LiveWebinar®

SUCCESS STORY

LIVEWEBINAR x INFOSHARE 2020

CUSTOMER

Infoshare is the largest technology conference in Central and Eastern Europe. In 2020, this event well known to experts and technology fans was held in the form of an online conference as a result of the ongoing pandemic. The event itself has not lost its inspiring character, but even gained an advantage by offering many talks by experts with a worldwide reputation. The conference lasted 6 days and was filled with presentations from various specialist fields. Thanks to the use of a special tool, effective networking between attendees was also made possible.

infoshare

INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

Organizing a large IT trade fair and exhibition event in the times of a pandemic is a major challenge. In April 2020, 97% of the events in Poland were canceled or postponed due to restrictions related to COVID-19. At the same time, the event industry experienced an unprecedented crisis[1].

A similar fate befell trade fairs in the USA, where manufacturers and distributors generally meet with customers to conduct sales, as well as to present new technologies and provide on-site training - these too have been canceled. Examples of such events include USITT, Prolight + Sound, InfoComm, PLASA, LDI2020, and next year's edition of NAMM[2]. Let us remind you that back in February 2020, the famous Mobile World Congress trade show in Barcelona was also canceled[3].

According to the research conducted by PCMA in an occupational group, the majority of whom were decision-makers related to the event industry, as many as 88% of the respondents stated that they canceled, and 66% postponed their events in connection with COVID-19[4]. The same survey also confirmed that 7 out of 10 companies changed the nature of their events and orga-nized them online.

Around 2-2.5 months before the original planned date, we postponed the event to September. Then, we started to analyze the situation. At first, as I mentioned, we were thinking about holding the event in its regular format, then about making it hybrid, i.e. a mix of offline and online. But in the end we decided that Infoshare would be held en-tirely remotely - and this is what we focused

our efforts on." – Grzegorz Borowski, CEO of Infoshare[5]

Moving events to the online world has become a serious alternative to traditionally organized events and is currently becoming increasingly popular. It is a great opportunity for initiatives such as Infoshare, whose organizers have proven that they are able to quickly adjust to the new conditions both in the world and in the market.

BACKSTAGE

This is not the first time that LiveWebinar actively support-ed the Infoshare organization. A simi-lar thing already happened back in 2019, when the attendees were able to partic-ipate in the event remotely. At that time, Infoshare provided live streaming from its two biggest stages. Anyone who could not make it to AmberExpo and had registered prior to the event could watch the speeches broadcast straight from the "Inspire" and „Marketing". **This way, LiveWebinar successfully increased the group of Infoshare attendees by adding an Internet audience.**

We talked to Tomasz Pawul, COO of Infoshare, who is re-sponsible for organizing the event together with Grzegorz Borowski (CEO).

We used the LiveWebinar platform for the first time back in 2019 to stream talks from two Infoshare stages. The confer-ence was held at AmberExpo, and thanks to LiveWebinar, it was possible to provide live streaming for the participants who could not be there in person. We assessed this coop-eration as very positive. It helped us expand our customer

1. https://marketerplus.pl/teksty/artykul-z-wydania-drukowanego/czy-branza-eventowa-przetrwa-koronawirusa/
2. https://www.livedesignonline.com/business-people-news/2020-pandemic-impact-covid-19-live-events-industry
3. https://businessinsider.com.pl/technologie/mobile-world-congress-2020-odwolany/dtw3y14
4. https://www.pcma.org/covid-19-impact-events-industry-planners-survey-results/
5. https://mamstartup.pl/odwolanie-eventu-nie-wchodzilo-w-gre-zawiodlbym-tysiace-uczestnikow-i-zwolnilbym-zespol-grzegorz-borowski-infoshare

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base by offering an option for those who could not attend the event.

We also trialed LiveWebinar during a series of smaller Tech-3Camp webinars. We organized 5 such events together and had a very positive experience. After two or three rounds of talks with other providers, we decided to choose the LiveWebinar platform. - Tomasz Pawul, COO of Infoshare "

PROBLEM

The main obstacle was the inability to organize a fair and exhibition event in a regular format. After the official date of Infoshare 2020 was moved from May to September, there were legitimate concerns that the participants would not want to attend the event. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the whole team was in the finishing stage of preparations for the next edition of the conference.

" *We already had a lot of obligations towards our partners and attendees to whom we sold tickets. If we canceled Infoshare this year, we would have to refund all the money, go right back to the start, and come back next year with our event in the traditional format. But that would mean no income, going into "survival" mode, and ultimately having to lay off the whole team – and we didn't want it to come to that. – Grzegorz Borowski, CEO of Infoshare* "

" *In the middle of March 2020, we were surprised by the first lockdown, which took away the opportunity to organize the conference as we had planned it. We initially moved the event for September, hoping to be able to meet in person - but we all know how that ended. The epidemiological situation in May, June and July left us with no hope for the conference to take place offline. We were thinking about organizing the event in a hybrid format, and then we made the final decision that we were going completely online. - Tomasz Pawul, COO of Infoshare* "

Infoshare needed a versatile and unified platform to host this year's online conference, one solution that would handle the entire event and at the same time be easy to use for the attendees.

SOLUTION

The solution was based on the comprehensive implementation of the LiveWebinar platform embedded in the Infoshare domain, as well as the creation of dedicated rooms for individual stages, stands, and activities performed during the event.

" *Infoshare is too big a venture to take a ready-made solution from the market, set it up in half an hour, and then launch. We decided to expand the video streaming solution of the Gdańsk-based company, LiveWebinar, with our existing conference system. We did it in such a way that the whole time the participant feels they are participating in the conference in the same space, that they register and log in the same place, and then use our entire offer: they watch the talks on individual stages, "walk" around a virtual expo, or use matchmaking. We developed all this especially for the online version, creating a coherent, comprehensive system. I'm very proud of it, I'm glad that it worked because it was a very difficult task. - Grzegorz Borowski, CEO of Infoshare[6]* "

The LiveWebinar API and External Live Streaming function allowed sharing individual streams in the rooms and the creation of necessary stands and stages.

ROOMS   STANDS   STAGES

LiveWebinar's virtual stand

6. https://www.gdansk.pl/wiadomosci/infoshare-2020-od-nowa-od-wersji-klasycznej-do-online-w-trzy-miesiace-rozmowa,a,179708

Moving the event online gave speakers the opportunity to appear on virtual stages, whereas its organizers got the chance to invite speakers who were previously unavailable, for example due to the cost of flights and remuneration. This is why the agenda of this year's edition included many well-known names of world-class specialists related to technology, business, and marketing.
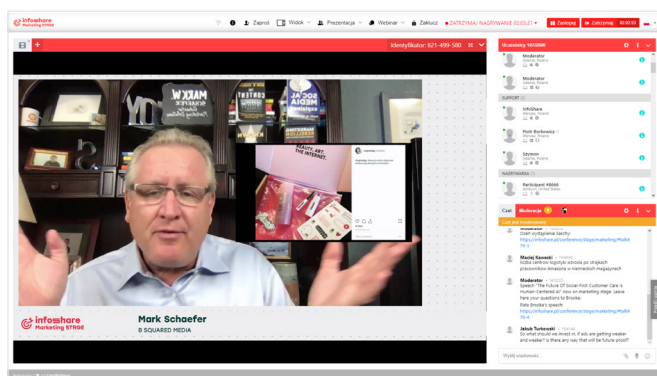
Speech: Mark Schaefer from B Squad Media

COOPERATION WITH LIVEWEBINAR

Infoshare needed a partner with whom they could fully integrate their website system, who was responsible for the other parts excluding the live streaming of videos and talks; the organizers wanted to fully integrate everything within one system.

We were looking for a flexible, configurable tool with a well-defined API that met our requirements, so we could fully integrate. In the case of LiveWebinar, we completely succeeded. - Tomasz Pawul, COO of Infoshare

One of the aspects that helped the organizers plan the event were the configuration capabilities of LiveWebinar. The nature of the Infoshare conference required a great deal of flexibility and the implementation of a strictly defined concept. Moreover, the challenge was to integrate the existing IT tools used for payment and ticket distribution, as well as the so-called "matchmaking", a tool enabling networking between participants. Competitive solutions did not offer such a possibility, which was an important argument in favor of choosing LiveWebinar as a conference partner.

How did Infoshare use the LIVEWEBINAR API?

Thanks to the extensive API provided by LiveWebinar, Infoshare was able to realize its project goals. First of all, the access to applicable API functions enabled dynamic creation of matchmaking rooms. This allowed for effective networking by using a database of attendees who expressed their willingness to contact other live stream viewers.

dynamic creation of
MATCHMAKING ROOMS

The second way of using the API was to obtain appropriate access privileges for individual participants. Infoshare offered five different packages that were also admission tickets to the event. Each package had slightly different access rules to the 11 stages created by the event organizers.

5 PRICE PACKAGES
with various access options

The implementation of the project using the LiveWebinar API made the navigation and use of the virtual conference space extremely clear and simple for attendees.

*Thanks to the right configuration in advance and the use of API, these access privileges were properly acquired and granted. It was really cool and at the same time **we were able to fully integrate our registration and login system with the webinar system - so that each participant, after logging in once, could access both the information part about the agenda, speakers, match-making, partners, Expo or Startup Expo, as well as webinar rooms.** - Tomasz Pawul, COO of Infoshare*
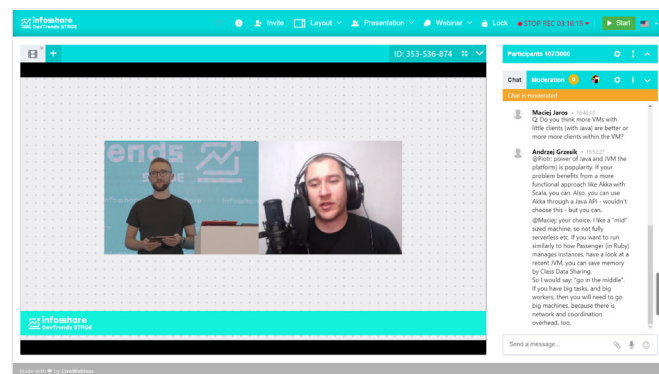
Studio

END RESULT

The conference was deliberately spread out over time (six days instead of two) due to the changed dynamics of the online event reception. In the "offline" version, five stages were running simultaneously, whereas now there were only two. Attendees could participate in all the events they found interesting, so that they did not have to choose, unlike the way it happens during the classic Infoshare conference.

The online world allows you to measure engagement. Thanks to our platform, we will be able to determine, for example, how much time a certain person spent listening to a given talk. - Grzegorz Borowski, CEO of Infoshare

MEASURING ENGAGEMENT
of attendees

One of the advantages of organizing an event in this format is the acquisition of global speakers such as Neil Patel, John Romero, or Silicon Valley investors, who might not have appeared if the traditional conference format had been adopted.

**LOWERING THE COST**
of hiring speakers

In order to reach as many participants as possible, a free Basic pass was introduced. Each of its holders had access to nearly half of all talks. Everyone who takes interest in technology, but also wonders how it affects our lives, particularly in times of a pandemic, could find something for themselves during this year's edition.

The platform was very stable - the vast majority (if not all) of problems we had during the event were on the participant's side. It was a matter of connection or its configuration. The platform itself did not cause any error, break or instability during the event. I must admit this is what we feared the most; it is known that IT systems follow their own rules. In this case, we were very positively surprised." - Tomasz Pawul, COO of Infoshare

Extensive networking was provided (Infoshare has been building its own matchmaking and networking tool for three years). Previously, it could be used to track attendees' profiles and take part in business "speed dating". Participants were given the opportunity to have video conversations with people of interest.

Do you plan to use LiveWebinar in the future to organize similar events even if they will be held in a traditional format?

The plan is that we will come back in our regular two-day format with personal participation including online elements. We will try to combine the best of both experiences by offering online participation for those who will find it difficult to come to Gdańsk. More details are yet to come. We don't want to lose the essence of our event, and we care to invite those who long for interpersonal contact, Infoshare in its traditional form, and high-fives with old friends, but we also want to provide an alternative for those who cannot afford to come. There is great potential in this. - Grzegorz Borowski, CEO of Infoshare
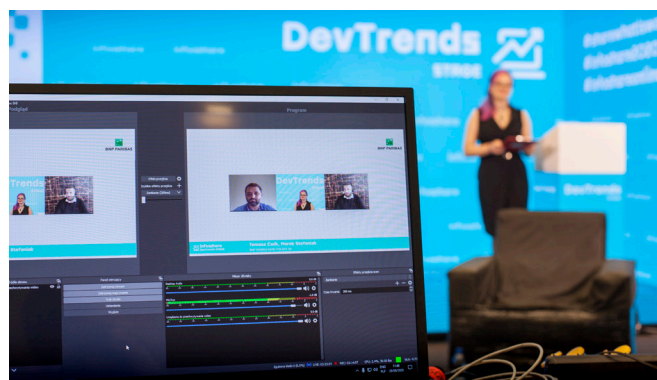
Studio

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Here are the
RESULTS IN NUMBERS:

191 SPEAKERS performed on **9 STAGES**

7542 REGISTERED ATTENDEES from 71 countries

about **7 THOUSAND VIEWERS** on the first day of the event

8300 RECORDED MINUTES of guest talks

677 STARTUPS that, thanks to LiveWebinar, entered the Startup Contest

319 WEBINARS AND ONLINE WORKSHOPS organized at partner stands with dedicated webinar rooms, which made it possible to present the offer of each partner who took part in Infoshare 2020

CHAT ROOMS available at each partner stand, which allowed for quick and easy contact between participants and exhibitors

A MATCHMAKING TOOL, that allowed to create a space for employers and job seekers, and enabled contact between investors and startup owners

DevTrends: one of the conference's 9 stages

Infoshare studio - backstage

Infoshare studio - backstage

Tomasz Pawul (COO) i Grzegorz Borowski (CEO) Infoshare