

Best Practices for Hybrid and Virtual Events



A Hybrid Event



A Virtual Event



What's a Hybrid Event?

A **Hybrid Event** is a live event with **simultaneous** delivery of the content via online platform with engagement.

The **engagement** of the online audience separates a hybrid event from a mere broadcast such as we are all familiar with on TV.

A **Hybrid Event** exists to **build, inform and connect** online and onsite audiences in order to advance the objectives of the event organizer and their overall community of members or other stakeholders.



Elements of a Hybrid Event

Presenters

- Speakers with great material and content for consumption



Emcee

- An experienced facilitator for cohesion and speaker interviews



Onsite

- A physically gathered audience
- Production equipment and related labor for camera, lighting, sound
- Venue, sound delivery, décor and furniture



Online

- An audience connected via the Internet
- Delivery platform/streaming technology
- Audience engagement tools
- A representative serving as the online audience ambassador



Sponsors or paid exhibitor videos and messages



Best Practices of a Hybrid Event

- A truly **hybrid event** melds the **online & onsite experiences** to engage individual attendees as part of a **community**.
- Online and onsite audiences must be built with **separate marketing practices** proven **effective** for each group.
- **Hybrid (and virtual) events** are timed appropriate to **shorter** online consumption and time zones **relevant** to community.
- **Hybrid and virtual events** should include an **emcee/host** to create continuity and engagement **both online and onsite**.
- **Interaction (Chat and Questions)** are **vital tools** for the online audience.



Best Practices of a Hybrid Event

- Social media hashtags and activity should be deployed to further encourage networking across the audiences.
- **Attention** must be paid to converting **online audiences** to onsite registrations in the future, and online options should be used to **keep interest of onsite**.
- **Sponsors** must be recruited to understand the **overall value** of the experience and embrace their likely different method for **branding or lead generation**.
- **Measurement** of registrant numbers, engagement points, speaker approval, onsite conversion, sponsor touchpoints and dollars **over life of customer** should be taken.



Why Invest in Going Hybrid?

- Use as a **Marketing tool** for future registrations
- Consider it a **Membership driver** and benefit
- Registration revenue
- Sponsor **revenue**
- Offer **new way** for community to connect
- Position organization as thought leader with **new tech & tools**
- Open to **new markets** not currently served by live event
- Put **more attention** on more speakers
- Repurposed content **opportunity** throughout the year
- Audience is better prepared today **more than ever** to consume digital content



Timing the Event

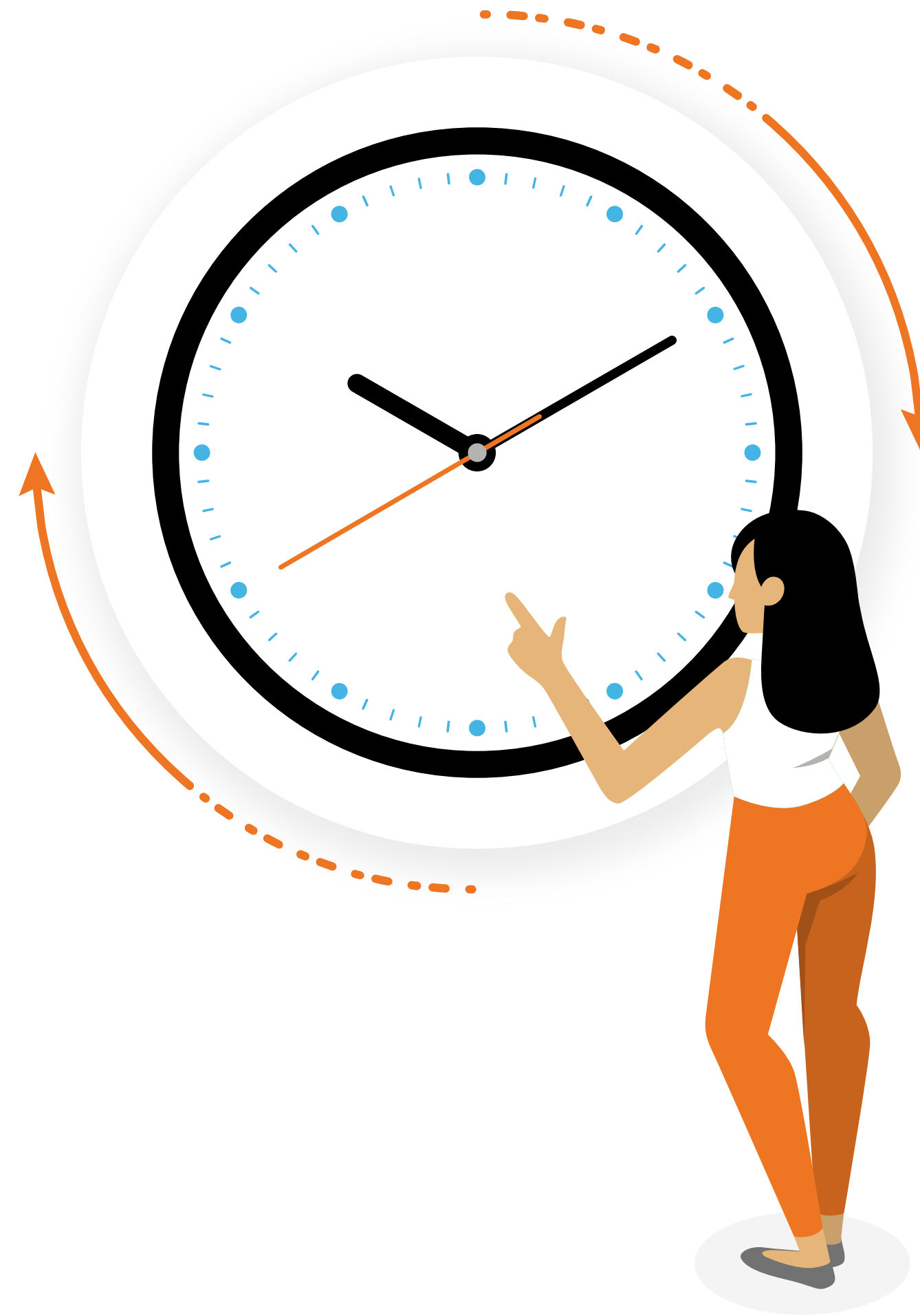
Have a **stream re-watch** event with the **speaker available** for personal interaction.



Make breaks on **livestream days** long enough for those at their desks to take meetings in between sessions.



40 minutes on, twenty minutes off **works for many.**



Break down your intended audience by time zone and consider their normal work day.



Do what you can to **create a schedule** that is timed for strong engagement.

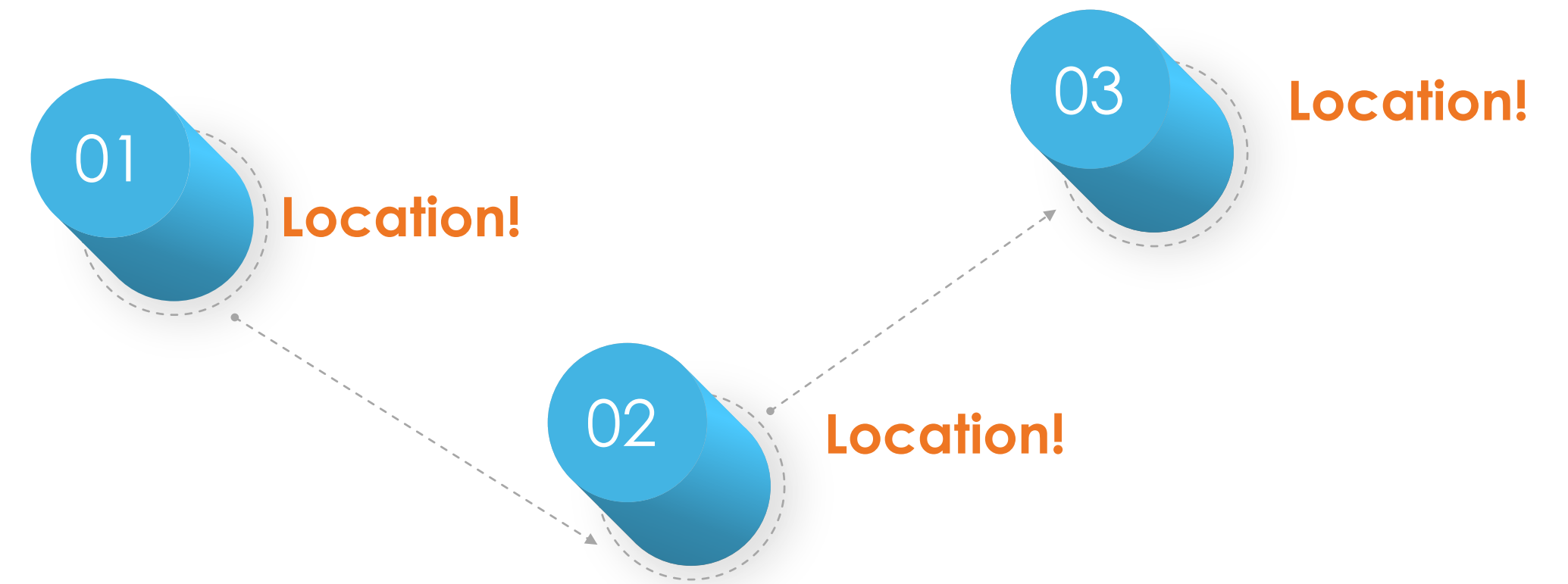


Make recordings available afterward for those you miss.

Locations of the Event

- **A hybrid event** can be streamed from rooms where you are currently offering live content.
- **Keynote Room** – If you are setting up for full AV, don't waste all the tech in the room on one speaker a day.
- **Breakout Room** – Load up one room with speakers intended for the live stream.
- **Trade Show Floor** – Break down the conference and exhibition barrier with live educational sessions streamed from a booth.
- **Any content** can be streamed for virtual or hybrid events from:
 - **AV Studios** – Companies across the country offer studios for live stream broadcasting.
 - **Homes & offices** – Speakers are being more comfortable with creating their own setup

3 Important Factors



Social Media

Take ownership of a **hashtag** by using and promoting it.

The **hashtag channel** helps pull together your online and onsite audiences.

Encourage speakers, exhibitors, sponsors and participants to use **the hashtag** before, during and after the event



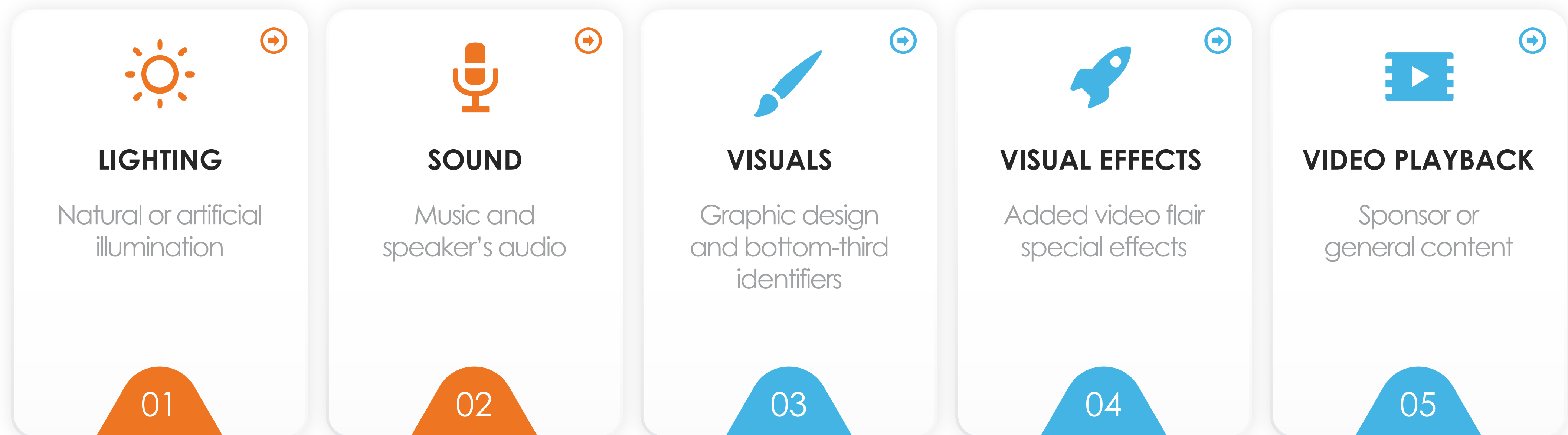
Use **the hashtag** across platforms including Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

Caution all about overuse and straight-selling on **social media hashtags**.

Filters, badges and geo-tagging can be **more fun** ways to engage audiences on **social media**

Quality Streaming Considerations

Elements of the livestream, **particularly the first two**, must be **high quality** regardless of location from which material is presented



Trade Show Floor Tie-Ins

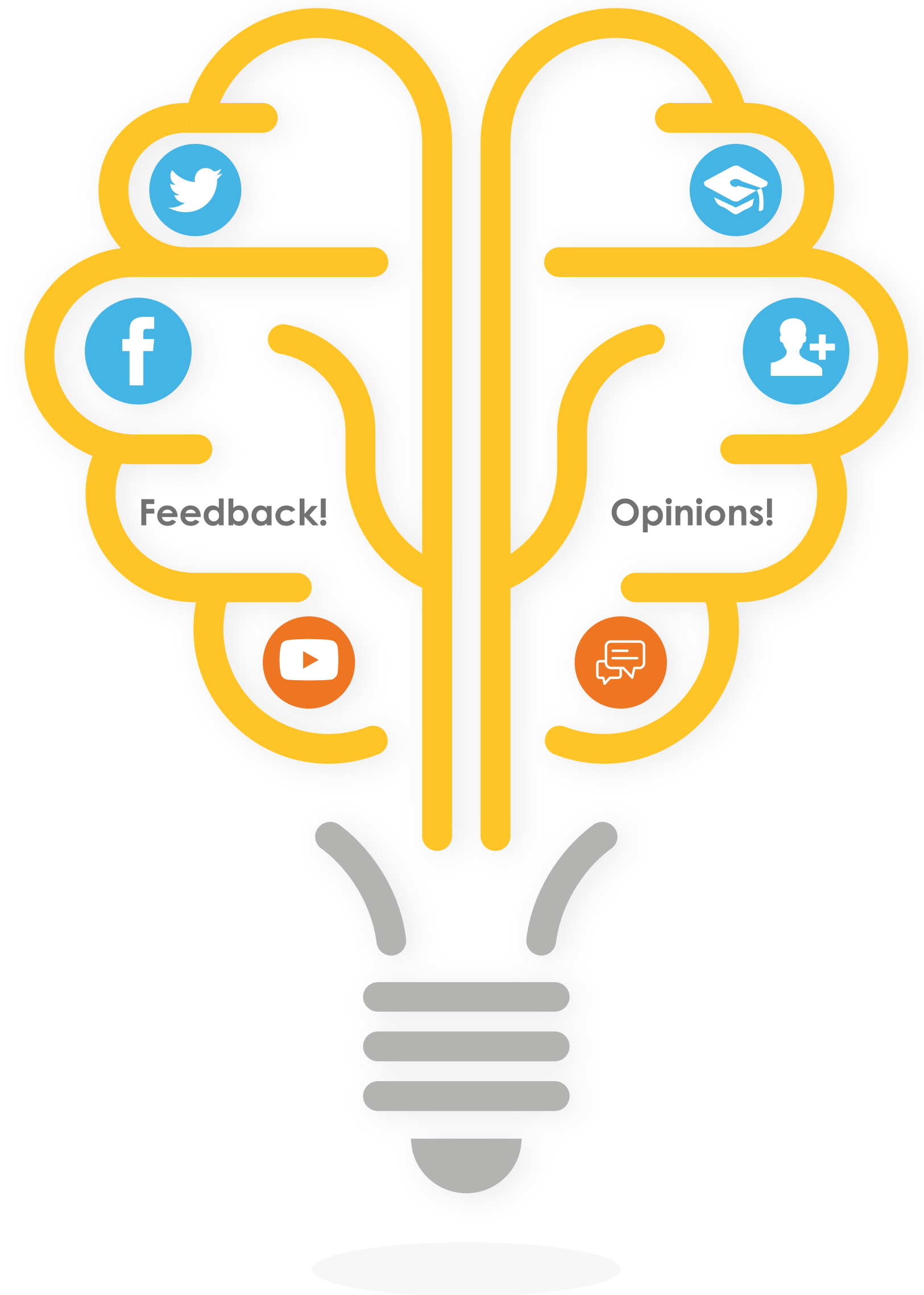
- **Break down the conference** and exhibition barrier with live educational sessions streamed from a booth
- **Education is a draw** to the trade show
- These sessions can be **sponsored by exhibitors** or a value-add for bigger sponsors
- Sessions can be organizer content and **streamed from your own booth on the floor**
- Time sessions on the short side with plenty of breaks to **encourage traffic flow** throughout the day
- Create content just for the online audience such as a **tour throughout the hall**
- A **content zone** could also be created at registration or a community hub that is open more hours than the trade show



Engagement

Deepens with Networking

- ✓ Platform must include feedback loops, question capabilities and chat rooms
- ✓ Inclusion of social media hashtags take the conversation across channels
- ✓ Speakers must be taught to encourage assimilation of info and personal connection
- ✓ Speakers can take online questions frequently and thank the submitter by name
- ✓ Online moderators should work the chat room, posting opinions, encouraging input
- ✓ Speakers and moderators can push audience to chat with each other and boost their personal profile in whatever platform (ie, put your twitter handle in)



Thank you!

