2020);
 - Choose the most suitable format for achieving your intended purpose (do you want to have a panel, 1 guest speaker, Q&A, an interview etc.) (Eventbrite 2020)
 - Decide on the detailed methodology of the event, a good idea could be to google and attend different types of webinars available so you can decide what you like and test it out
 - Include interactive elements such as questions, a poll etc., for the audience to get involved in the event (Eventbrite 2020);
- Write a detailed script of how the event will be (Brotte 2020);



02 Preparing the speakers and people helping out with the events



- If you decide to have speakers and a moderator in your event, the selection of them is important as you need to ensure that they can help you to achieve your intended outcome of the event. A good way of communicating your vision of the event is to provide all speakers with a briefing note beforehand as it will help them to prepare/decide what to focus on. Try to do individual meetings first and then ensure that all speakers are all gathered before the event (for example 30 min prior to the start) to address potential last minute issues;
- If you have many elements to your event, a good idea could be to organize a 'practice run' with your guest speakers for them to login to the platform and test the various functions you will be using during the event (Tucker 2020)
- A good way of foreseeing how the event will turn out is is to ask speakers to send their presentations to you beforehand. If you have the presentations, you also have a back-up should the speaker be unable to share their presentation during the event;
- Try to avoid lengthy presentations as it often makes it difficult to keep the participants interested.



03 Communication preparations I

- Create a visual identity of your event to guide you in your communication on social media etc. but also for participants to recognize your events. Once this identify has been decided (hashtags, colors, shapes, tone etc.), make sure to stay coherent and keep it until the end;
- If you start from scratch and do not have a big network of people to invite as participants to your event, it can be a bit difficult in the beginning but here are some tips for how you can attract people in an easy way;
 - Attend events on similar topics to promote your own event;
 - Target organizations and key people active in the topic of your event and ask them to promote your event in their networks;
 - Promote your event on social media and perhaps with a blog post and/or a small video promoting your event;
 - It's important to send reminders to potential participants in your events. However, do not overwhelm people with social media posts and emails, try to set a good and regular level of communication;
- Consider if you need to send some communication to the participants before the event to introduce them to the topic;

03 Communication preparations II

- Send a final reminder about the event the day before or in the morning of the event;
- Make sure to be able to keep in contact with your participants of the event, of course, adherent data protection regulations like the GDPR. Here are some ideas of how you could do it;
 - Create a database of the contacts, perhaps using an Excel list. This way, you can send them updates and invitations to new events;
 - A good idea could be to have a registration process so that you can control the size of your audience, several of the programs offers tools for this. As much as you can, try to personalize your emails for more effectiveness.



04 Technical preparations

- Consider which digital platform you will use and test it to make sure that you feel comfortable navigating it (e.g., Zoom, Skype, GoToMeeting, Teams). Do a bit of research of the different platforms to find one with functions that can benefit your purpose;
- Try and test out the platform and the different functions you would like to use before the event;
- A good idea could be to conduct a test run of the events with your colleagues;
- Ensure that you will have a stable Internet connection;
- Consider that some of your participants may join the session via their mobiles so ensure that for example presentation slides are don't have too much content on them (Eventbite 2020);
- If you have speakers who will deliver presentations, it's often easier to let them have the control of their presentations, to change slide etc.

During the event

- Start of the event with something exciting, maybe a question to the audience? (Eventbrite 2020);
- Don't panic if you have a technical glitch, sometimes it happens and try to solve it in a calm phase;
- There could be issues emerging that are beyond your control or perhaps the event will take another turn than you expected, so it's important to be flexible, sense the room and go with the flow;
- If you have some people helping you with the event, it could be a good idea to ask someone to be in charge of the chat functions and another to deal with potential technical errors.







After the event

- Track your results and send out a survey based on the aim and purpose of your event. Check with your participants, did you achieve what you wanted?
- If you had already set up a website and social media channels, it's always worth to check the impact of the event on your communication channels through the analytics and insights tools available on the social media applications;
- Consider your events as starting points of something new and exciting rather than the end point;
- Think about ways that you can engage your participants also after the event – perhaps your event can be the start of a new digital community involving people sharing the same interest.

YOU GOT THIS!







Remember that sometime with event planning, things can go wrong – and that's OK!

A good way of planning ahead and calming your nerves for an event can be to try to foresee challenges and think of solutions for them. For example, try to have a back-up speaker in mind should your speaker cancel in last minute, make sure that you are not the only person managing the technical part of the event – just in case your Internet breaks down. Most importantly, have fun and enjoy your event!

Stay motivated = you are at the beginning of an exciting entrepreneurship adventure and your efforts will pay off!



External references

Brotte, T (2020) “Lugn – det går att göra bra digitala evenemang”. Web article. Published: 2020-03-14. Available [here](#) (Swedish).

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Tucker, C (2020) at EU Startups “10 steps to plan a successful online event”. Web article. Published 2020-04-27. Available [here](#).

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