

LIVE!TM

Interactive Virtual Events



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Optimist International is a worldwide volunteer organization made up of more than 2,500 local clubs whose members work “to make the future brighter by bringing out the best in children, in their communities, and in themselves.”

CHALLENGE

Optimist Clubs often host annual events, such as galas and silent auctions, to raise money for specific causes. For the Yamaska Valley Optimist Club in Lac Brome, Quebec, Canada, however, the pandemic and corresponding limits on in-person gatherings made it impossible to hold one of the group’s largest fundraising events, an International Women’s Day celebration that funds the club’s activities for kids throughout the year. The club needed a way to put on this essential event while maintaining social distancing and respecting travel restrictions.



The only virtual event the club had run before was on a smaller scale. The International Women’s Day event would require a more sophisticated and interactive platform — an environment in which club leaders, the emcee, honorees, and others could speak or present, and where club members and other attendees could come together, once again, to socialize and catch up with one another. A webinar wouldn’t be quite robust enough, so the event committee sought out a better alternative that could more closely replicate the feel and impact of a live, in-person event.

SOLUTION

After walking through a demo with the Dundee Hills Group of the company's LIVE! interactive virtual event platform, the event committee opted to use LIVE! for its annual fundraiser. The LIVE! experience was a complete turnkey solution, from promotion through to the closing remarks of the event.

The LIVE! team assisted with website promotions, press materials, and email communications to help drive attendance and ticket sales for the event. Registered participants received a unique link that they could click on the day of the event to join.

"We were pleased to see that even though it was the first time we had run an online event like this, people were interested in participating," says club president, Lucy Davis. "Though the format was completely new to them, people really felt it was a worthwhile event!"



The theme of the LIVE! event was a health and fitness fair, and the main stage featured back-to-back presentations while other rooms offered exercise, meditation, and other classes provided by local instructors and businesses. The club was able to add branding to each activity and include a description in both English and French. The whole LIVE! interface was customized for the fundraiser, and the club also was able to raise the profile of their sponsors by adding their logos on the main page.

Prior to the event, the LIVE! team provided training for club members who would help run the event, as well as a run-through and technical check to make sure all presenters understood and would be able to use the platform effectively. Because most had used Zoom, the interface and controls were already familiar to them. Working with the club's graphic designer, who also volunteered her time and considerable talent, the LIVE! team created and maintained an event website with a schedule and detailed information about event presenters and activities. The LIVE! team also customized the platform itself to give it just the right look and feel.

RESULT

By shifting its largest fundraiser of the year to the LIVE! platform, the Yamaska Valley Optimist Club was able to host a successful event that brought members of the club and larger community together to support local children. Events on the main stage and activities in other “rooms” were well attended, with participants moving through the environment to take part in the varied offerings available to them — activities ranging from a “Curry in a Hurry” cooking demo to financial planning to a Zumba fitness class. Because the LIVE! platform shows which rooms guests are visiting, it was easy for people to meet up and share the experience with friends and colleagues from across their community.

“Although our International Women’s Day event was virtual, it had the feel of a community event,” says Davis. “The interactive aspects of the event helped people to engage with presenters and with one another. The whole experience exceeded our expectations for participation and funds raised in support of children’s activities throughout the year.”

Despite the constraints presented by the pandemic, the club was able to continue bringing in the funds essential to ongoing work in the community. The LIVE! event also gave club members and other guests a welcome opportunity to engage with one another and the work of the Optimist Club.

