



Gamification in virtual events

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One of the main challenges for organizing online events is to build an appropriate level of participant involvement. Why not use a proven tool that will help not only arouse the interest of participants before the event, but also ensure commitment throughout its duration?

Over the past few decades, gamification has been recognized as an effective method of encouraging innovation, productivity and commitment. Researchers, video game developers and educators have perfected gamification tactics; these are now extensively used in the education and training space. As we now know that digital events will stay with us forever, it's time to use the principles of gamification in online conferencing.

How does it work?

Gamification is the use of game elements and game design techniques, such as scoring and competition in a non-game context designed to engage people.

Scientists have shown that dopamine, the feel-good hormone, is released when we are rewarded for a specific action. Gamification focuses on giving participants immediate feedback in the form of virtual rewards (points, stickers, scoreboard, etc.) that generates positive emotions and keeps participants engaged.

Serotonin is another key hormone secreted by game elements such as badges and rewards and regulates our overall mood. Having a lot of serotonin makes you feel great while a drop in serotonin can make you feel awfully bad. Serotonin release can even be triggered by remembering past successes; even by just looking at your rewards - like checking your place on the event leaderboard - can make you feel better.

New ideas, new skills and new contacts are the hallmark of every good business event. But how do your attendees achieve these benefits - especially now that this event is virtual?

Your brain can only handle a certain amount of information at a time; scientists call it "cognitive bias." One way that gamification can help participants deal with cognitive load is by presenting knowledge in a more game-like and challenge-based format; this helps break down lessons into smaller chunks that are easier to learn and remember.

You can incorporate gamification elements into your event in many ways. Here are a few of them:

1. A little reward

Keep dopamine flowing by rewarding people for the desired forms of engagement. For example, if you want participants to visit all of your suppliers, you can create a digital passport or an interactive bingo card and invite them to complete it in order to participate in a lottery.

2. Create a team spirit

Add a competitive element to the event by assigning attendees to teams and groups that can be based on something simple like color, or can be related to the meeting content. Ask team members to work together to achieve a common goal or solve a problem. Small and medium teams are the best in this case.

3. Encourage self-expression



Let participants get creative with their profiles, give themselves nicknames and share fun facts. Provide a sense of autonomy by letting them choose which sessions to attend, or introduce a sense of random adventure by distributing codes that take delegates to previously unselected breakout rooms.

4. Encourage sharing on social media

Encourage action on social media. Cheer attendees to share their impressions of the event on social media to unlock rewards such exclusive content or access for special speakers. You can also raise money for charity by committing to donate a certain amount when participants' community posts reach a designated target.

5. Reward winners

Think about ways to celebrate the "winners" of the game at the event. Can you give them special access to VIPs? Do you share your winning moments on social media? Can you highlight attendees on a scoreboard that is updated throughout the event? Rewards can also include a digital bag of gadgets with product offers and discount codes.

Author: Anna Górska, Vice President of the Management Board of SKKP for International Cooperation, Board Advisor of Symposium Cracoviense, Positive Impact Events Ambassador, ICCA Board of Directors member

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