

How the pandemic is reshaping the future of events and meetings

By [Tim Cordon](#)

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In today's ever-evolving world, sustainability is becoming more important than ever. No matter the industry or the country in which they operate, companies are becoming increasingly conscious of the vulnerable and marginalised, turning their attention to support social causes.



jagritparajuli99 via [Fxabay](#)

Looking towards the future, there are many signs that Covid-19 has helped prioritise social responsibility, environmental awareness and understanding of cultural values for businesses around the world, not least because a year of protracted lockdowns drove people to reconnect with their local communities and lend a hand to those in need.

This shifted attention to the importance of sustainability, with people rethinking their choices and their actions. In the travel industry, sustainability has become a mainstream conversation for both hotels and destinations, sharpening the focus on the environmental impact of travel, and seeking solutions to help restore local communities, the environment and ecosystems.

With that in mind, as a responsible business pioneer in the hospitality industry, Radisson Hotel Group, for example, continues to focus on its Responsible Business strategy, one of the essential drivers to being able to deliver memorable and meaningful moments to its millions of guests worldwide.

Environmental best practices

Prioritising the reduction of our carbon and water footprint by 10% by 2022, we are focused on human rights in our supply chain, as well as the creation of shared value in communities in the areas of food, shelter and better futures for disadvantaged children and youth. In line with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs or Global Goals), our hotels across the globe are adopting more and more best practices to protect the environment.

One of our key focus areas moving forward lies with Radisson Meetings, a global partnership with First Climate, one of the world's largest carbon offset organisations, that helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions and creates positive social impact.

With the 100% carbon neutral meetings option, we are one of the first hotel groups to turn emissions into impact. By automatically offsetting the carbon footprint for every single meeting and event we host, we offset more than 38,300 CO2e tonnes, which is the equivalent of taking 8,300 cars off the road per year.

Hybrid meeting demand

While the future of meetings is yet to be written, it will likely include a combination of live and virtual meetings in the same event. The past year has forced many companies to explore work-from-home options, relying heavily on Wifi, streaming and increased demand for hybrid meetings. By curating intimate hybrid events in local areas, that require less or no travel time, companies can reduce environmental impact while simultaneously keeping attendees safe.

The demand for hybrid meetings has increased exponentially over the past months and is a great solution for many companies, as attendees can join from other countries, their homes or even their local coffee shop. But the hybrid format is not only convenient. It also provides a great opportunity for any organisation to further its sustainability mission, significantly reducing its carbon footprint without completely eliminating true human connection.

Recent studies predict that small domestic meetings will return first, with large conferences likely to be seen again well beyond 2021 – or only ever as hybrid options into the future. According to the [Post Covid-19 Event Outlook Report](#), an overwhelming 93% of organisers plan to invest in virtual events moving forward.

With that in mind, many believe that virtual events are here to stay, primarily because they offer a powerful way in which to build engagement with audiences everywhere. While physical events will of course return in time, it seems that they're unlikely to ever supplant virtual events, but rather co-exist with them.

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