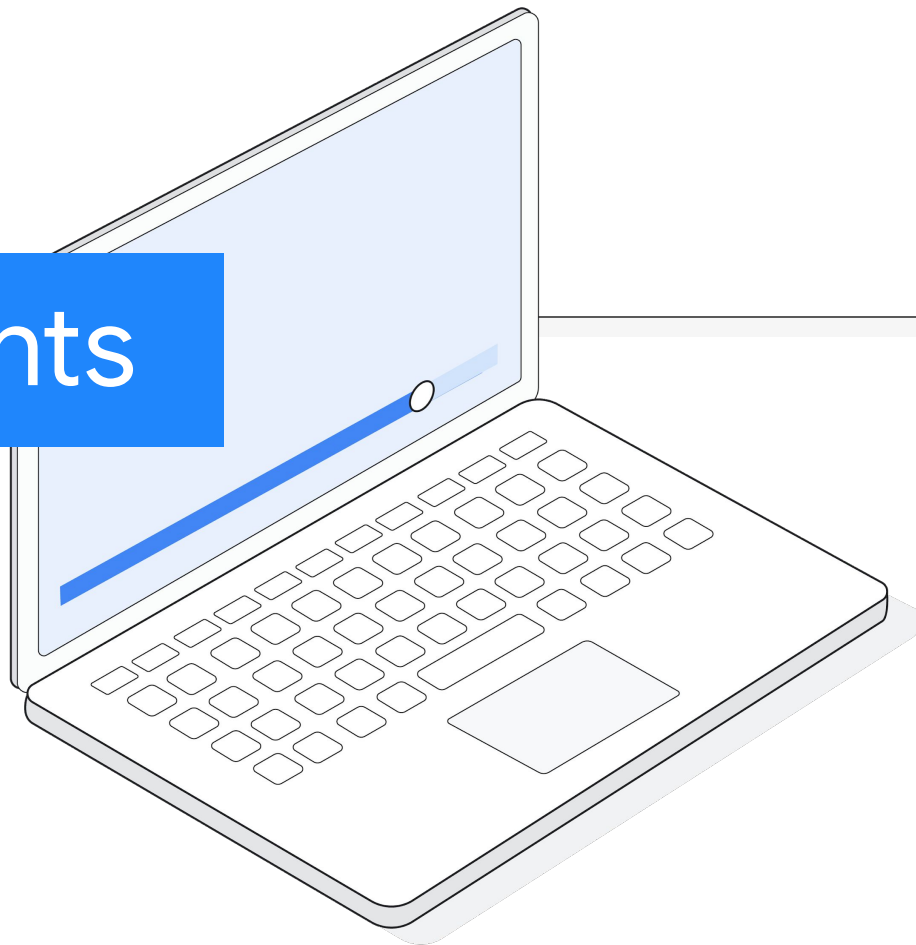


Taking Events Online



Hello! 🖐️

We know a lot of people are exploring taking their events online. So we created this playbook as a guide to navigate available Google resources and to share some principles on how to think experientially about your digital event.

Here's the thing ...



This guide is

- Tips and tricks to think about how events should change if they are digital only
- Some basic info on Google tools that can help
- Some basic guidance on content and comms

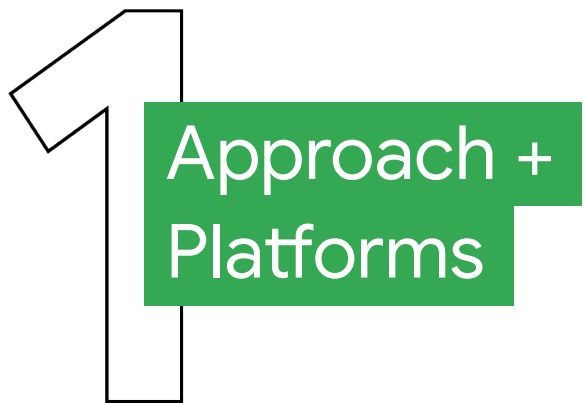


This guide is not

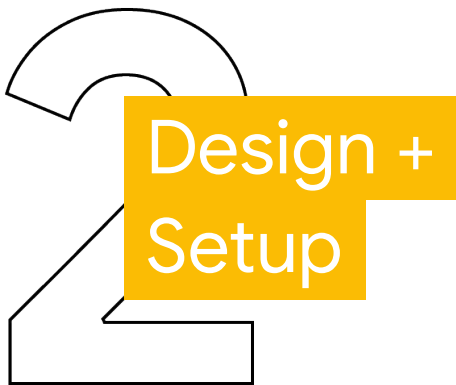
- A how-to manual for producing a digital event
- Set in stone
- A complete formula for every event
- Inclusive of all events and experiences

Here's what we'll be covering





Consider why users are attending your event. Prioritise key content and takeaways. Choose the platform or channel that best suits your event's needs for distribution.

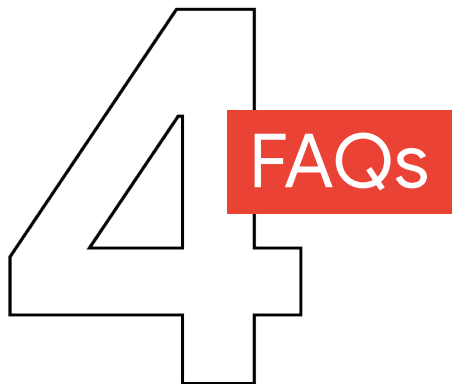


Design and layout can make a huge difference in creating a set that feels inviting and informative, **and — most importantly — makes your content sing.**

3

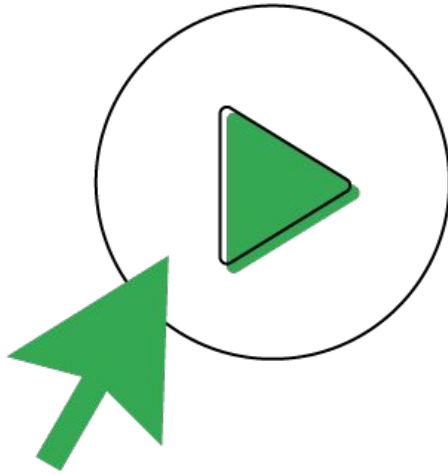
Interactivity + Engagement

Consider interactivity and engagement in every content-making decision. Simply live streaming your originally planned event may not make the best online experience.

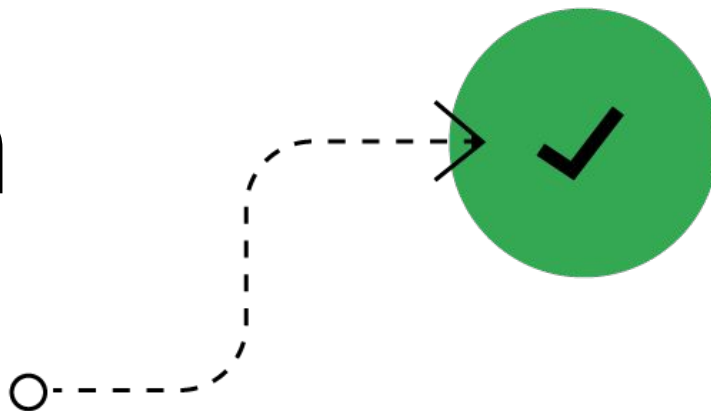


Considerations are different
when planning an event online.

Let's get started



Approach



First choose which
type of content is
right for your event.

Online event approach

There are many digital content options, each with their own pros and cons. It's important to start by picking the one that's best for your event.



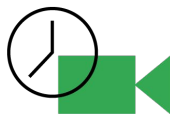
Real Time or True Live

Events are directly broadcast, or "live streamed," as they are happening, without opportunity for editing.



Rebroadcast or Live Playback

Events are recorded, minimally edited, and broadcast at a later time, but they may appear to be happening in real time.



Prerecorded

Events are captured, edited, and shared for viewing later. This type of content can be premiered or made available online to view at any time via video on demand (VOD). Content can be made to appear live, even if it's not, offering more flexibility.

Brevity is your friend

Consider things from a viewer's perspective.

Viewing an event at home — no matter which approach you take — won't be the same experience as viewing it live and in person. The more concise and direct your content can be, the better.

General timing guidance for an event with multiple components:

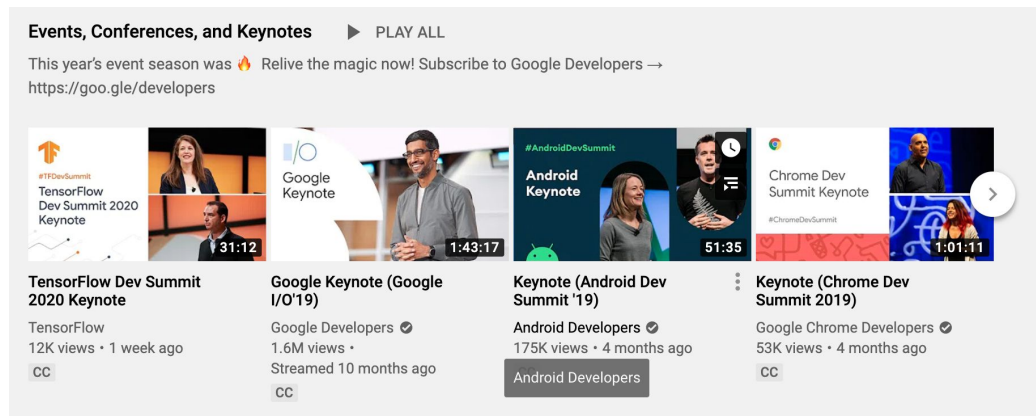
- Keep keynotes to 30 minutes or less.
- Don't ask anyone to tune in for more than 3 hours, max.
- Keep Q&As to 20 minutes or less.
- Keep breakouts or deep dives to 10 to 20 minutes.



Connectivity considerations

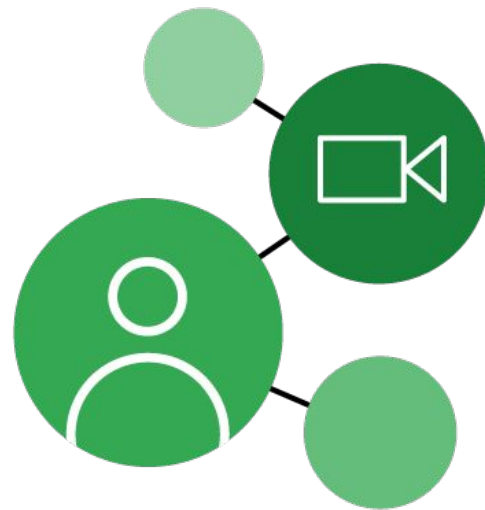
Is there a contingency plan for slower streaming? Varying Wi-Fi speeds should also be considered when creating online content. Can users dial in or watch later?

Consider post-event wrap-up materials that let viewers revisit key highlights. That could mean creating a playlist for viewers to watch later.



Example of post-event playlists

Platforms



So you've got your
content approach.
Now it's time to
choose the platform
that will make it sing.



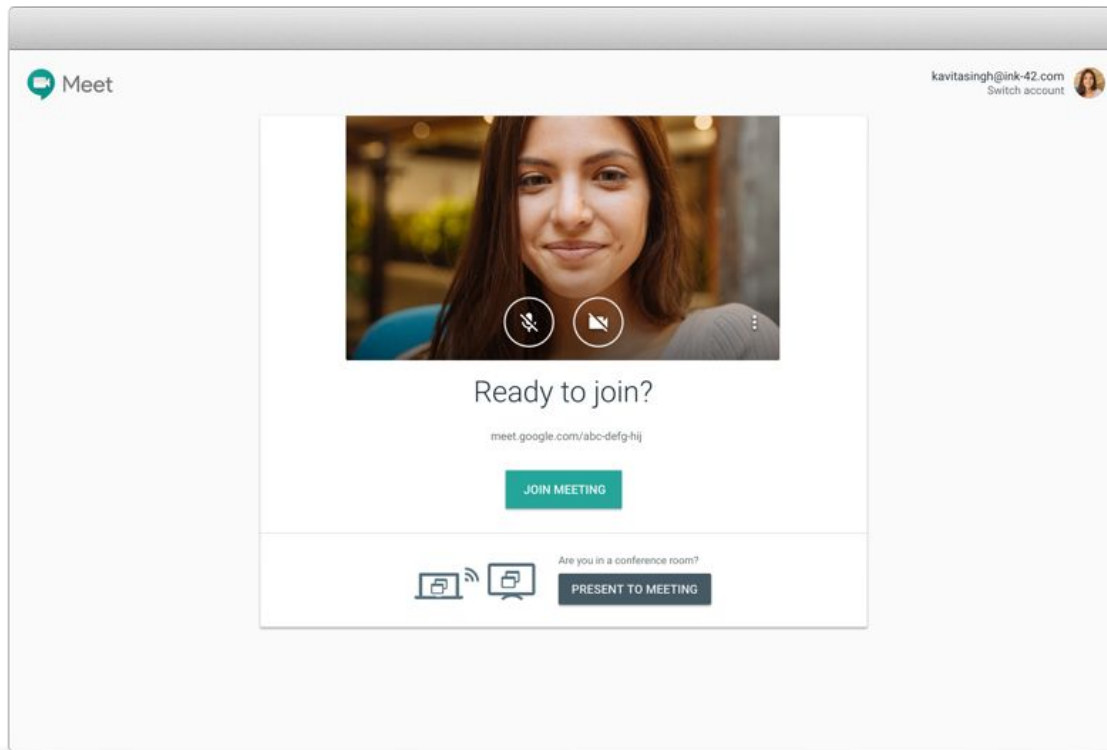
Hangouts Meet

Works well for team meetings or workshops where direct interactivity is required.

Can support real-time broadcast for up to 250 viewers, but make sure to test for bandwidth limitations beforehand.

Be mindful of audience management.

Facilitating conversation and turn-taking requires extra consideration virtually compared to in person.





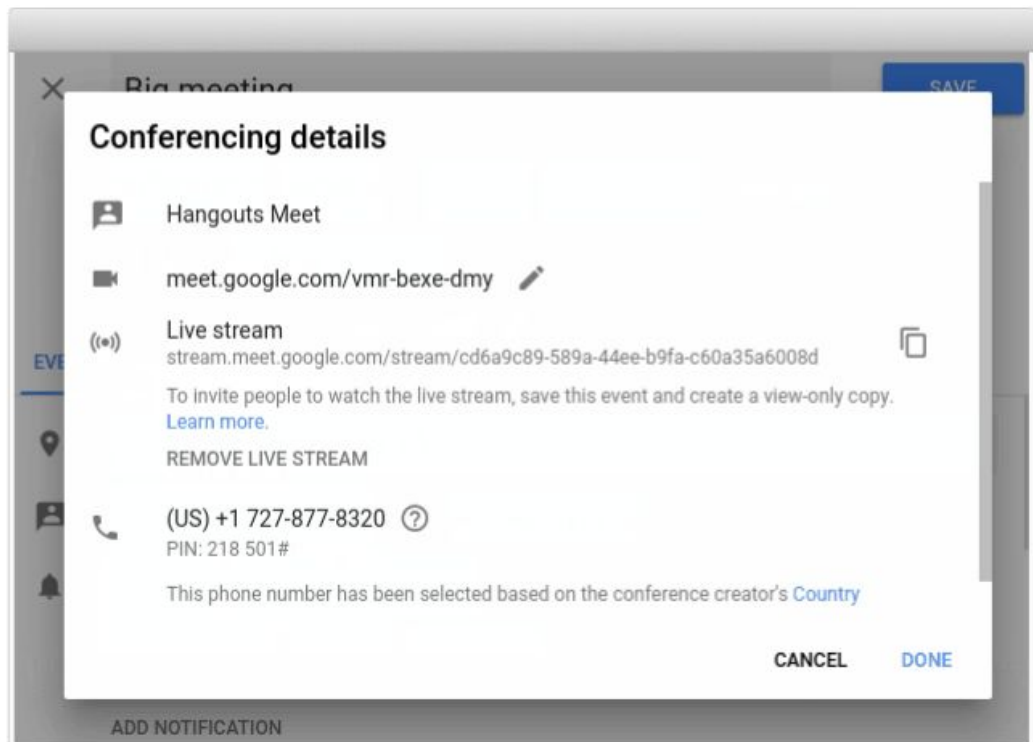
Hangouts Meet Live Stream

Works well for real-time,
one-way streams.

Supports real-time broadcast of up to 100,000. Viewers and speakers can be in multiple locations. The one-way stream means viewers won't interrupt as they come and go, but any interactivity would need to happen on a different platform.

Keep in mind, all viewers must be
on the same G Suite account.

All participants are required to have the same corporate account, so this is likely best for internal events.



[Learn more](#)



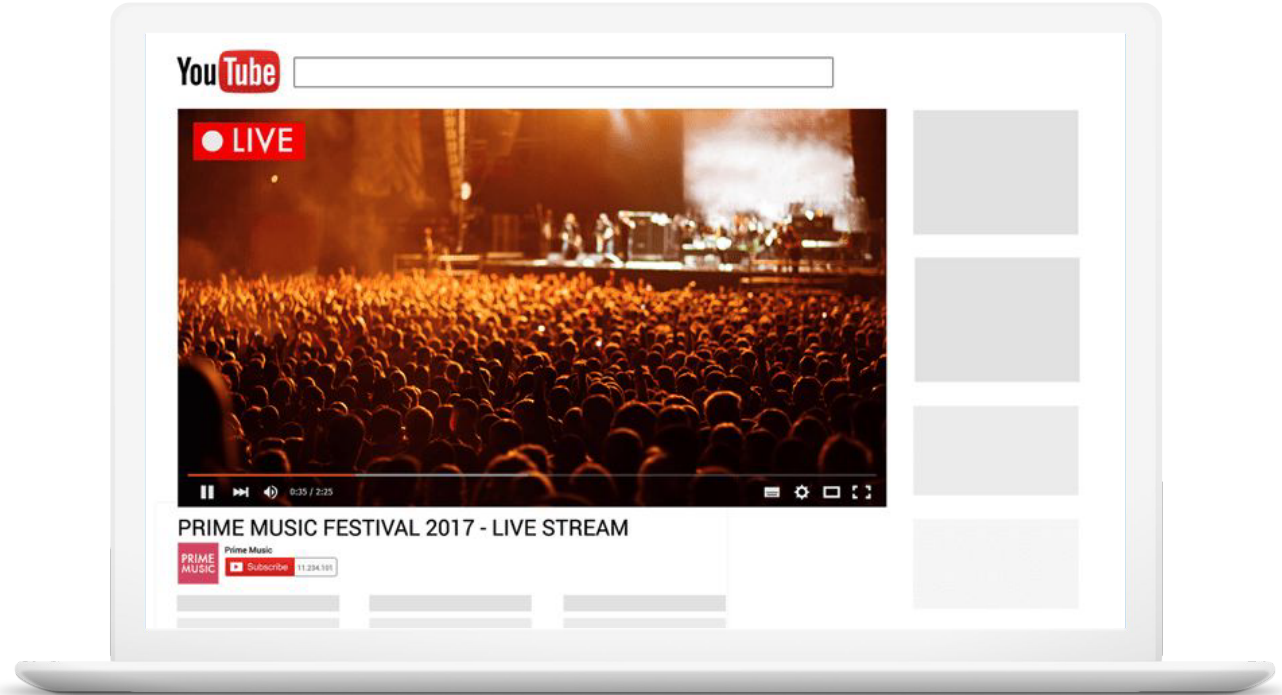
YouTube Live Stream

Works well for large reach,
external events.

Supports broadcast and engagements
with chat, subscribe, and comments.
It's best used for truly live content and
live playback content.

Be mindful of customisations
before going live.

Graphics, sound, and customisations
must be included prior to streaming.





YouTube Premieres

Lets viewers experience new content together.

It's great for turning the release of prerecorded content into an "event" without the ephemeral nature of real-time content.

Keep in mind branding opportunities on- and off-platform.

This tool lives on the YouTube platform, so if you wanted to brand the space around the video, you would need a custom website in which to embed it.





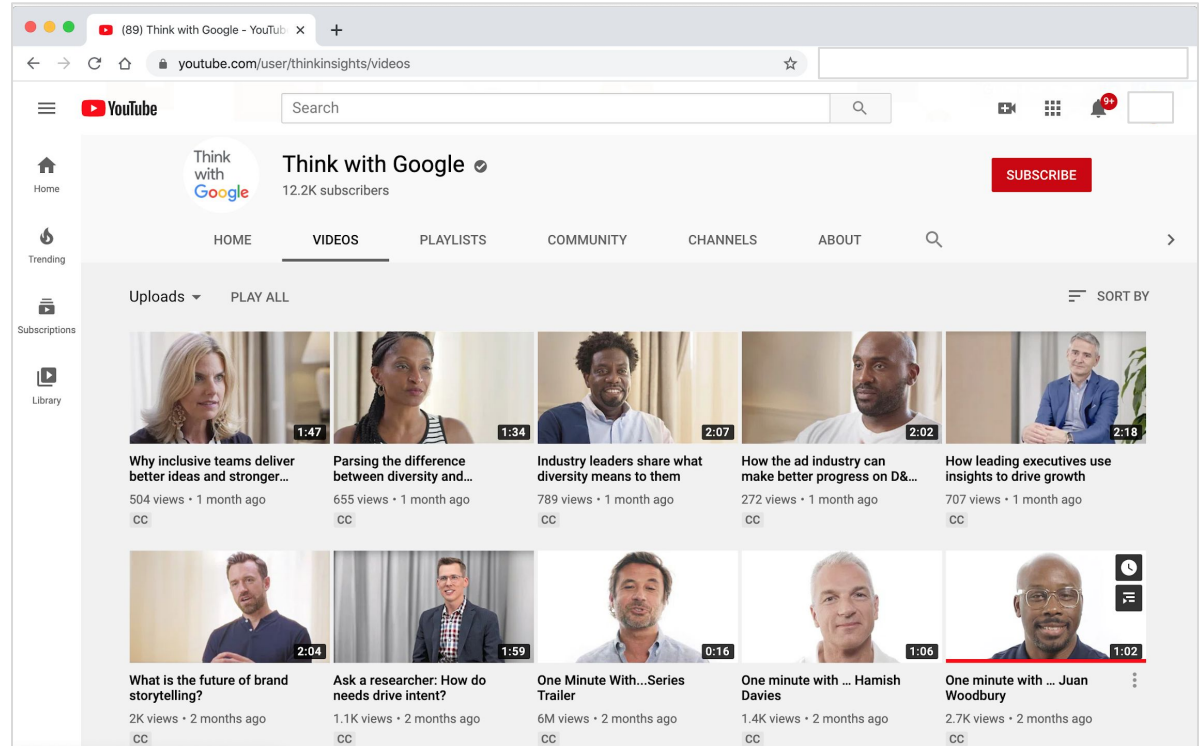
YouTube Channel

Works well for video on demand (VOD).

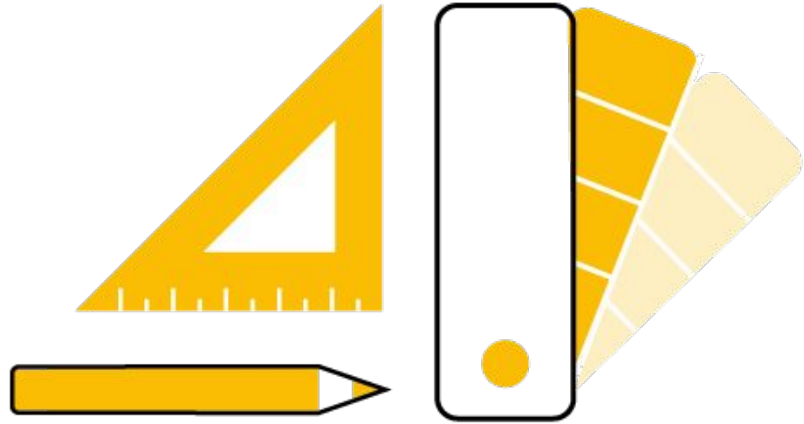
Also a great place to host content after any live events.

Example of ways to use YouTube channel and features:

- Pretaped YouTube Video
- YouTube Playlists
- Dedicated Event YouTube Channels



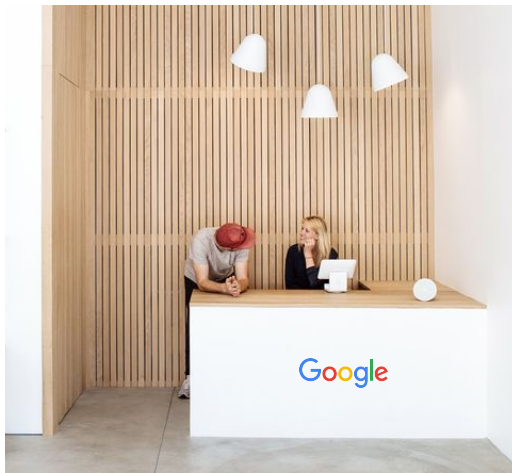
Design + Setup



Going online means
bringing your company
design & branding into
a digital space.

Look & feel

Consult your brand's design guidelines when thinking of building your set or establishing graphics. It is important to remain consistent in your approach to physical and digital design.



Graphic identity

A consistent graphic identity that matches the mood and tone of your event can keep the narrative and theme of your event cohesive.

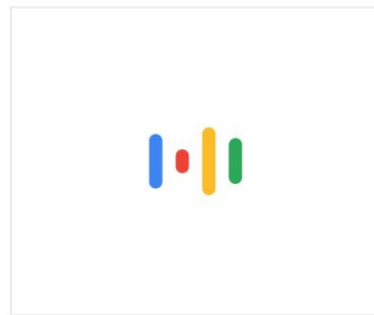
Graphic identity examples:

- A consistent colour palette
- A thematic set
- Pop-ups and titles

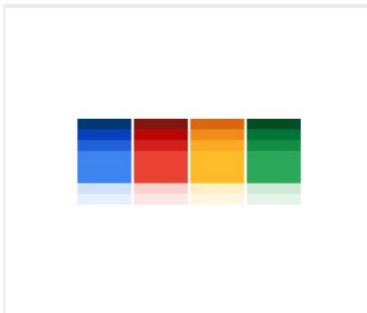
For example,
Google branding



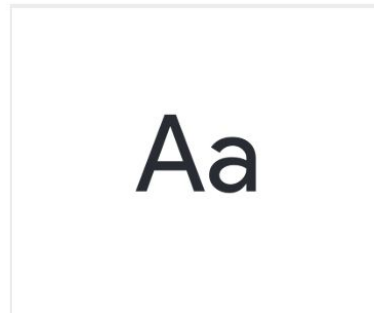
Logos



Identity elements



Color



Typography

The power of motion

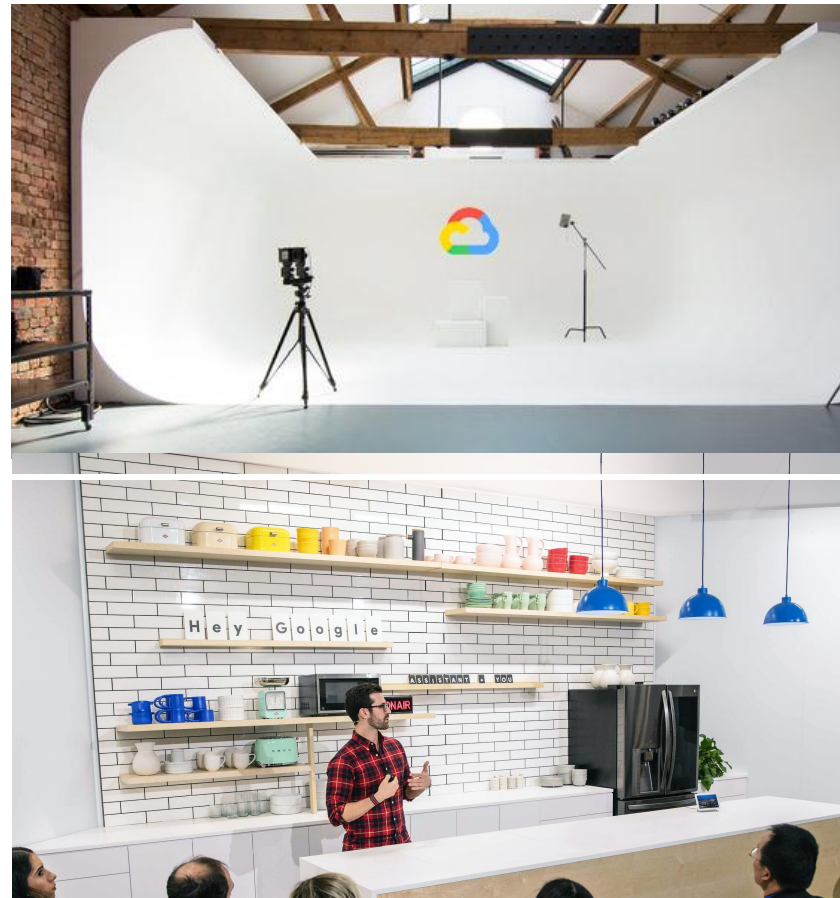
Eye-catching design in broadcast packages and motion templates can make content stand out, and be more engaging and ownable to the brand.

Here's how YouTube Music used a motion template to tie footage from New Year's Eve back to the brand.



Consider what works for your brand

At Google, we start with a simple set, then build from white to bring content centre stage and make graphics and presenters pop.



Examples of Google Set Design

Optimise for mobile

Smartphones are now the primary device chosen globally to watch online video. Whatever your setup, design with a smaller screen in mind.



Scrappy sets

Even a modest setup can feel professional. This series was shot with four Pixels, a white cyc (or seamless backdrop), and a sound and lighting person. The entire production fits in a hotel room.

Tips:

- Where possible, ask on-screen presenters to wear solid colors.
- Ensure lighting is set up for all skin tones to be accurately represented.

Pixel phones.



[Final result](#)

Example set from a Google shoot

Fun on set

Small touches like plants, fun props, and custom backdrops can make a simple setup less sterile. And why stop at a white cyc? Try switching up the location if a different environment helps tell your story.

Being unabashedly
scrappy with your set
can add charm.

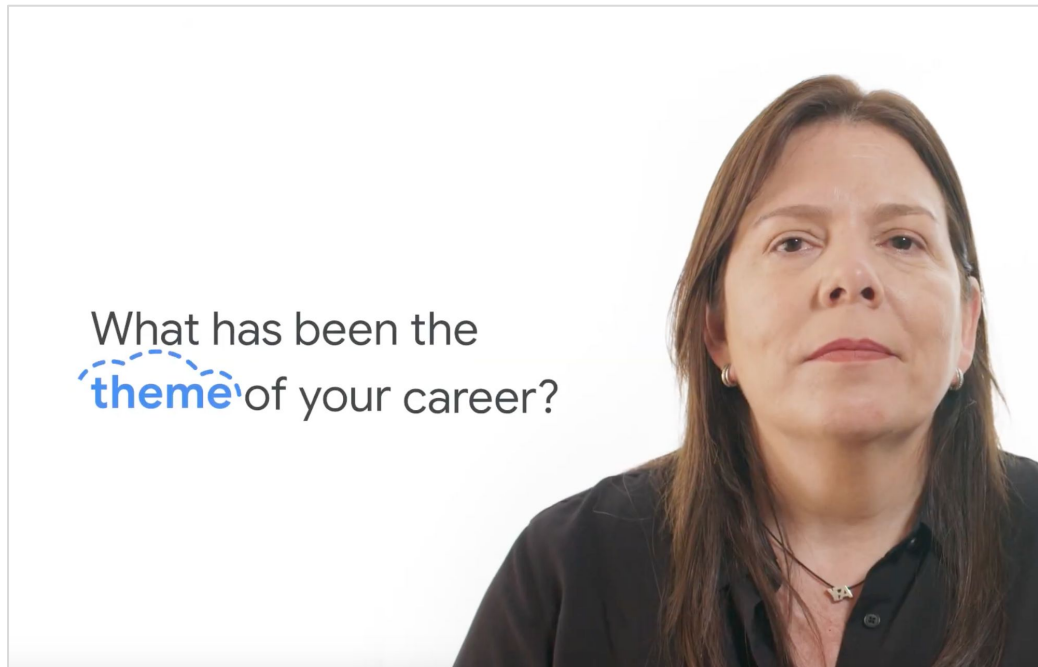


Example set from a Google shoot

Presentation delivery

If you can't have an audience, having your speaker interact with the crew or person behind the camera is a great way to add a sense of levity and humanity.

In [this video](#),
the presenter chats with
someone off camera.



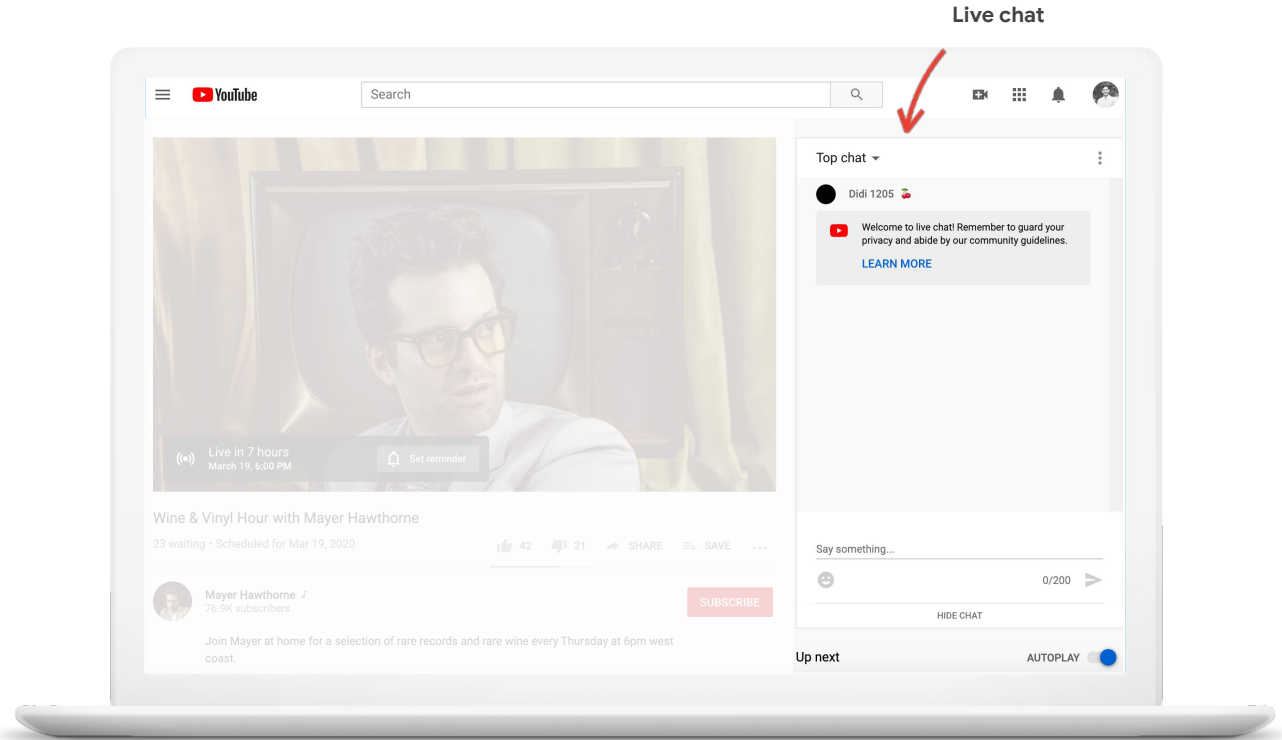
Example video from Think with Google

Interactivity + Engagement

Now think about how
to keep viewers
interested throughout
your online event.

If you're going to go live, give viewers a reason to tune in live. Being part of a real-time conversation makes events exciting and engaging. The following tactics can help up the engagement factor.

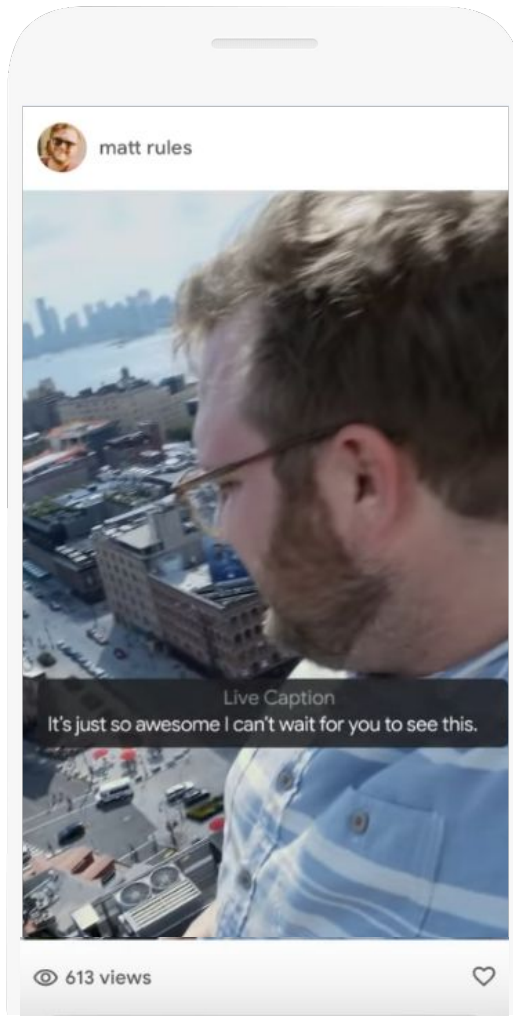
- Q&As
- Chat functionality
- Social media shout-outs
- Real-time competitions
- Gamification



Use inclusive practices to help people fully experience your event. Consider the following:

- Avoid strictly visual, noncontextual language, like "over here in this area." Not all viewers can see slides or videos.
- In meetings, think about multisensory cues for turn-taking.
- Use real-time closed captions if available on your platform, and/or get a remote sign language interpreter.
- Learn more about Hangouts [Meet Accessibility](#) and [YouTube Live Captions](#)

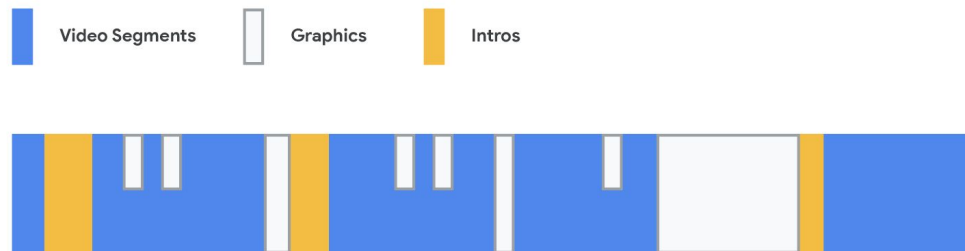
Turn on CC or Live Caption when possible.



Maintain interest and attention with visually interesting interstitials that break up the content using:

- Typography and titles
- Graphics and animations
- Photos and videos

Full Episode:



Content Structure

Intros set the stage with just enough context before jumping into the real story.

When setting up an engaging and inclusive event, it's important to **establish participation ground rules** up front for Q&As, demos, and breakouts, so your audience knows how and when to chime in.

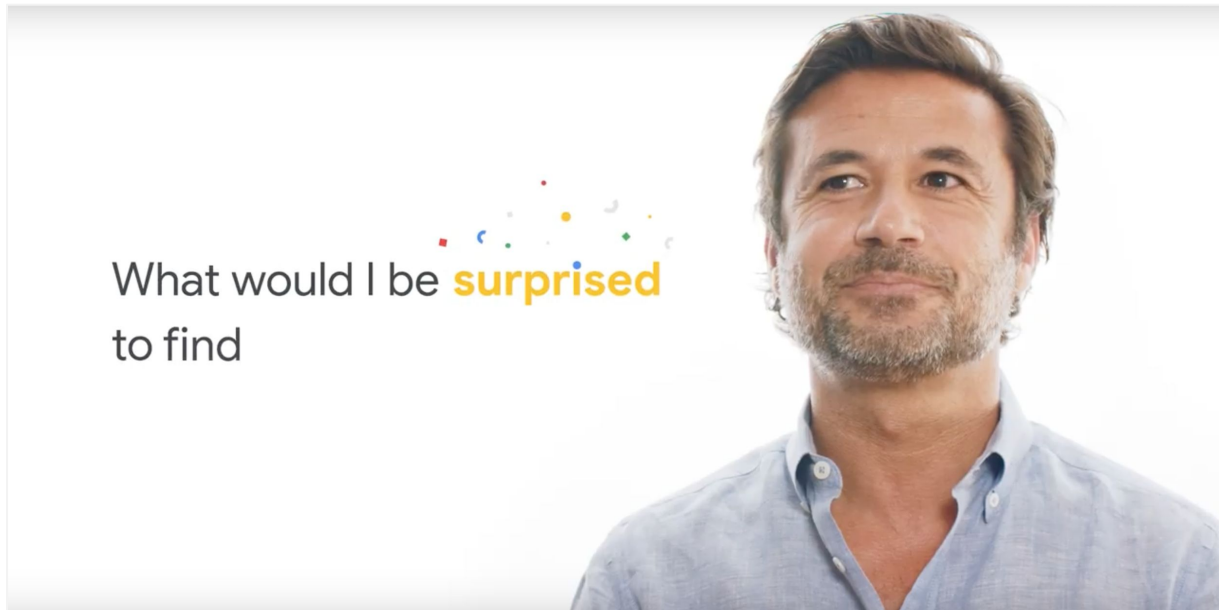
For example:

- Direct participants on where and how to ask questions.
- Let participants know at the event's start if there will be a live, structured Q&A at the end.



If you need to be super scrappy, own it. A video chat interview can make for an impactful and authentic film with simple add-ons, such as:

- Name and title overlays
- Colorful GVC backdrops
- Playful graphics
- Realistic UI representation



Here's an example
using playful graphics

An interactive game is a fun way for people to interact with each other remotely and an opportunity to entertain idle viewers before your live stream starts.



Example video from Think with Google, where the featured presenter interacts off-camera

At Google I/O 2018, we created World Draw,* an interactive game where viewers in the amphitheatre joined remote viewers to draw a world together.

FAQs

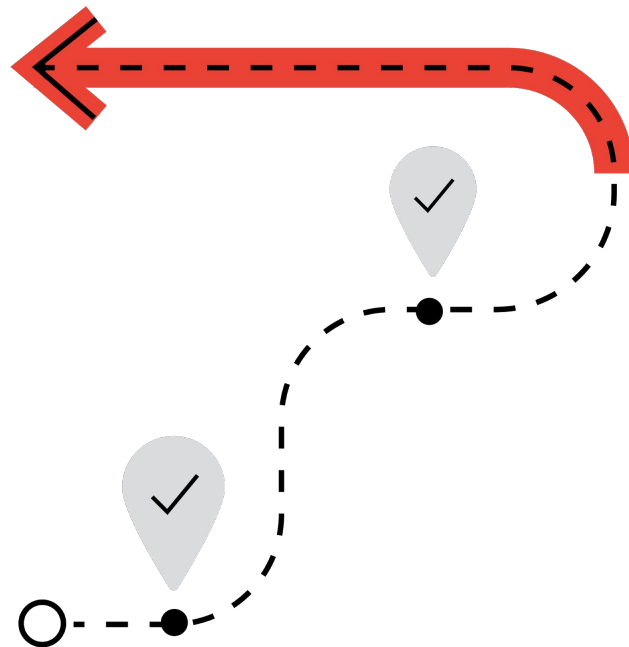


Whew! That was a lot.
But don't worry, there
are more resources
that can help.

What should I say if an event is changing course?

Attendee comms:

- One of the most important elements in adapting to change is clear, concise communication.
- Be transparent.
- Communicate regularly, but don't overdo it.
- Set up a comms channel for questions.



How can I promote my event?

Before the event

- Post staggered reminders counting down to your event. Consider user behaviour depending on the platform you're using. For example:
 - **Social handles:** Post about your event often, but don't overdo it.
 - **E-mail:** After an initial invitation, aim for one or two reminder emails max, one 48 hours prior and one on the day of the event.
- Share your streaming link with your attendees 48 hours prior to going live. Anything earlier than that is likely to be lost or forgotten.
- Create easily shareable visual assets (for example, a video trailer or poster) to post on your social media accounts.

During the event

- Create highlight clips during the event while it's still live to promote across different channels, like your social media handles.
- If this is an external event, create an official hashtag for the event to promote across networks, track, and engage.

After the event

Post an archive of the live event soon after completion. Create a video on demand playlist so attendees (and others) can rewatch and share out content.

What are the legal considerations?

Don't forget to reconsider your legal process if you are broadcasting to a wider audience.

Clearances

Music or other third-party content (like clips, photos, logos, video, etc.) used for your event must be cleared for all of the uses where your content will air for however long you'll be using the content.



Thanks!