

## How to get the best out of a digital online session.

The Pros and Cons Of Face to Face V Virtual platforms effectiveness FAQs. –  
Andrew Grant



<https://youtu.be/OloJZiBoWaA>

*Tirian's program can now be delivered both in the classroom workshop or remote online virtual platforms. The content remains the same, but the design and methods have been adapted.*

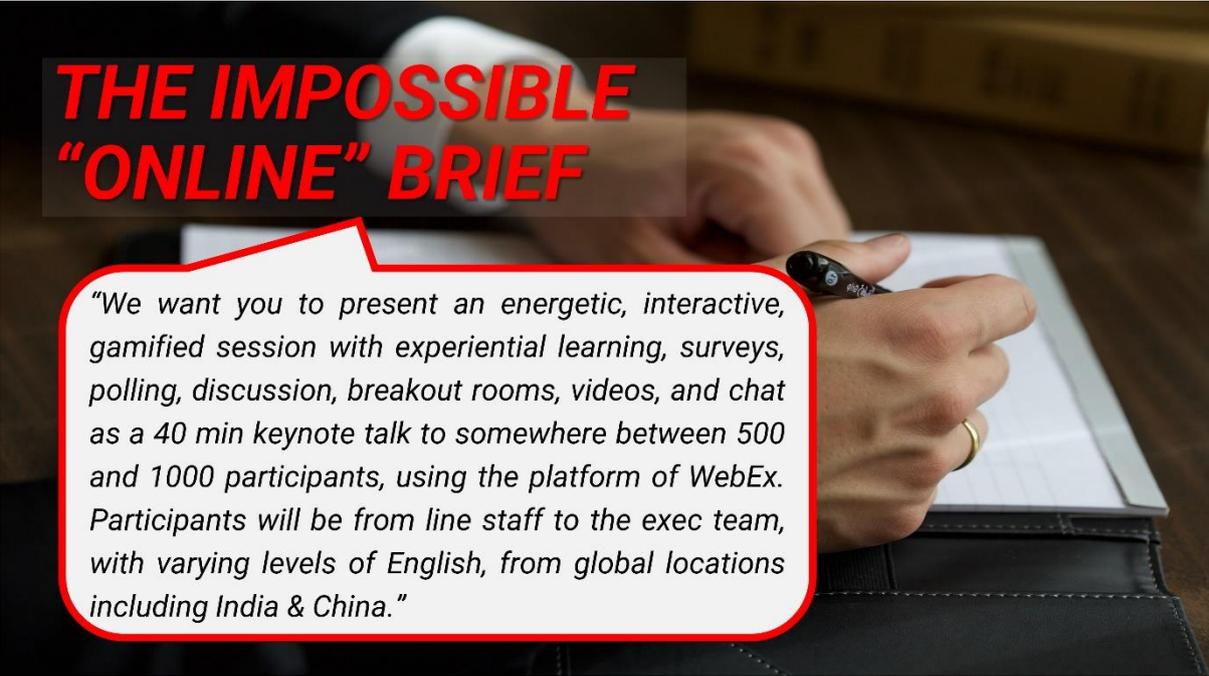
### **How to choose an online conference keynote event learning training session and make it successful.**

Both face to face (classroom-based) conferences, keynote talks, team building, experience-based simulations) AND remote digital platform delivery (Zoom MS Teams etc virtual based) have their pros and cons. It is essential to know when to use what, the differences, along with the pros and cons of each. Since Covid, many companies facilitators, presenters, consultants and trainers, were forced to move all their content to deliver through a virtual remote online platform. To ensure a successful online learning session, it is as important as setting up a professional face-to-face workshop/keynote / conference.

All outcomes and parameters need to be considered. The successful ones make it look easy, but this should not discount the pre work invested of an experienced team to pull this off. The time needs to be taken to make sure everything that is created online is still educationally sound, so the learning lasts. All stakeholders, including the designer, facilitator and organizer, logistics, IT, need to understand the implications of many variables. (This is often why its hard to design and propose a session and even quote until all the variables are nailed down.)

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## **THE IMPOSSIBLE "ONLINE" BRIEF**

*"We want you to present an energetic, interactive, gamified session with experiential learning, surveys, polling, discussion, breakout rooms, videos, and chat as a 40 min keynote talk to somewhere between 500 and 1000 participants, using the platform of WebEx. Participants will be from line staff to the exec team, with varying levels of English, from global locations including India & China."*

*Can you spot the challenges? If not please read on.....*

### **1. The disconnect dilemma**

Often there is a disconnect between a conference organizer who are focussed on the outcomes (and getting as much value as possible from a session), and the limitations and parameters of the available technical Platform, (and available time) relative to the group size and outcomes. Sometimes its too late by the time the company IT department is called to make it all happen. Even worse – the Presenter is told they can use Zoom (and so have designed the session for Zoom, only to find out 10 mins into the actual session that the company, for security reasons, has disabled breakout-rooms AND the Zoom chat function. IF in this case the session depended on distributing information, codes, URLs via the chat function during the session, and now cant, then everything is jeopardized, leaving the Presenter looking disorganized and the participants in limbo.

This doc is to help organizers walk through how to ensure the best session and to ask that all stakeholders get together as soon as possible to know the parameters (restrictions and limitations of any IT logistics / platforms) and then prioritize the outcomes. In the above brief regardless of the presenters' skills set and set up,– a few things would have to be sacrificed / prioritized to find a workable solution.

## 2. What's the difference: Online, Webinars, LMS's and other options?

What's the difference?	Webinar	< FOEx- FACILITATED ONLINE > EXPERIENCES	LMS – Online Learning Courses
<b>Equivalent to ...</b>	Keynote “motivational” talk	Small group “developmental” outcomes driven facilitation (intelligent team building, simulations and gamification elements, with debriefing etc	One on one self learning / courses “Educational”
<b>Recommended group size</b>	50 (but in theory no limit)	5-20 (stretching up to 30) depending on outcomes & program	1 on 1
<b>Host</b>	Director level / author/ designer	A host and 2 <sup>nd</sup> facilitator with the option of extra facilitators per breakout rooms (unless groups can run independently and are not dysfunctional)	Pre made online learning
<b>Recommended time</b>	30-60 mins with optional pre post stakeholder briefings and integration	90-120 mins / several sessions with optional pre post stakeholder briefings and integration	Multiple mini courses over a few weeks (at participants own time)
<b>Advantages</b>	Large groups wanting inspiration	Full immersive learning. Contains elements of and can integrate into both the < Webinars, & Online Learning(LMS) courses >	Independent learning (can learn in their own time frames)
<b>Method</b>	Introduction to core key points, with learning through listening. More straight talking, informative, inspirational, research motivational, stories, case studies, but personal interaction will be limited.	Interactive theory with learning through experience, with participant discussion, reflection, gamification, models, indepth case studies, action planning, moderation and facilitation. All driving towards outcomes. Carefully blended and integrated in a way that ensures the best learnability and results. Can be highly customized and developed around specific outcomes	Theory & Learning. Can lead to the doing of assignments / pitches (applying) and be either independent learning OR integrate back into the FOEx sessions
<b>Limitations</b>	See our FAQ “Mega groups” > “What to consider and do with large groups checklist.”	As numbers grow the less interactive it will be.	No peer interactivity.

### 3. How to successfully transition to Facilitated Online Learning Experiences' (FOEx)?

- To successful transition to digital requires all content and methods to be redesigned as interactive online sessions. A straight transfer of the content to a digital platform is not good enough. It requires a behind-the-scenes redesign to ensure a similar level of engagement as a good face to face session. Its important to differentiate the specially designed digital delivery and not think that a straight 'talking head' using 'PowerPoint slides' focusing on more traditional content delivery will be effective online. (they are barely effective face to face)
- We know that if clients are going to pay for an outside presenter, they want something that will significantly lift their online conference experience &/or learning achievement. Core sessions can be successfully transferred using a wide range of tools (including simulations and gamification) to ensure the audience is fully engaged in the session. No learning takes place if the participants are not self-motivated to learn. But equally, a presenter should not fall into the trap and assume participants are as passionate as they are about the topic.
- As dedicated educators, we have been working hard over the last few months to design a new innovative style of "session" we are calling 'Facilitated Online Learning Experiences' (FOEx). This new delivery style will enable participants to successfully transition from their pre-COVID face-to-face conference/ keynotes and classroom-based workshop experiences to an online virtual version, which provides all the rich additional opportunities this Platform can offer.

#### 4. Since Covid 19 I'm sure you have seen the flood of consultants and speakers offering content free webinars, team games etc – how does this affect fee structure?

- *Digital- has allowed for a very low entry barrier, so this medium now attracts more traffic and offerings.*
- **The flood of 'free' webinars** are more likely not professional, and whilst they may have some passionate content to share, most likely, they have not designed their sessions to a professional standard nor adapted it specifically to online delivery. If they could charge, they would.
- **There are many adapted 'games' online.** These might be good for basic ice-breaking and team bonding and are mainly just fun recreational team-building “activities” where the experience of being together & doing an activity provides a fun team bonding experience. This type of program is designed to let the experience speak for itself, where clients are left to sort out their own personal insights. This approach is fine, provided that identified or prescriptive intrapersonal and interpersonal goals are not sought. Clients may well have a good time and possibly become proficient at new skills, but they are less likely to have learned anything about themselves, how they relate with others, or how to resolve confronting issues in their lives.
- **A professionally designed & run session** makes use of careful design & framing, leading to genuine debriefing. Facilitators ask clients for their opinions and refrain from making statements to clients. In this way, clients learn to think for themselves and begin to take ownership over confronting issues (educational programs). Designed to bring about an outcome (Engagement, Communication, and Leadership, etc. ) that will change the way people feel, think, and behave—to entertain, re-energize, relax, re-create, socialize, teach AND learn new skills.
- **Validate each offering** based on their experience and results.
- **Digital delivery fees are slightly lower relative to a face-to-face session.** However, its worth noting that the client is also saving on travel, conference rooms, Audio Visual, and printed collaterals. However the Presenter now bears the brunt of expensive audio visual set up, subscriptions for digital tools, which replace collaterals and physical kit materials. The outcomes, IP, experience and preparation time, is the same.
- **The greatest cost,** expense and savings should not just be measured by the financial investment given to the Presenter, but also by the requested time commitment (and their hourly rate) of the participants. If not designed & delivered well, it risks becoming a 'waste of time.'
- **Start with what you want to get out of the session,** how you will measure success, what are your outcomes, size range of group (being careful not to just load it up > unless you just want a more one-way learning content offering), and then budget parameters. If they don't all line up ask which ones take priority? Alternatively, provide the budget as the parameter and then ask the vendor what they can and cannot do for this fee.

## 5. PROS of digital online V live classrooms:

- Digital learning can use multiple of online collaborative tools. And these tools can be used to build a powerful narrative. They can contain a healthy mix of presentation, chat, discussion, group work, gamification and simulations, all in a way that takes advantage of the online tools available. A skilled facilitator who can effectively use the design & flow of the contents, multiple methods of engagement, and the tools properly, will combine of all these to bring out the discussion needed to achieve results. AND its all digitally captured for follow up (with the option of being anonymous if needed)
- There is no travel, booking of a conference room, printing materials etc. (please note that for the facilitator / presenter they now bear extra costs for multiple online subscriptions, and this is why online fees are not heavily discounted OR this might be passed on to the client / adjusted in the fee, in replacement for printed collaterals.)
- The most significant advantage of digital virtual is that the classroom can be flipped with some of the critical learning of the content done prior and post the core session. This allows the participants to learn in chunks at their own pace. A flipped classroom enables learning to take place over time. Along with a summary from the CORE content, a post online learning gives the chance to 'try and apply' the learnings in real-time in the workplace, and then reflect on the outcomes, with goal setting and action planning each week (module). We use a 4Rs method. Review, Refresh, Reflect & React.

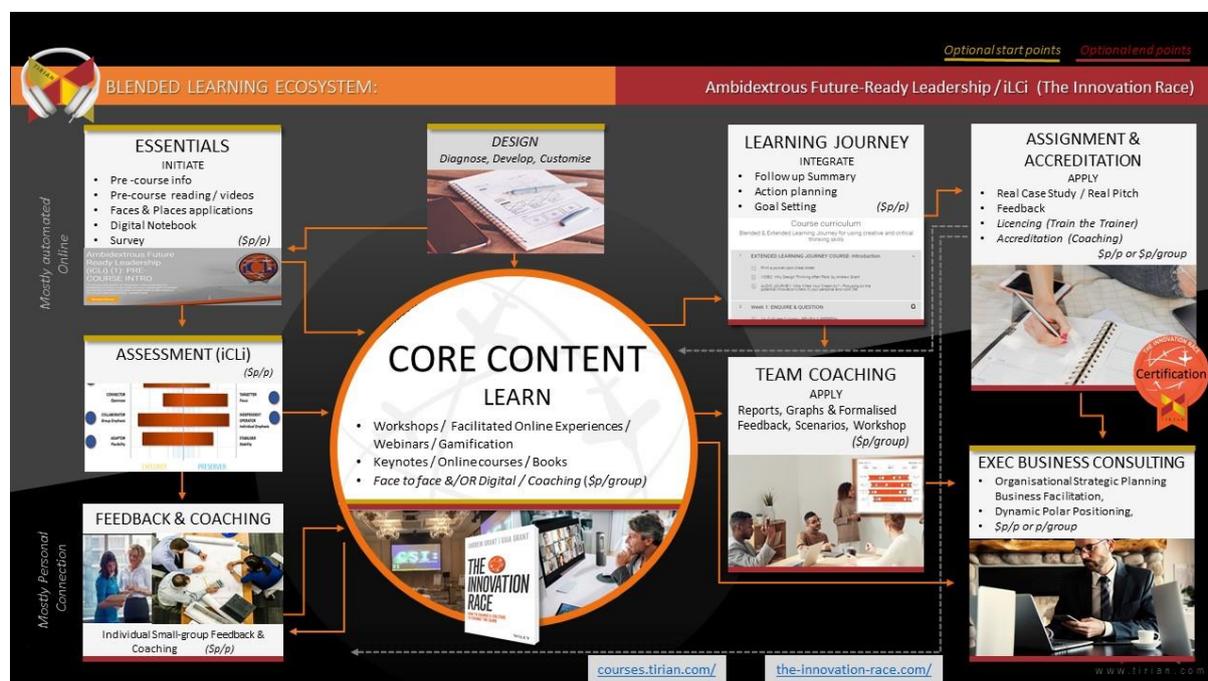
*"The 'flipped classroom' is the term commonly defined as a pedagogical model in which traditional lecture and homework elements are reversed (Hamden et al, 2013; Lage et al, 2000). Students engage with interactive content focusing on key concepts prior to class allowing face-to-face time for collaborative activities that clarify concepts and contextualize knowledge through application , analysis, and planning and problem solving"*

## 6. CONS of digital online V live classrooms:

- Engagement: In a face to face session, the facilitator (workshop / simulation) or Presenter (keynote) can see immediate body language & micro expressions, withdrawal and motivation. They can move fast to table groups that need support, and spend less time with table groups that have good independent leadership and understanding of the tasks. They can quickly read and adjust to the dynamics, culture, & tone of the group. A good facilitator can respond in real-time, changing the content (making it simpler or dive deeper) as they go.
- A digital setting makes this much harder, as moving between the breakout room is slower, and reading the body language of a thumbnail is challenging. Participants can quickly reach screen time saturation and treat this session as just another call. They can also be distracted by their surroundings and devices, of which cant be detected by the facilitator. >> important that the stakeholders (boss) manage expectations upfront and provides the participants with the right time and environment needed to be successful.
- Platforms (Zoom, Teams etc) have limitations that only your IT department might know. Even some companies that use Zoom have the chat disabled. Finding this out mid-presentation when attempting to run an interactive game could damage the whole session. The larger the group, the more interaction might have to take a back seat to risk aversion.

## 7. The best of both: Blended Learning

- All learning is most effective when taken over a period of time. So in combination with the Core session (face to face or digital), the opportunity for the participants to consider the topic, reflect on its relevance and follow up with implications and applications once back in the workplace, can be combined to make up the most successful interventions.
- MORE INFO: <https://courses.tirian.com/>



Sample of a blended learning ecosystem. With PRE, CORE and POST sessions + coaching, facilitation, strategic planning, and accreditation online courses.

## 8. How to overcome the 'cons' (challenges) of virtual digital online sessions

1. **Manage expectations relative to the group size** – if it's a large group, (30+) the information flow will be more one way. (more like a keynote). Smaller the group, the more discussion.
2. **For interaction, keep groups small.** (5-20) If you want interaction, gamification elements, simulations, action planning etc keep it small. If you want just 'learning', then size is not as big an issue. This will vary depending on the content, methods, topic, outcomes /expectations and participants' preparedness. Relative to face to face sessions, and table groups, when in digital breakout groups, they need to be smaller in size and less of them. (or their needs to be confidence from the organizer that the groups can self-manage and follow instructions etc)
3. **Keep time short:** 2-3 hours X more sessions. What was a typical day face to face workshop, now can be delivered as 3 X 2 hours session (or 2 X 3 hours sessions) either over a day or a week. Sleeping on a challenge, actions, problems or idea- helps with the long term learning.
4. **Have the key stakeholders (boss) set expectations to the group?** (like in a face to face session – have the leader set out what is expected in terms of participation, use of phones, camera "on", distractions etc)

5. **Ensure the participants have dedicated the time to attend** and are in the right environment (on a PC with a screen, quiet place, camera on, fast internet etc). Sessions often only move as fast as the slowest person.
6. **Minimize movement between breakout rooms** BUT at the same time ensure that all the latest online engagement collaborative tools are used, and specially designed into key times during the session. (but not overused). From as basic as 'chat' to polling and as complex as miro. This also ensures that people will participant as they never know when they will get called on to answer.
7. **Make sure the facilitator is both an experienced facilitator and technically savvy.** (or have multiple roles / people). Also ensure that there is a professional camera, mic, dual monitors, and good lighting along with fast internet. (higher than 30MBSP)
8. **Pre brief key leaders:** to minimize logistics and dead time, pre brief and login group leaders in advance to any games, actions required.
9. **Manage expectations:** Note that many participants are often overexposed to digital learning, con calls, and screen time. So it's important to ensure participants see our sessions as a priory, and hence expectations are best set in terms of asking them for 100% committeemen during the session. (and any pre/post learning.) Never has the phrase "you only get out of a session what you put in" been more relevant. Arriving late, not using the tech (camera / audio effectively), being distracted, not doing the pre and post will affect the individuals learning and their teams. The host has very little ability to influence this, and yet it may risk a positive evaluation.
10. **Plan the session well:** The leaders need to ensure that the participant are not on back to back meetings and so give plenty of time before and after this session.
11. **Mega groups 200-2000** are a completely different dynamic that need a professional IT team to manage. (see "How to design for mega groups 200-2000" FAQ below)

## 9. How to not let the tail wag the dog?

- Start with the outcomes and parameters: Beyond just delivery of content (which can now days be learned free on YouTube), a professional learning intervention should allow participants to reflect on and find real solutions to their business issues, leadership, group dynamics, and personal needs. This best happens through innovative simulations & engaging facilitation that create positive intervening experiences which break down barriers and provide unique leadership and team development opportunities and outcomes. It involves the deliberate use of authentic experiences and facilitated reflection to create a lasting impact.
- The medium (face to face, digital or blended) is an important parameter to consider when designing. But the outcomes should drive the design and factor in the parameters and restrictions each Platform comes with.

## 10. How to best choose the best numbers of participants?

For a more interactive participatory session (with gamification elements) - consider on a scale of 1 (low) - 10 (high) and score the participants /teams levels concerning the following

- The comprehension of English is high (10 = fluent)
- The participants are all technically savvy (they know to use their laptop, with camera & mic on, and will not attempt to use their phones)
- The organizer is not limited to the delivery platform. We can choose to use fully functional\* Zoom. Old dated systems such as WebEx, are limited in what we can do in terms of specially designed activities. (\* check with your IT team if Zoom Chat, & breakout rooms are enabled)
- The participants are experienced in and can effectively navigate their way around the chosen delivery platform (ie Zoom, Teams etc). They can use tools like: Chat, mute, video on / off, shared screen etc.
- When in breakout rooms the group can be: independent, can follow instruction, & are comfortable talking with each other & sharing the leadership role
- The group know each other, are a functional team (not dysfunctional)
- The leadership cultural 'power/distance' is low. (they will be happy to share ideas, not worried about politics or power)
- The participants are intrinsically motivated to attend and want to learn
- The participants will treat the session as special. (they won't treat the session as another online meeting in their already busy day, and suffer from screen time burn out). The session will be positioned into a good time slot, with spare time before and after.
- Wanting more of a webinar and less of expecting gamified interactive activities
- ✓ *A score of 7+ can allow the max group numbers to stretch towards the larger group size with multiple teams, gamification, simulations and debriefing with action planning and goal setting.*
- ❖ *A score of 1-7 and / or If the any of the above parameters dont score high, then it would be more important to ensure teams are small, group size is small and / or there is a professional role per team, (a moderator- to help with tech) &/or a facilitator (to help manage /lead the group).*

**To maximise the best feedback the best way to look at the numbers is as follows**

- 1) **Interactive sessions (Facilitated Online Experiences):** self-lead breakout rooms with activities, case studies, Miro (collaborative whiteboards) & presenting back to the full group.
  - **Recommended number of breakout rooms 3:** (max 4). This is so if there is a presenter and support facilitator (hosts), they can move between the rooms fast and are able to clarify instructions & help rooms that are not struggling to run independently.
  - **Recommended people per breakout room (4- 7):** This is so everyone in the group rooms can contribute and not feel left out.
- 2) **Webinar:** basic interaction (chat, polling, assessments etc), no breakout rooms.
  - Rec people per session is less of an issue. (we still rec small <50)

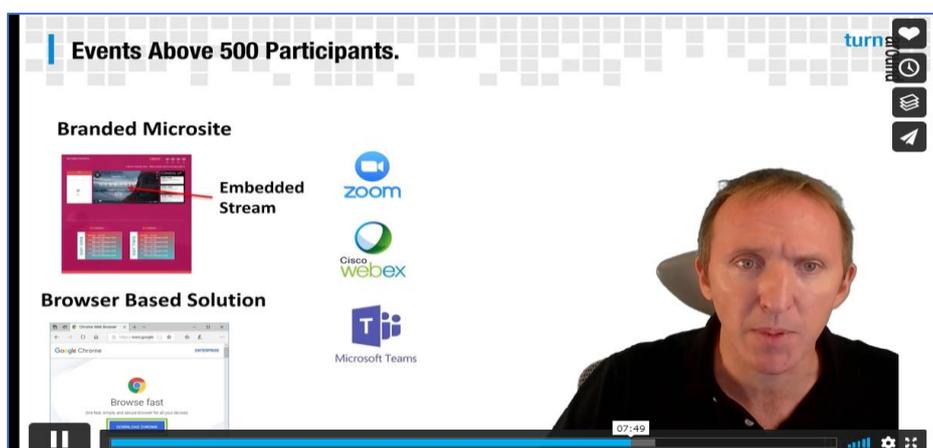
## 11. How to design for mega groups 200-2000

- For a face-to-face live stage large keynotes, the numbers don't matter as much (as long as from a logistics perspective- there is a professional setup (staging AV, MCs and flow.)
- But for online sessions the IT tech team from the organizers play a critical role in both PRE and DURING the session and the session needs to be designed to suit.
- Did you know that ...
  - Zoom and MS teams have limitations in audience size and breakout rooms?
  - Over a certain a number, all these platforms will revert to a one-way delivery- Meetings > Webinar, (this is not interactive, but rather the Presenter talking to their camera.)
    - [Zoom Meetings](#) (max 300 education plan) note that Zoom is always updating these numbers
    - [Zoom Webinars](#) (max 500 or 1000 by request) Requires additional license and fee, Participants cannot use polling, cannot turn on their video and audio, nor see each other. ZW can have a smaller PANEL of people.
  - Despite what Zoom might advertise for "Meetings", these large groups often end up with technical issues.
  - Mega groups might slow down and possibly crash your internal sever or have significant latency delay. Some third party apps and platforms might be slow to load or not work.
  - Many companies' tech IT team have blocked functions on their online platforms company wide (such as chat, polling etc).
  - The group will often only move as fast as the slowest person, or slowest loading? (login in, interaction, instructions etc)
  - BOTTOM LINE it will be critical to engage a Professional Digital Event Manager. (Just like you would have for a live stage keynote conference)

The Paradox of Virtual Events. Will the Platform actually work for large groups &/or interactivity?

See this 10 min video from our partner Rob Day on the technical reasons why large groups stumble

<https://vimeo.com/509709606>



## Mega group digital checklist.

- Engage a digital professional event organizer. They will cover all the steps below and coordinate all audio visuals with your IT team and other stakeholders. (Referred to as “the AV team”). *This is the same reason as engaging professionals to set up and run a live conference. Example <https://hubilo.com/virtual-event-platform/> <https://hopin.com/>*
- Ensure as early as possible that the IT, HR and Conference stakeholders’ expectations are all aligned. (outcomes, audience and IT logistics)
- Ensure from the IT department there is a clear (in writing) about what can and cannot be offered (based on the companies infrastructure and security).
- Check if your company or the event organizer has a license for a group this size? AND they have done this before (as Zoom / MS Teams may advertise it can run on large groups but this is not always the case.)
- What platform capabilities, chat functions, browser, devices, IOS and Windows versions, streaming, latency issues & bandwidth might there be?
- Discuss the trade-offs: ie Sacrifice of interaction V Group size V Time, V Risk management.
- Every second counts. A 30 min keynote to 500 people cant have the participants sitting around for even a few mins. It also cant have anything that involves instructions, as all movement can mean dead spots or people being left out.
- The Presenter needs to know in the design infancy stages what they can and cant do, and use. Inform (in writing) the Presenter as they have to design the session to fit the outcomes and parameters. If they can’t do breakouts, chats etc they need to redesign the content to fit. The Presenter cannot discover this after design or on the day.
- During the session the Presenter needs to be 100% focused on delivering the message and engaging the audience, and so not distracted with tech issues. This is the role of the AV team
- See if the Presenter can offer non-critical (asynchronous)– pre-participation to have participants upload some activity. Such as on a Wall that allows posts (Padlet), do a poll or survey (Mentimeter), complete an assessment (iCLi). This can help with interaction. (We say ‘non-critical’ as it cant be expected that everyone reads the pre work and does it).
- Create a “VIP Panel”, a subgroup of participants that will appear onscreen and the Presenter can interact with. (Chat, Question, Activities). This is not ideal but it’s the best that can be done with these limitations. (this could be done by a raffle or a VIP list).
- Structure how participants will ask and answer questions & give feedback.
- Do a Premortem. What could go wrong? And consider worst case scenario options
  - The Presenter doing a backup pre recording (\$)
  - A second presenter on a completely separate independent ISP and computer (\$)
- Ensure an independent 4<sup>th</sup> role of a professional online event organizer and/or IT department with experience to manage the IT issues; Including streaming, loggin in, group management and sign up.

## 12. How to ensure the best Platform:

- The Platform chosen needs to be suitable to the method of sessions delivered.
- Example: for gamification- the Platform needs to be one that is able to break into break out groups with chat functions. Our programs and quote default to being based off using ZOOM, everyone using a PC with an updated browser (Edge or Chrome) and fast internet. We can advise on what is needed, but the management of this should be handled internally. If the parameters are limited, we can look at redesigning the program (in the proposal stage).
- Too many times we have been asked to do engaging experiential learning gamification and simulations in groups only to discover (way too late) that the organizer cant offer a software platform that allows breakout groups.
- We've even discovered that some companies whilst able to use Zoom have shut down their chat function. And note that Google, Youtube etc don't work in China. If we don't get this vital information upfront, then a potential disaster is looming if we have designed an activity that requires something that then cant be offered.

## 13. How to manage and prepare participants

- Don't assume all participants are tech-savvy. We recommend getting a feel of the group by using a checklist and then an action plan. Non-tech savvy people should log in and explore early.
- Team leaders (of breakout groups) can also be chosen and prebriefed

### ONLINE PLATFORMS 'EXPERIENCE' CHECKLIST

New to digital delivery – <i>Google the answers, and then login 10-20 mins prior to learn some tricks</i>		Digitally savvy – <i>Grab a coffee &amp; login at the invited session start time</i>	
<b>The online platforms</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> I have not used online platforms much: (Zoom, MS teams, Google) Check with your organiser which of these will be used). <input type="checkbox"/> I don't really know how to <a href="#">rename my window</a> , turn on / off the sound, video <input type="checkbox"/> I'm not familiar at resizing my Zoom windows and the menus <input type="checkbox"/> I am not that experienced in using a split-screen before. (have on my screen Zoom AND a Browner open, so as to see both and resize fast) <input type="checkbox"/> I don't have a monitor (ill be using a laptop only) (note phones / iPads won't work in this session) <input type="checkbox"/> I don't have stable, fast internet (above 5MBPs). (I don't know how to measure this) – <a href="#">Please learn and test it</a> . If it's below 5MBPs, let us know well in advance.	<input type="checkbox"/> I have used: Zoom, MS teams, Google) Check with your org which of these will be used) <input type="checkbox"/> I know how to rename my window, turn on / off the sound, video <input type="checkbox"/> I'm am familiar at resizing my Zoom window and the menus <input type="checkbox"/> I am that experienced in using a split-screen before. (have on my screen Zoom AND a Browner open, so as to see both and resize fast) <input type="checkbox"/> I do have a monitor (as well as my laptop) <input type="checkbox"/> I have stable, fast internet & know how to check this (above 5MBPs)	
<b>Audio Visual</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> I have not used much my camera & mic. (I will be using the PCs camera and mic) (not recommended. Please at least use headphones) <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know how to Mute / Unmute easily- please learn this is very important. <input type="checkbox"/> I will not be able to set up in a quiet, uninterrupted place- please try to.	<input type="checkbox"/> I am experienced in setting up my camera (external) mic, & lighting. <input type="checkbox"/> I can Mute / Unmute easily <input type="checkbox"/> I can tell my PC / Zoom app what mic and audio to use. <input type="checkbox"/> I will be able to set up in a quiet, uninterrupted place	
<b>Tools</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> I have not used <a href="#">Chat function</a> , <input type="checkbox"/> I have not been in breakout rooms before <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know how to share my screen <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know how to <a href="#">split, snap &amp; resize my windows on my screen</a> (i.e. viewing the Zoom windows and a browser at the same time ) <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know how to screenshots/photos etc	<input type="checkbox"/> I have used the Chat function, <input type="checkbox"/> I have been in breakout rooms before <input type="checkbox"/> I can share my screen <input type="checkbox"/> I can upload screenshots/photos etc <input type="checkbox"/> I do know how to split, snap & resize my windows on my screen (i.e. viewing both Zoom and a browser at the same time )	
<b>Other Apps</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> I have not used <a href="#">QR codes</a> to access new websites. <input type="checkbox"/> I have not used polling, (Mentimeter), Online software collaboration tools (Miro) (Zoom whiteboards) <input type="checkbox"/> I am not that comfortable dragging /items, scrolling, resizing	<input type="checkbox"/> I can use QR codes / URLs to access new websites. <input type="checkbox"/> I have used polling, (Mentimeter), Online software collaboration tools (Miro) (Zoom whiteboards) <input type="checkbox"/> I am comfortable dragging /items, scrolling, resizing etc	

*If you are a beginner please take time at your own pace to become as familiar as possible with the above. We don't want you to get left behind, nor spend the workshop learning the platform. We can often only go as fast as the slowest person, or they miss out. Note by reference to 'Zoom', we are referring to the platform that will be used. This might be Zoom or MS teams, or Google or Webex. Check with your organiser about the platform used.*



## 14. What goes on behind a workshop (or even a short 30 min keynote)?

**Success is achieved when:** the content is relevant / the narrative is memorable / the method is educational / the facilitator is experienced AND the environment is favorable.

We need to

- Understand your business strategies > *to target the learning*
- Determine desired outcomes and link learning > *to enable relevance*
- Build a thematic journey, cohesive narrative & visual model > *to ensure stickability & applicability*
- Develop content & delivery methods > *to ensure engagement*
- Develop an agenda & flow to fit the timing > *to ensure the learning lasts*
- Prepare best online resources > *to provide high quality results*

For a full outcomes-based program, we like to ensure success by doing the following:

- briefing stakeholders
- creating the flow & agenda
- the finalization of the presentation multimedia: PPT slide deck, Miro, Prezi, videos/music,
- choosing the presenter/facilitator & best team
- preparing and coordinating the Presenter, facilitators & stakeholders
- preparing collaterals: workbooks, flipcharts, polling, etc
- preparing materials & kits
- feedback to stakeholders
- integration with any pre and post sessions or other sessions in an engagement/conference/theme
- Designing the learning environment
- LOGISTICS COORDINATION\*: room design / layout, set up, pack down, online orchestration

*Did you know that comedian Joe Rogen once said that for every 1 min of content delivered onstage, it equaled about 1 hour of prep. Excluding the technical setup aspect.*

## 15. Why digital sessions need extra roles such as a moderator and a co-host?

- A professional Facilitated Online Experience (FOEx) with gamified interactive activities is a unique online experience. It is not a one-way information dump, (webinar, keynote, lecture) or a loose discussion (meeting).
- To run a FOEx successfully requires more than just talking to the camera while reading from PPT slides. To successfully execute this, it often requires a team or at least a second co-host / facilitator / moderator to manage all the additional roles.
- For participants to learn and gain value they must be actively engaged, and to ensure engagement, it is critical that multiple experiences are carefully designed into the whole experience.
- The larger the group and longer the session, the more critical the design of the experience is.
- The most important thing to consider is that the Presenter (of the content, and driver of engagement) which we will call the lead facilitator needs to be freed up to concentrate 100% on delivery at the time they are delivering.

Additional required roles for digital sessions include:

**Co-facilitator Role** (2<sup>nd</sup> monitor)

- Monitor & facilitate the 'Zoom Chat' window
- *To create discussion (verbal and written) and to keep the flow discussion and engagement high + humor.*
- Monitor the participants' body language
- *To enable feedback loops*
- *Co-contribute: To add variety of the presentation and to keep the pace and flow going. This allows for more of a conversation style at appropriate times, to take place between the 2 facilitators that results in encouraging others to join and contribute to the discussion. Balances the academic, business, engagement, motivational content*
- Managing breakout rooms
- *where there is poor dynamics, dysfunctionality, misunderstanding of instructions, lack of leadership, engagement and time management issues*
- Facilitate and coach groups & individuals
- *Can be done in breakout rooms and in pre briefing, debriefing, and for reaching actionable outcomes goal setting, strategic planning etc*
- Manage & facilitate all third party apps
- *This includes managing the content of these apps such as polling, scoring, assessments, voting, whiteboarding, Padlet etc.*

**Logistics / Moderator Role:** (larger groups or VIP sessions) – **Professional Event Manager**

- Manage the webinar logistics
- *Including participants entering the session, breakout rooms, panelists, and attendees.*
- Manage time / scheduling
- *Eg stop and starting the webinar, keep track of general timing*
- Set expectations and explain logistics
- *Can go through participant set up and meeting etiquette (so the main facilitator can jump into the content)*
- Manage participants
  - *Eg can mute panelists, stop panelists' video, remove attendees from the webinar, bring people back in that get logged out (repeatably)*
- Assign and move people to breakout rooms
- *Monitor breakout rooms, travel between & coach breakout rooms, assist any rooms are that are struggling with instructions and manage timing, help bring participants back in when they get logged out*
- Manage tech: *log in issues cameras, mics, screens etc*
  - *Monitor real time: exactly what the participants see and hear (2nd PC logged in as a participant)*
  - *Take control if there are issues: if the main PC or any app freezes / crashes.*

**Still not convinced?** See our article: Musk V Ma - Why every conference needs a professional speaker, moderator or facilitator  
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-every-conference-needs-professional-moderator-andrew-grant>



## FACE TO FACE sample photos of interactive keynotes and gamified events

*Each Platform requires its own unique content and method design to fit with the parameters to make the best use of the platforms.*



*Interactive gamification face to face Workshop  
YOUTUBE SAMPLE <https://youtu.be/oMTVJ6NJfsw>*



*Large conference style Keynote (Andrew Grant preparing for an AMP keynote)*



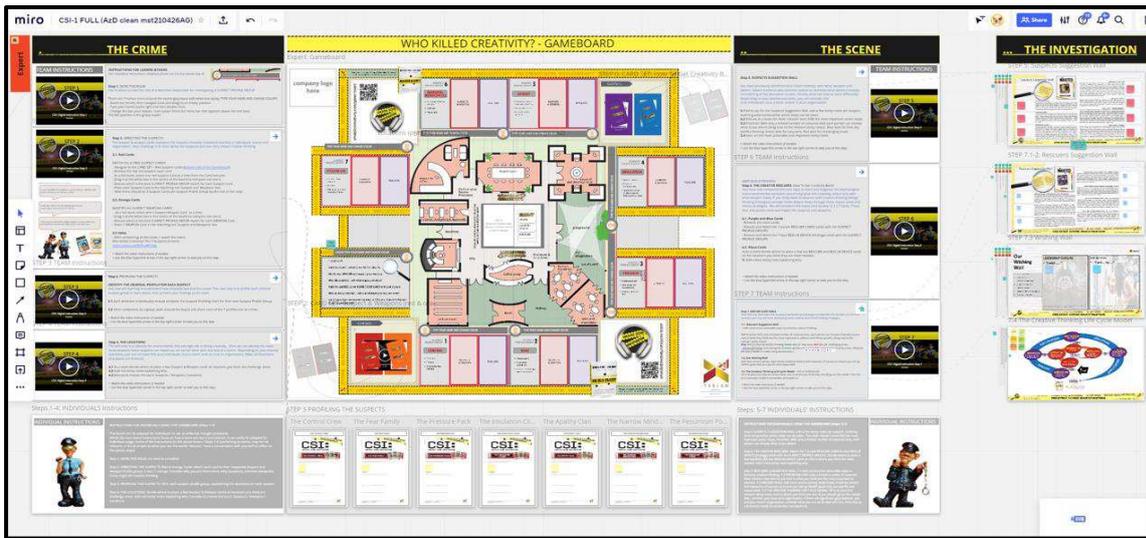
*Intelligent memorable theme based Team building (the Sky is note the Limit -by Tirian)*



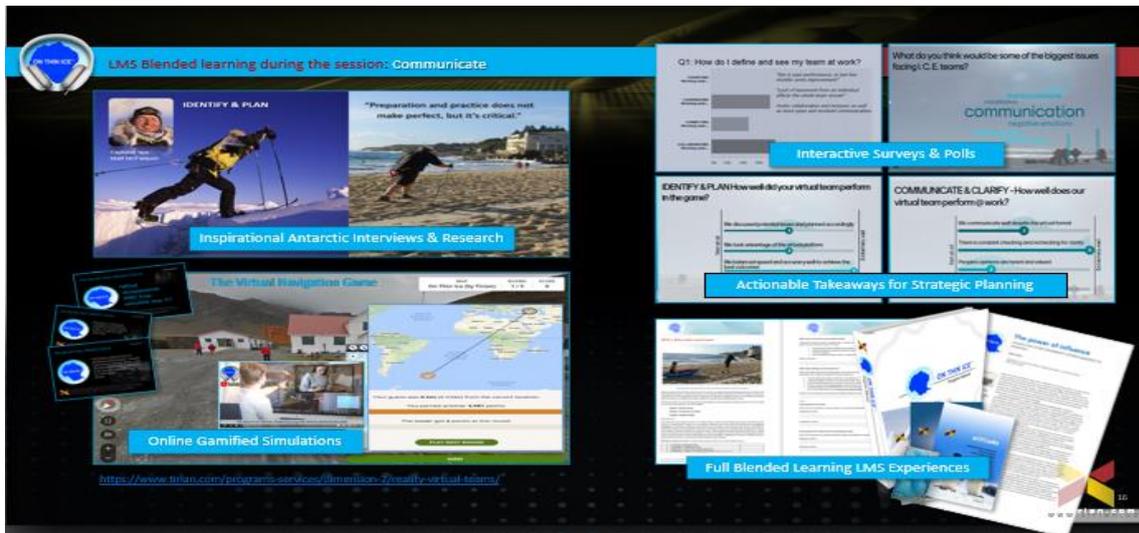
*Just as a professional live event needs a behind the scenes professional team to set up and manage the audio visual, the same applies to large scale online digital events. A digital event professional team needs to set up the Platform and run the session – allowing the speaker to focus on the delivering the message. (See how to design for a mega group FAQ Q 11)*

## DIGITAL / VIRTUAL Facilitated Online Experiences:

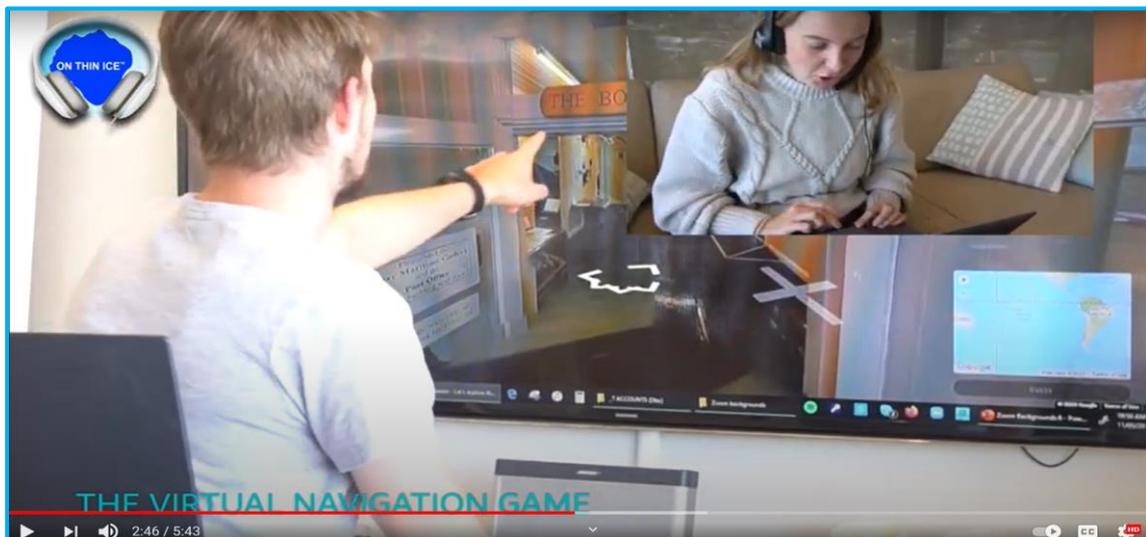
Sample photos of interactive webinars, & gamified online collaboration.



Gamified simulation and collaborator canvas [YOUTUBE SAMPLE https://youtu.be/jAleJrTj4Xq](https://youtu.be/jAleJrTj4Xq)



Additional online collaborative tools – [On Thin Ice – The Reality Of Virtual Teams](#) by Tirian)



## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



[Andrew Grant](#) is the Executive Director Tirian: Author, Facilitator, & keynote speaker

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Andrew & Gaia Grant are full time professional presenters, facilitators and consultants. They have been designing and delivering sessions for over 25 years globally for MNCs, NFP and Universities. They know what it takes to design for the a range: from small CEO groups to, interactive workshops, show-like team building conference events, and large keynotes (including TEDx, APEC CEO Summit, Gartner, YPO GLC). With over 10000 hours onstage, they know what it takes 'end to end' on how to run a successful event, live and virtual. They know that great & effective rooms set ups & online learning should not be left to chance.

YouTube playlists: [Interviews](#), [Keynote Talks](#), <https://tirian.com/key-topic-suites/specialist-topics/>



Andrew Grant and Gaia Grant co delivering a series of live interactive webinars to Boeing and their clients

*"Your knowledge, professionalism, and willingness to work with us were key to the success of these digital virtual seminars."* Boeing Doug Wieringa Global Strategic Initiatives Boeing USA



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