

HOW TO HOST A SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL HAPPY HOUR *for Chamber Pros*



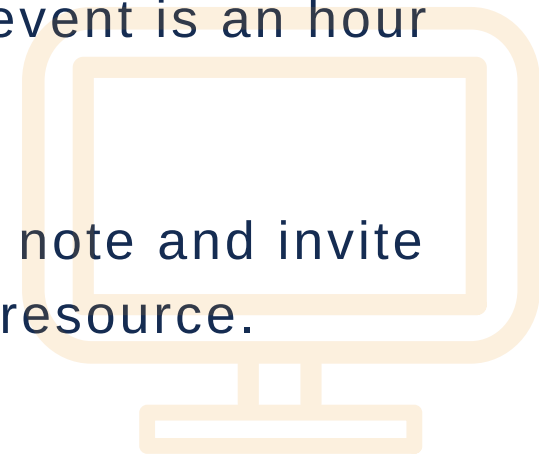
Sheltering in place doesn't mean networking has to end. People are looking for a place to connect and enjoy social interaction. Your chamber can host a fun virtual happy hour.



HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO HOST A SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL HAPPY HOUR:

- Technology/hosting platform. Many chambers/businesses use Zoom but there are lots of options for all budgets. When auditioning platforms, look for ease of use as well as the ability to host many people. Use grid view for maximum interaction.
- Marketing. Spend a few days getting the word out. People are on social media a lot these days but there's also tons of noise. Post on all your marketing channels to ensure maximum participation.
- An icebreaker, story time, or trivia. It's difficult having conversations in a large group but an activity can draw a group together. It adds needed structure. Small groups can pick a topic of conversation.

- Communicate platform...often. While you're marketing the event, be clear about video participation. Don't make anyone feel uncomfortable because they thought it was a phone call and they haven't showered.
- Moderator. Some people have been alone for a while and they dominate the conversation. A moderator can make sure everyone feels included.
- Text reminders. Remind people through text, email, and social media on the morning of your event, when your event is an hour out, and five minutes before it begins.
- Happy/inspirational ending. Wrap it up on a high note and invite them to your next happy hour or share a helpful resource.

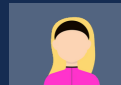


ADDITIONAL THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Alternate days/times you offer virtual networking sessions. Parents and others may not be able to make dinner time.
- Poll your audience on what they want: socializing or learning. Find out time preference as well.
- Alliteration helps people remember the event like the Monday Mob or Taco Tuesday.
- Involve families or offer events for kids. It might help parents get some work done.
- Be a virus-free zone. There's a lot of virus talk these days. Give people a break. Or...

ADDITIONAL THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Ask people to share how they're coping or what they've used this time to do.
- Decide the group size. Will you let it get huge or limit it to a certain number of people?
- Themes. Invite people to join you on their patio or create some other theme like "dress like the 80s." Themes help people think about something other than the virus.
- Invite participants to answer questions with signs during a portion of the event. It's an easy way to ensure everyone is heard and has fun.



Thank you for your interest in downloading the How To Host A Successful Virtual Happy Hour for Chamber Pros.
If you have further questions or ideas for us to make this list better, please reach out to me at frank@frankjkenny.com

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