Planning a Virtual Event

Last Modified on 09/04/2026 1:35 pm EDT

Virtual Events are a way to conduct larger gatherings with more control than a standard virtual meeting can provide. Events can be added to your account by a Wharton Computing administrator.

If you are unable to access an Events license of your own, you may have the option of being added as a host to an Events Webinar created by our Event Support team, please consult Classroom Technology for more information.

We recommend limiting your events to 1,000 participants. Events larger than this may incur charges. Contact Wharton Computing for a consultation.

When to Use Virtual Events

Use Events for:	Use a Meeting for:
Events larger than 200 participants, including presenters and moderators.	Informal events or team meetings.
Controlling and tracking attendance.	Broadcasting to a large audience, via social media streaming, without the need for closely monitored interactions.
Structured interaction between presenters and attendees.	Options for informal interactions, realtime chats and breakout sessions.

Events Features

Some of the features that are often used at Wharton include:

- Public or Private meeting invites and links
- Event registration
- Video/Audio interaction
- Chat
- Raise hand
- Polling
- Q&A
- Recording
- Chat transcripts and attendance reports

Roles

In the Virtual Events world there are four roles:

- Meeting Organizer
- Moderator

- Presenter
- Attendee

Best Practices for Meeting Organizers

Below are some best practices for managing the technical aspect of your Virtual Event.

- **Plan properly** - Work through each section of this article, no matter the size of your event.
- **Invite at least 2 moderators** - There are too many details for one person to manage effectively. At least one of the moderators should be fairly tech savvy and familiar with Virtual Events. Training can be provided upon request.
- **Conduct a test event** - Hold a dry run with all presenters and moderators at least two days prior to the scheduled event. This will help work out all the kinks and get everyone familiar with the platform.
- **Create a production timeline** - A production timeline is your agenda with technical cues written in where appropriate; it is very specific and detailed. The technical cues include, but aren't limited to:
    - When to mute/unmute a presenter
    - Q&A Sessions
    - When to initiate a poll, along with the name of the poll
    - Using/recognizing verbal cues for significant transitions
    - Recording the name of the moderator assigned to a planned task
- **Upload videos in advance** - Anyone sharing videos will need to upload them to the meeting rather than embed them into a presentation. Upload times vary depending on video length. We recommend uploading videos **at least 30 minutes before your TEST event**. Do not wait until the day of your event to upload videos.
- **Join using the Events app** - All Moderators and Presenters must join with the events app. This app is not the standard meetings app; be sure to recommend presenters and moderators download it ahead of time.
- **Schedule your presenter arrivals** - All presenters should not arrive at the same time. Instead schedule their arrivals in staggered 15 minute intervals before the event and have a moderator ready to help them check their audio, video, content sharing, and any video content they may present.

Before Scheduling the Event

After you've reviewed the best practices, it's time to start the planning process. Planning for a virtual event is similar to planning an on-site event in many ways, therefore, much of the event planning found in the MarComm Event Toolkit is relevant.

Click **Read More** for a list of questions you and the event planning team should think about and answer before you schedule an Event.

Before the Dry Run

Preparation is the key to running a smooth event, and we recommend you stage a dry run before your event. Click **Read More** for a list of tasks to complete prior conducting this dry run.

Before the Event

Complete these additional tasks before your event;

- Approve all pending registrations.
- Distribute a final copy of the production timeline to involved parties.

- Verify all presenters and moderators have the latest version of their content ready.
- Verify all video content that will be shared has been uploaded to the event.
- Recommend attendees test their access and log in 48 hours before the scheduled event time.

Additional Assistance

- Review our informational articles:
  - Zoom: Using Zoom Webinars
  - Visit the Zoom website for more articles and videos.
- Contact your Wharton Computing Representative to request access to Events.

Request a consultation, training or ask additional questions by emailing class-tech@wharton.upenn.edu.