

5 TOP TIPS FOR MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

From BritCham's
Marketing & Communications Committee

FROM THE COMMITTEE

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused major disruption since the start of the year, creating a “new normal” for work with travel cancellations, remote working and a reluctance to meet face-to-face. There is still a large level of uncertainty around where the virus will go, and how long it will be around, but in the meantime we’re all living this now, and need to continue to pursue business objectives and meet targets.

This new, more digital, way of working can actually provide an opportunity for you to experiment and revamp your communications strategies. To help you in this challenging climate, the BritCham Marketing & Communications committee have put their heads together to come up with their Top 5 Tips on how to manage your internal and external communications during this period.

Enjoy the read and stay healthy!

FROM THE PRESIDENT



**RICHARD
WARBURTON**

**PRESIDENT, BRITCHAM
&
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
HEAD OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS,
ASIA PACIFIC,
ARCADIS ASIA**

"It is pleasing to see the agile response from the Chamber team and Business Committees in moving to virtual meetings and events whilst Covid-19 restrictions are in place. Connectivity, communication and collaboration with and between members is at the heart of the Chamber proposition and the move to the use of a variety of online platforms is key to achieving and maintaining our promise to members. Embracing new ways of engaging members will, I believe, enhance the reach of the Chamber and ultimately the value that Members receive."

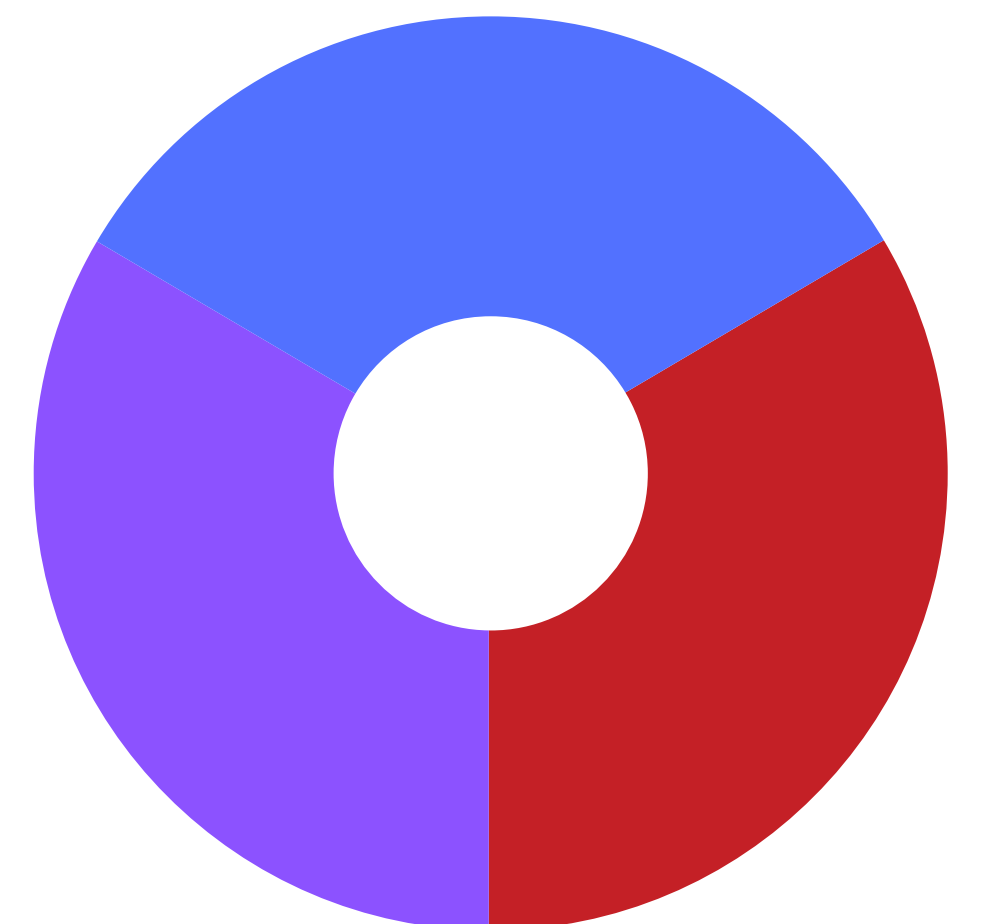
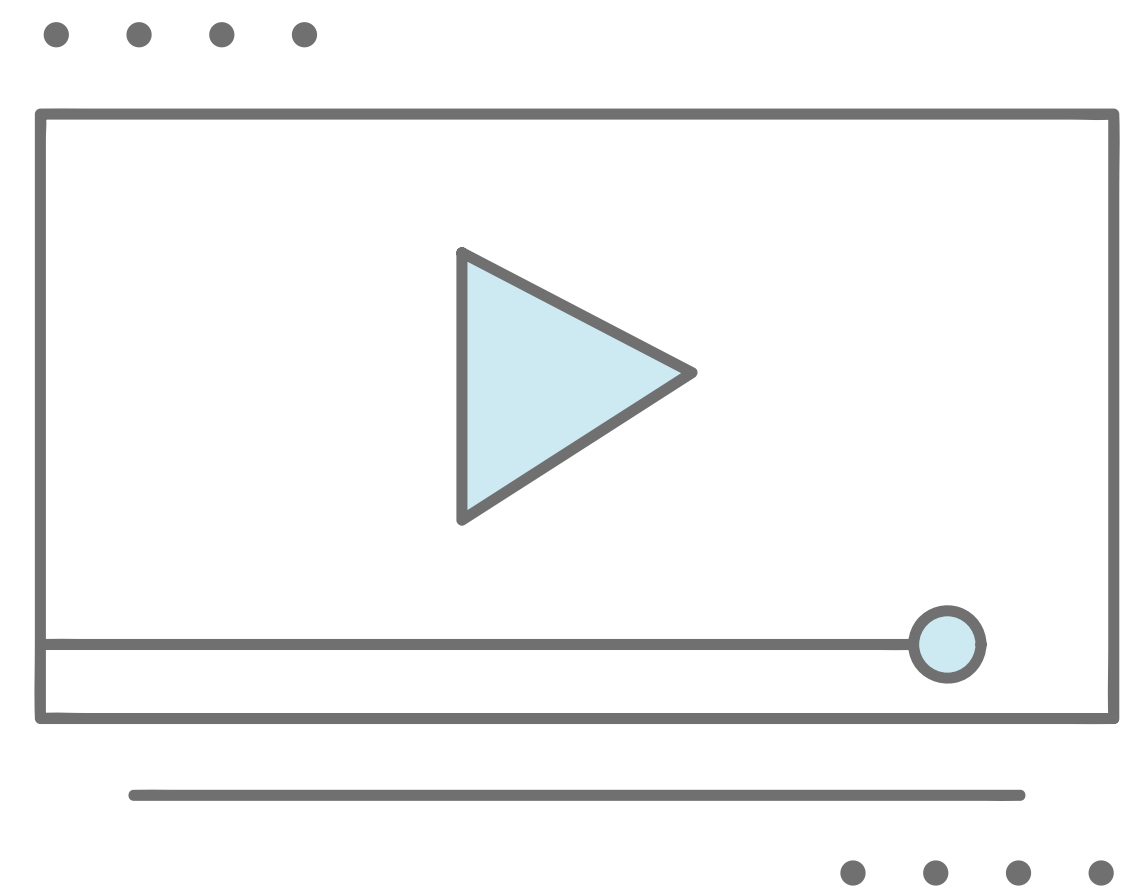


1. REVIEW & UPDATE YOUR CONTENT

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Are you having less meetings and organizing fewer events?

This is a great opportunity to use the extra time to review and update your content. Have you got the right types of content in the right formats for all stages of the customer buying cycle? At the top of the funnel, you can create thought leadership content such as video messages or surveys and reports that talk about common challenges that your company is helping to solve. You can also turn elements of that into bite size pieces of content, such as a short video, a blog, an infographic, animation, to share the message across different platforms.





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"Elevate your communications by using video as a core part of your content strategy at this time. On-cam video messages position senior leadership in your organisation extremely well at times like this. It shows how they are decisively handling the current situation in a compelling, relatable and human way. Video conferencing normally means bedroom backdrops and "Can you hear me now?" Think about how professional video production can solve these issues, add value, position you better, sharpen your messages, keep your staff informed and protect your reputation."

For prospects that are further down the buying cycle, have you got any case studies that demonstrate how you have helped other organizations that you could turn into some useful content to help buying decisions? Finally, it's a good chance to check that your product brochures and creds decks are up-to-date?

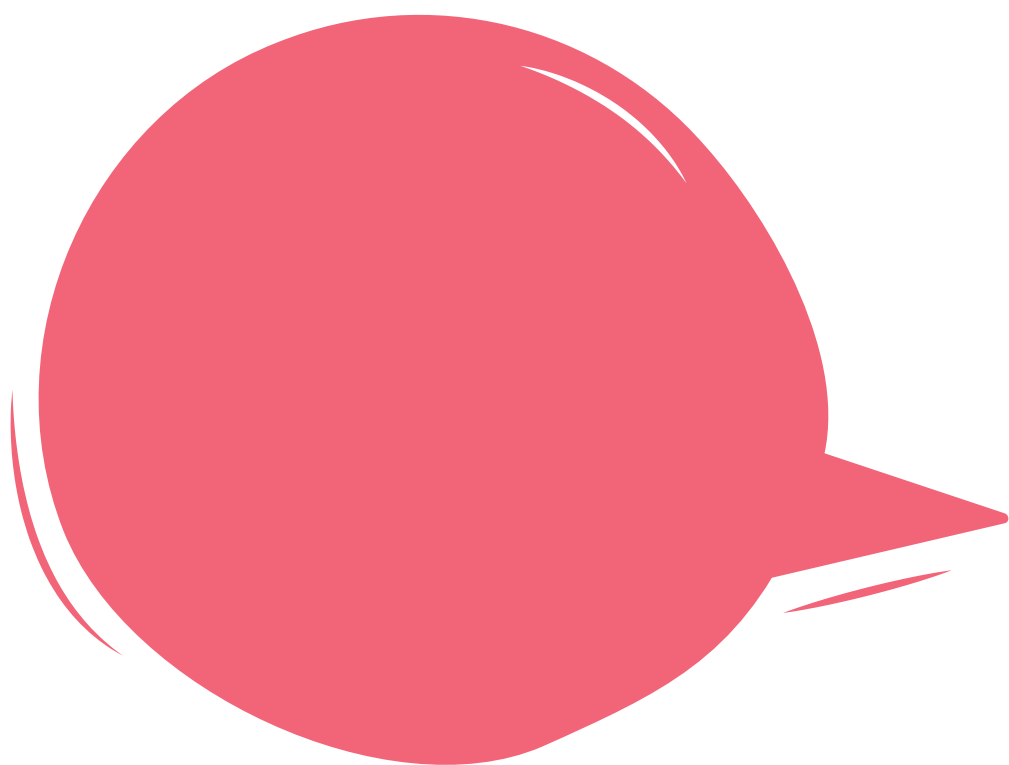


2. SEND TARGETED EMAILS

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Email marketing forms the backbone of most communication strategies. While less face-to-face meetings are able to happen, it's now more important than ever to keep your customers engaged with your latest content and key messages via email instead. That said, average open rates of emails are only 10%, so perhaps you can try some A/B testing to see if you can improve engagement.



Changing a subject line, the content of an email, or even the “Call To Action”, can all have an impact – see what makes a difference for your company.



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"At Refinitiv, we're using the breathing space from organizing events as an opportunity to set up more long-term, strategic email campaigns. We are combining different pieces of content to create a personalized customer journey depending on how the contacts engage with the emails. For example, if a customer downloads a sales brochure, we can tell they are more ready to buy, so they will automatically receive a "Would you like a demo?" email next."

Email is also an important tool for internal communications. With a lot of uncertainty and Sometimes fear, regular emails from senior leadership updating on company policy towards the virus and steps taken to keep employees safe, can be a good way to keep staff informed and calm.



3. LEVERAGE SOCIAL MEDIA

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In this day and age, most people check their social media multiple times a day, and it's commonly being used by organizations as part of the customer buying cycle. Depending on your business, you can leverage different platforms to target different audiences. For example, if you are a B2B company, you can leverage LinkedIn to target business professionals who are looking for thought leadership material. If you are a B2C organization you can use Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to reach out to a broad segment of individuals.





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“With traditional event marketing paused, an opportunity presented itself to reassess our approach on LinkedIn. Our team have seen a strong interest in content shared on personal accounts in the last month, leading to new clients conversations. The highest engagement has come from collaborations with clients or external partners. We are making a conscious effort in posts to give value without crudely selling our brand, our goal is to offer support that may or may not lead to sales conversations further down the road.”

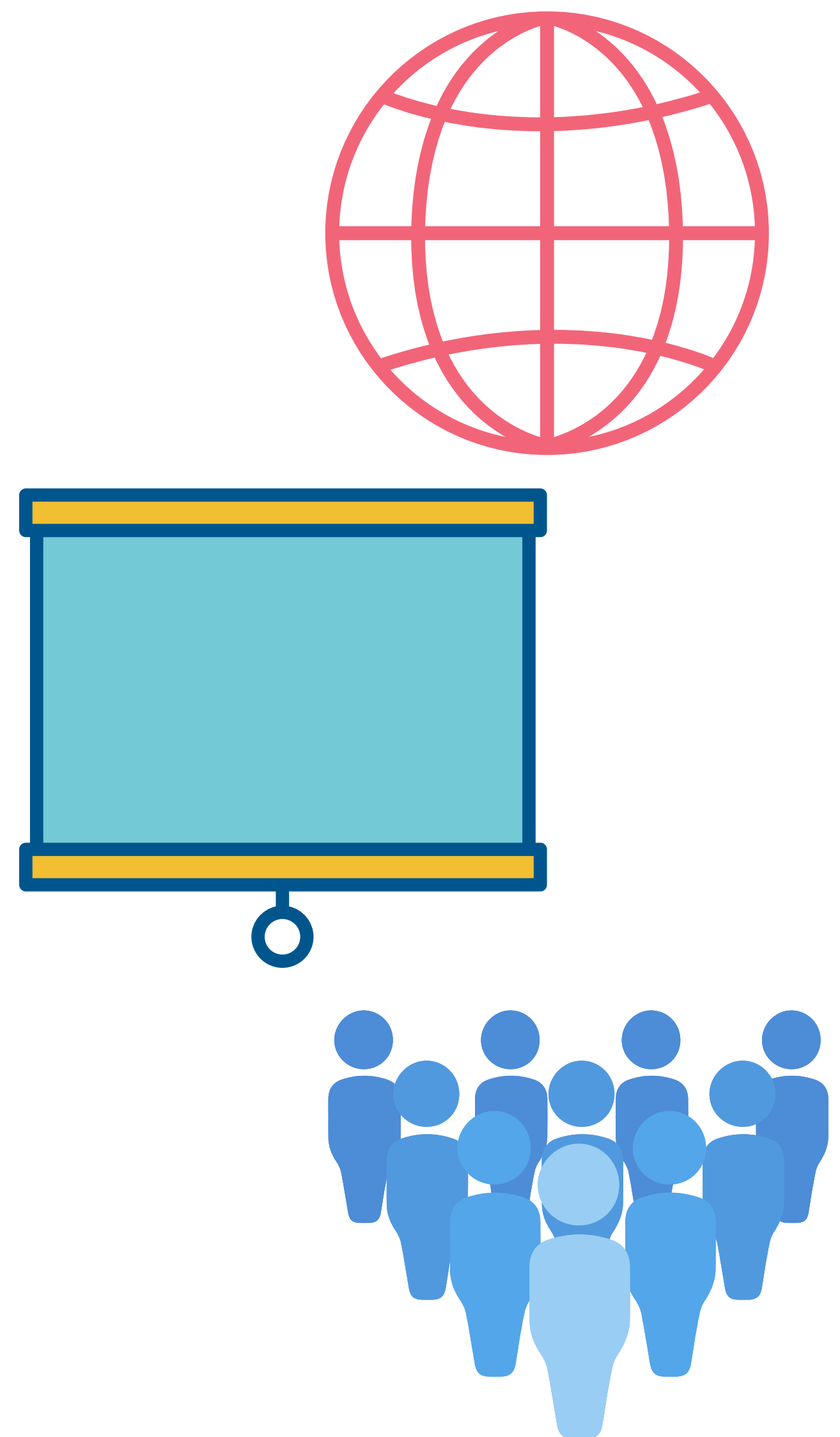
To reach your target audience organically, you can share a post from your company page, or encourage your Employees to also act as company ambassadors to share the message with their contacts too. Even better, if you have some budget, you can set up paid ads on social media so that your posts are seen by targeted contacts that are outside of your current network.



4. RUN ONLINE WEBINARS

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Although large group gatherings are currently being discouraged, thanks to the internet there are a host of companies that offer digital meeting capabilities so that you can run “events” online. Microsoft Teams, Zoom and BlueJeans are just a few examples of online conferencing platforms that allow you to host meetings over the internet. In addition, On24 also includes interactive elements, such as quizzes and surveys, to keep your audience engaged and allow you to generate warm leads by being able to indicate if you would like to speak to a sales person after the session. In this current environment, certain online providers are also offering special deals to help organizations move to online webinars fast.





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“Incorporating virtual meetings to maintain connectivity across staff, committees and our members has been vital at this time, and we have successfully engaged with stakeholders using online platforms such as Microsoft Teams. The British Chamber of Commerce is committed to connecting members, building networks and sharing valuable content. Digitising the way we get together has been key to maintaining our activities, whilst taking sensible steps to protecting the welfare of our members and staff.”

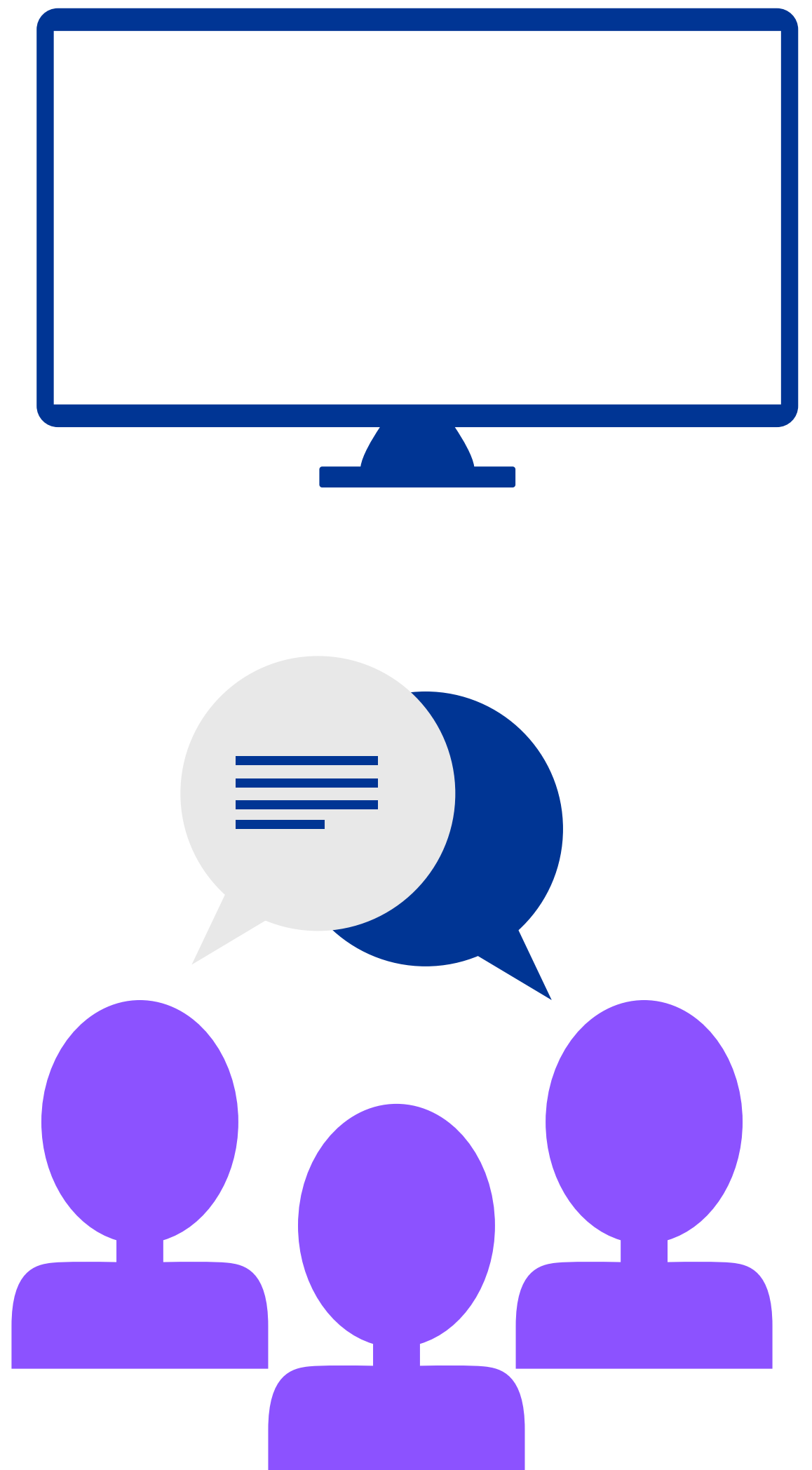
That said, digital events can't ever replace the value of face-to-face networking. As a novel touch you could always send your webinar attendees a bottle of wine to their home to make them feel like you are all having a drink together...!



5. HOST VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

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Running workshops remotely may sound like a major challenge but with some careful planning and organization it is possible. Revisit your workshop agenda – will your planned practical sessions still work or do you need to look at another way of getting the same output, for example an online quiz or perhaps some pre-reads before the workshop? Choose your venue carefully – see if you can rent a space with good video conference facilities and large TV screens so you can feel as ‘connected’ as possible to other participants. Agree with participants beforehand how you will communicate with each other during the workshop – you want to avoid everyone trying to speak at the same time!





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“The nature of our work often requires facilitating workshops and the current environment gives us an opportunity to explore and experiment with new ways of bringing groups of people together in a remote or virtual environment. We’ve found that while it isn’t ideal, with careful agenda setting, creative use of technology and strong facilitation, we’ve been able to get the results our clients are expecting, and without the added cost of travel and accommodation.”

For example, ask participants to put their microphones on mute when they’re not speaking so you don’t get echoes and the facilitator can see who is wanting to speak. Or if you are all in a room in a video conference, ask participants to raise their hand to signal when they have something to contribute.

If you have any questions with regards to how best to communicate with your customers and staff during this period, please do send them through to the M&C committee and we will try to cover these during the live Q&A session. We hope to speak to you then!

The Marketing & Communications committee exists to keep British Chamber members and the broader business community in Singapore updated with the latest research, trends and technology in the marcoms sector; to promote industry best practice and showcase the individual capabilities of members via Chamber initiatives and through the development of its own events, seminars and shareable content.



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