



Virtual Show Best Practices – Global Audiences

Helpful Tips and Strategies for Virtual Shows
Targeting Multiple Global Regions

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Overview

The goal when building a Global Virtual Show should be to create a compelling and interactive user experience for your attendees, regardless of their region. The show should highlight content relevant to each user based on their specific region's business and market and should allow for networking and interaction with your company's staff per region as appropriate.

This document aims to provide Show Producers with important considerations and recommendations for virtual shows targeting multiple global regions.

General Considerations

Project Team

When managing a global show, it's critical for the Show Producer to identify an appropriate project team. Regardless of the number of regions participating, one individual should be designated as the project lead, with primary stakeholders and decision makers in each region clearly identified. ON24 will also assign a global project lead and appropriate project personnel in each region (account manager, virtual show manager, webcast manager, support resources).

Team members need to communicate clearly with each other early and often when planning the event so that everyone is on the same page and there's accountability of the milestones in your plan. ON24 recommends allowing yourself at least 12 weeks for planning, creating your messaging, content and sponsorship recruitment (if applicable). Please note that with multiple regions involved, approvals can take extra time; please be sure to take note of your own approval process when building the timeline with ON24.

Additionally, it is important to consider internal legal review that might be required; be sure to incorporate those reviews into the timeline as appropriate.

Time Zones

Time zones are important for both internal project planning and external promotion/execution. For project planning, time zones need to be closely considered in all communication. All correspondence should include GMT as well as the local time zone relevant to all individuals in a particular communication thread. Special consideration must be taken to ensure status meetings and approval processes account for the multiple working time zones.

For external promotions and show execution, you'll first want to identify a default time zone for the entire show. ON24 suggests GMT. While there are several options for attendees to set their time zone preference (to be reviewed in detail later in this document), it is important for all individuals on the Show Producer team to be aware of the default time zone.

Localization

Localized Content

ON24 has executed Global Virtual Shows where all content is 100% in English and where select content is available in multiple languages. Show localization options are discussed in detail later in this document, but it is important up front to determine what will work best for your specific show. Some questions to consider:

- Does my audience expect to receive content from my company in their local language?
- In past marketing programs, has the availability of localized content increased interaction and, ultimately, ROI?
- Do I have ready access to content in multiple languages? If not, do I have resources available to provide translation services, or do I need to engage a third party? (ON24 may be able to help here)
- If not all content will be available in all languages served, will that impact the attendee experience?
- If content will be uploaded in multiple languages, do I have regional resources available to review the final show, in order to ensure all localized content is displayed appropriately?

If you determine local language content is important, you'll want to clearly identify your key languages. These key languages should also be considered when reviewing support needs, per the below, and when determining the categories and tracks for your content.

Localized Support/Show Staff

This is a critical piece of planning that should be accounted for early in your process. Regardless of content available, you'll want to consider how your attendees will be more likely to interact. ON24 has seen a higher level of engagement when local language show and support staff are available. Some questions to consider:

- Do I have show staff available to interact in each of my key languages? This could include salespeople, product experts, client help desk staff, booth staff, etc.
- If I do not have staff available for all areas of the show (locations, product areas, etc), what impact will that have on attendee experiences? Should I "close" certain booths or locations when no local staff is available?

As a reminder, even when a show is executed entirely in English, you must provide appropriate time zone coverage. As noted above, if coverage is not available, consider how you will handle the affected show areas.

Event Promotion

Virtual shows targeting global attendees should be built and marketed specifically for the varying audiences. Before settling on a show date, and before executing any event promotion, you should first check holiday schedules for the specific regions targeted. You can use the following third party website to search for holiday schedules by country:

<http://www.earthcalendar.net/index.php>

In addition, you may want to adjust your messaging and design per region to ensure the accepted local language terms are used. Please consider this when creating your master timeline, as multiple versions of each promotion may require more production and approval time. If you decide to use one global promotion, such as a "flipbook" invitation/conference guide, you'll want to ensure globally accepted language is used.

Also note, per the time zone discussion earlier in this document, you'll want to ensure all promotions include the show default time zone of GMT, as well as the local region time zones, if deemed appropriate and important for your show.

It is important that media should be engaged early in the event lifecycle and used to support the promotion plan. In addition, we recommend that clients consider the most commonly used social media vehicles in each of their targeted regions to promote events to expand reach. For example, consider cross promotion whereby your registration confirmation emails include a link for attendees to alert their LinkedIn network about their upcoming attendance.

Registration

While the ON24 platform offers several options for registration, you'll want to answer a few questions to decide what will work best for your show:

- Do I need to offer registration in key languages per region? This decision should mirror what you decide about overall show content.
- Will I use one registration vehicle or landing page for all regions, or will I drive all registrations through one central point?
- Do I want to offer an interactive conference guide with detailed agenda items, or am I comfortable with a static landing page?
- Is it more important to ensure a local time zone and/or navigation language is chosen for each attendee before the show starts, or should attendees to be directed to their profile to customize their experience?

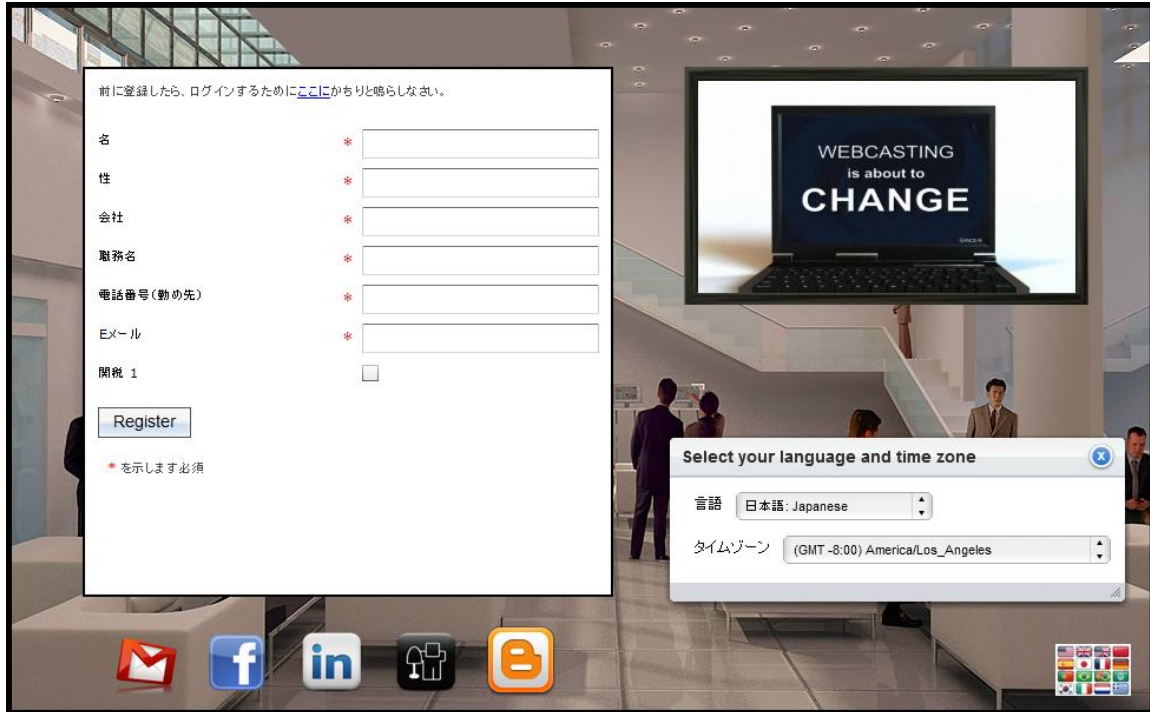
Option 1 – Integrated Virtual Show Registration

The Virtual Show integrated registration is comprised of one or more registration pages with corresponding lobby pages. The lobby pages provide direct access to Virtual Show during the live and archive show dates. The features of the registration and lobby pages can be configured, and each can have a unique custom design.

The integrated registration can be implemented such that the registration process selects the default language and default time zone. The language and time zone of the Virtual Show can be selected in multiple ways:

- *Registration Selection:* The Virtual Show can use a single registration page, which includes the language and time zone as selections (see screenshot below). The user selections would be recorded (as a cookie), and the Virtual Show settings would reflect the appropriate language and time zone when entering into the environment.
- *Multiple Registration Pages:* The Virtual Show can also include multiple registration and lobby pages. For each language, a registration / lobby page combination would be setup. This option allows the registration, lobby, and email confirmation to be localized for the specific language.

The ability to select the language and time zone is a big advantage for global shows. Attendees do not need to take any additional action to view the show in their desired language and time zone.



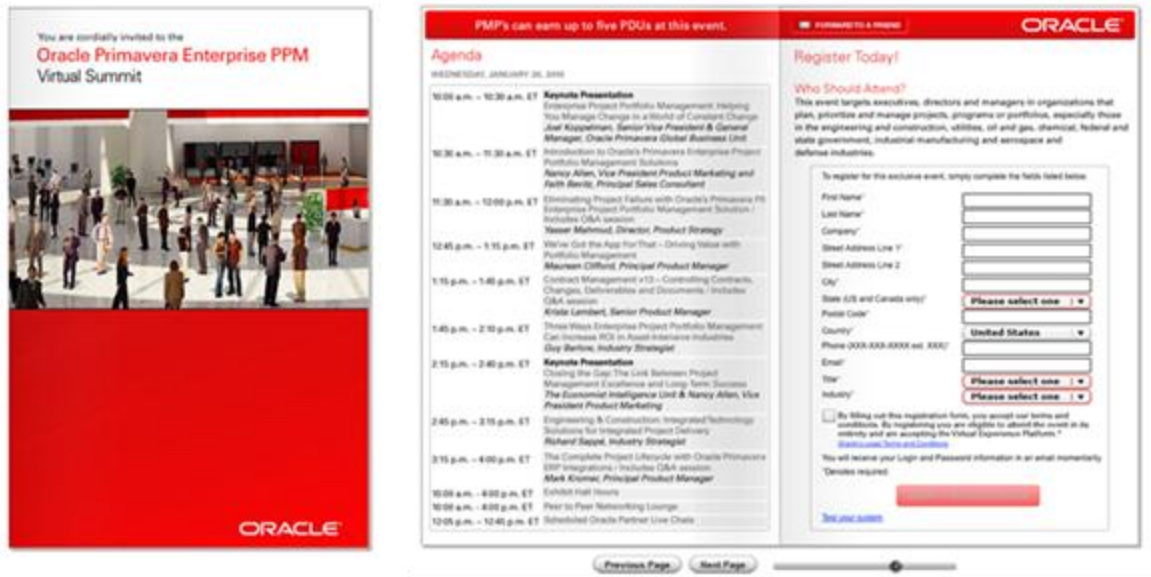
Example – Language / Time Zone Selection on Registration Page

There is, however, a limitation to the amount of content a registration page can include, and using integrated registration may necessitate the creation of a microsite or landing page if you determine that additional details, such as agenda, session abstracts, etc., are necessary to provide.

Option 2 – Flip Book / Conference Guide

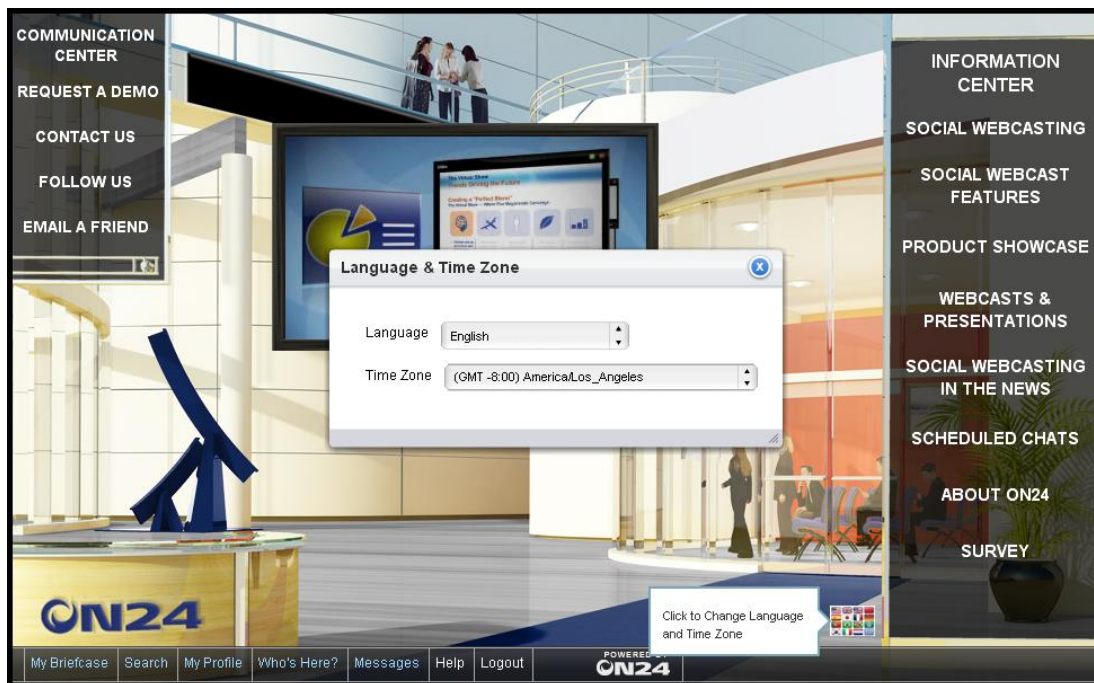
A popular approach for virtual show registration is the flip book or conference guide. This interactive format provides the show overview, agenda and registration, all in one place. Flip books can be very effective when used in conjunction with social media.

One of the great advantages of the flip book is the integrated registration. Individuals do not have to navigate to another web page to register, thus providing for a great conversion. In addition, a flip book eliminates the need for a microsite or other landing pages about your show, as all the pertinent details are already easily accessible.



Example – Interactive Flip Book/Conference Guide

A disadvantage of using a flip book for registration centers on the language and time zone features. Unlike integrated virtual show registration, attendees will not be presented with a language or time zone option in the registration. Instead, attendees will need to be directed to select their language and time zone after entering the Virtual Show (see example only).



Example – Selecting Language and Time Zone in the Virtual Show

Option 3 – External Registration

You can also create a unique microsite or landing page to provide information about your show. There are a variety of reasons this approach might make sense. In most cases, attendees will need to be directed to select their language and time zone after entering the Virtual Show (see example above).

Virtual Show Configuration

There are several important Show configuration options that you should consider.

- There is only one default time zone displayed in the environment. We recommend using the global default of GMT. Time zones can be customized per attendee as described above.
- There are nine language navigation “packs” that can be implemented for the overall show: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese, German, French, Hebrew and Korean. Localizations appear in the global navigation, window titles, window tabs, field names, column names, and common lobby fields. Content itself is not localized (e.g., descriptions, content titles, etc.). Please refer to the localized content section of this document for considerations/options. For an example, refer to the ON24 Virtual Show: <http://vshow.on24.com/vshow/on24>.



The language selection changes the background graphics in the locations (plaza, auditorium, communication center, resource center, and exhibit hall), which allows text within the image to be localized as well. The language option also changes the main Show navigation. This enables different navigation options for the various languages.

Marquee messages (show announcements) can be entered in various languages. If your show strategy includes multiple languages, you should plan to provide announcements in multiple languages, targeting the appropriate time zone for each.

Staffing

Booth Staff Selection

Be careful who you select to staff your booth. These people can make or break an event. If you are offering a show in multiple languages, it is assumed your staff will be able to speak in the selected languages.

Not all sales people are good at manning in-person booths, never mind online booths. Some may see it as vacation and pay little attention. Others may view it as punishment and won't get or stay involved with attendees.

Selecting someone with good product knowledge, outgoing personality and the ability to work with others is your best choice. If your product is highly technical and the buyers are engineers demanding technical answers, that may limit the staffing options, but overall be very selective.

Sales Staff Training

Although we assume our sales people are well trained it is never too late to make sure! It is vital that the people staffing your booth are trained in the intricacies of working an online trade show. Let's go over the basics:

- Use the attendee's name when introducing yourself
- Be friendly and non-aggressive
 - Use the 80/20 rule.
 - 80% of your time should be spent listening.
 - 20% of your time should be spent asking questions about the attendees' needs or answering questions from the attendee.
- Be as brief as you can while asking or answering questions thoroughly.
- Efficiency is key
 - Ask questions which reveal the level of interest/need for your product/service.
 - Inquire about the decision-making process, influencers in the decision & who makes final decision.
 - Explore time and budget parameters.

Sample Questions

- Are you currently using a product like this one?
- Who are you presently buying from?
- What would you like to change about your present situation?
- Who else is involved in the buying decision at your company?
- When do you anticipate purchasing the product?
- When is your budget set?

Disengaging with Attendees

- In order to meet with as many visitors as possible, it might be necessary to move past someone without the business potential and onto other prospects entering your booth.
- Decide ahead of time what type of attendee you want to engage based on buyer categories.
- Next, list engaging questions, which will weed out browsers and giveaway hounds.
- Once you have established that the attendee does not qualify, offer them a piece of literature. “It has been great talking to you today. Before you leave, let me give you some information on our products/services for you to consider.”
- Even though the visitor may not be qualified, be polite!

Closing the Meeting

Now that you have qualified the attendee and spent some time discussing their needs and how your product or service will resolve their issue, it’s time to end the meeting. It is important that you ask the attendee how they would like to proceed. If they don’t recommend a course of action, your staff should offer them the appropriate literature and establish follow-up with them at an agreed upon time.

Webcast Configuration

Within a Virtual Show, webcasts can be promoted in any location, but will typically be accessed in the Auditorium. A few things to keep in mind:

- The time zone configuration for the Auditorium will be the default (recommended to be GMT) unless integrated registration was used or the attendee has selected a different time zone within the Virtual Show. Please see the registration section for more detail on these options.
- If you are executing a 24 hour show, you may want to discuss options as to how the webcasts are displayed within the auditorium. You can use tracks or categories to distinguish the targeted region.
- You could also use abstract of the common lobby to include the listings of all time zones.

- If the webcasts will be localized please remind content managers that slides and timing may need to be considered as each language may require more/less characters to speak/view.
- If the webcasts need translations as they occur live, please engage the Account Manager and the Webcast Manager assigned as they will need to work on logistics of having live translation with our third party vendor.
- If live translation is not required, we can also consider using time transcripts within OD events, so that attendees could watch and listen in their regional language. Further to that point, you could also consider using transcripts of all targeted languages that would be accessible from the audience console.

Content Strategy

If you have determined that it is important to include content in a variety of languages, there are several items/strategies you'll want to consider. First, how will attendees access the local language content?

Option #1: Using Roles

The “attendee roles” feature in Virtual Show allows you to define roles, assign attendees to a role, and select the content that will be available for a given role. Attendee roles are frequently used to:

- Establish a hierarchy (VIP, Member, Guest)
- Define areas of particular interest (Business Intelligence, Databases, etc.)
- Offer content language preferences (English, Japanese, French, Chinese, etc.)

With respect to language preferences, during the show setup process, content can be assigned to only be visible for one or more specific language roles. Attendees can select (or be assigned to) a language role when they register to the Virtual Show. When the attendee enters the virtual event, he/she will only see content that matches their role type.

Option #2: Using Categories and Tracks

Another option for organizing localized content is to use your Virtual Show Tracks and Categories.

- Tracks allow you to sort presentations and documents by themes within the show (e.g. Technology, Healthcare, etc.).
- Categories allow you to display a document type beyond the basic file type (e.g. White Paper, Product Info, etc.)

Categories and Tracks can be used to provide sorting by Language. That is, all content within a given content list will be grouped by language. This decision regarding content listings can be deployed across the Show (e.g., in the Auditorium listing, the Resource Center, Booths, etc.)

Option #3: Using Exhibit Halls and Booths

The third option for organizing localized content is to use the Exhibit Hall. In this approach, one or more individual language booths can be included.

Summary

Using the techniques discussed in this Best Practices document will result in a Global Virtual Show that will be compelling and interactive user experience for your attendees, regardless of location in the world. The show will be able to highlight content relevant to each user based on their specific region's business and market, as well as allow for networking and interaction with your company's staff per region as appropriate.