

Episode 203: Here is everything you need to know about Virtual Summits & Virtual Events

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Dr. Mark T. Wade:

If you're ready to take your summit to the next level, or want to start implementing other virtual events. Then this episode is definitely for you and you're going to want to be here. Hey there, Dr. Mark T. Wade founder of Virtual Summits Software, your host here on the Virtual Summit Podcast, and I'm excited to tell you about our upcoming event. I decided, you know what, I'm going to take this episode, not to just tell you about the event that's coming up, actually break it down because I think there are some learning points for you right now in this event that we're about to do. And that event is Summit Fest Live. So you can grab your tickets right now. It's still happening February 3rd through the 5th, grab your ticket, join us live, whether it's in-person in New Orleans or grab one of our virtual passes and stream live in real time with one of those interactive passes.

Dr. Mark:

Now grab it. You can go to <https://www.summitfestlive.com>. So I figured let's actually break down Summit Fest Live. Let's use this opportunity, not just to remind you to be there with us. This is definitely event. You do not want to miss. Uh, if you're looking at creating your first or your next virtual summit, or if you're actually looking at adding on other types of virtual events, like, uh, challenges, live stream conferences, online workshops, virtual mastermind, all of that is represented at Summit Fest Live. So I said, you know, let's go ahead and tell them, let's remind everybody that it's happening. Um, but also let's use this opportunity to break it down so you can see it because what is Summit Fest Live? Summit Fest Live, which is normally our in-person conference. Uh, last year it was focused specifically on virtual summits and for virtual summit hosts.

Dr. Mark:

Well, this year we've expanded that with the, in the virtual event space, which is the fastest growing industry in the world right now we've decided to expand to encompass these other virtual events as well. So you can get a little bit of everything at one spot, but also in light of the current atmosphere with, uh, some people not wanting to get out and leave yet, we've decided, well, let's take that into consideration and let's create a hybrid conference. And so with that being said, that makes it a perfect example to walk through today, uh, in real time, showing you about Summit Fest Live, but also showing you the different aspects of it from a hybrid event perspective. So, first off, let's just start with, what is it like? We talked about how in the past it was specifically focused on summits. This year what it is, is strategic implementable presentations by experts who are doing the exact things they are teaching, breaking down specific parts or tips or strategies or, um, insights into different aspects of virtual events.

Dr. Mark:

So what I mean by that, all of that is first off. We didn't just take anybody to speak on this. We actually had over 75 speakers apply. We reduced that down to about 25 speakers. And I went through and I vetted every single speaker. I looked at, not only what is the topic that they would want to talk on because I wanted to make sure we had a variety of every different type of topic under the umbrella virtual events covered. But I also, wasn't just looking for like headliners it, wasn't just going to call up my buddy, John Lee Dumas, and be like, Hey, JLD come join me here. You know, just because he's got a big

name. No, no, no. If they're on this stage, they have been vetted and have looked at to make sure that what they are teaching, they have actually done.

Dr. Mark:

So you can know with confidence that anybody who is teaching on these stages have done the thing they're teaching and not like seven years ago, either like within the last year. So this is like real time, up to date strategies that work now, because you know, if you follow me, you understand, we constantly talk about new and changing strategies, updating trends, things that, you know, do work this year, didn't work last year, worked last year and don't work this year. So it's in person. It's important to have your finger on the pulse of what is happening now. So that was the first key. Two, no pitching. This is not a pitch fest. These speakers are going to be giving you strategic implementable tactics. It's also not theory. It's not hypothetical. You are going to walk away with things that you can write down and actually use in your event, whether it's next week, next month, next year, you're going to have these tools in your tool belt.

Dr. Mark:

Now with that being said, my belief is that the virtual events space is kind of where podcasting was at about 10 years ago. And it has the opportunity become an industry, an industry that's going to create so much opportunity for all of us that are in this space. Whether you are a host, whether you are an attendee, whether you are a, a consultant, a coach, a service, a product, a technology, et cetera, inside of the virtual events space, we have an opportunity here. And so one of my missions that I'm doing throughout all of my companies is creating an environment for this industry to take shape. See, I believe for the industry to take shape, we need to bring the people, the experts, the heads out there that are out there doing amazing, remarkable things and bring them together in one place.

Dr. Mark:

So that collaboration opportunity in general, you know, in like a, it brainstorming, all these amazing things can happen and arise from that, which will only cause more flourishing and more, uh, an increased to happen. And that's what Summit Fest Live is. It's the place for everyone to come together and start to look at these opportunities. Start to look at these new ways of doing things. Start to look at what's working, what's not working. Get ideas from others, you know, and here's the other thing with these speakers. They're not all in one industry. These are not entrepreneurs, all entrepreneurs. We have people who have done them in financial aspects. We have people who who've done them in the farming virtual events, in the farming niche. We've had people in the chiropractic niche, the health professional niche, the dancing niche. I mean, in in-person indoor rec niche, we've got all kinds of different industries represented inside of Summit Fest Live.

Dr. Mark:

And one of my, uh, core beliefs is, or one of my core philosophy is I'm always looking for, uh, uncommon commonalities. I believe there's a lot of opportunity in business. If you find things that don't, aren't normally in a certain niche, a certain arena, and you bring those into it, you can get a lot of success really quick. So that's another aspect with Summit Fest Live. These are not all Facebook marketing, uh, online course, you know, entrepreneurs talking about virtual events. These is a plethora of industries and niches represented here. So it's going to create a lot of thought, a lot of, uh, excitement, a lot of collaboration, which was one of the top things our speakers and attendees from last year's Summit Fest Live said was one of the, which we had a net promoter score of. I think it was 8.8, which is really high.

Dr. Mark:

So we loved that. We had over 80% of the attendees last year and speakers purchase tickets to this year. That's how great of an event it was. But one of the top feedbacks I got was how much, how much opportunity and collaboration came from being at that event. So if you're looking for some opportunities, if you're looking for some collaboration, this is the place to be. Even if you're going to be there virtually with us, and I'm going to break this down and talk you through all the different aspects are going to be there is going to be awesome. I can't wait, but again, I wanna, uh, we are looking with this with Summit Fest Live, to create a community, a network collaboration, the third aspect of it, which is, you know, just based a little bit off of my personality is experience. We want a memorable experience. We want you to walk away going, wow, that was a lot of fun, I cannot wait until the next one.

Dr. Mark:

Now you might be saying, okay, Mark, I get it. If the in-person version of it, the in-person is in New Orleans. All of the speakers are going to be there. You've got some of those super VIP tickets that are going to be there. And you guys are going to be doing things in person and going down Bourbon Street and checking out, you know, uh, the Jackson Square and getting beignets at Cafe Dumont. I can see all the amazing, uh, fun that you would have in person, but how's it going to be a memorable experience virtually? Well, we have special virtual events planned just for the virtual attendees. So let's kind of chat. Well, we'll get into in just a second. I'll explain and break it all down. So where's it at, I mean, as if you haven't picked up on that already, it is hosted in New Orleans.

Dr. Mark:

It's always the first week of February. So, you know, even if you're hearing this three years later, you can go to <https://www.summitfestlive.com> and check it out. Uh, we are still going to be hosting it first week of February. You can check those dates there. It's in New Orleans, which is one of my favorite cities in the entire world. It has a little bit of everything. So what my goal is, you're going to come for the conference. Then you're going to stay and have fun in the city. So we always host it the weekend before. It's essentially the weekend before Mardi Gras. Uh, there's so much, uh, there's a little something for everyone in New Orleans. If you haven't been to NOLA, you gotta check it out. It's got cuisine, it's got culture, it's got art, it's got music, jazz. It's got so much food.

Dr. Mark:

It's got fun. There's activities, there's tours. And I, one of my favorite things to do is the ghost tour in New Orleans. There's so much history there. So it's got a little bit of something for everyone, which is why we host it in New Orleans. It's a lot of fun. Now, every year we will have the in-person conference at, at, you know, Summit Fest Live in New Orleans. Come join us there this year. Uh, we decided to do a hybrid version since there are limits on capacity. And of course we're daily checking all of the updates and standards and safety precautions, and we are 110% ahead of all of that. And, you know, regularly adhering to all regulations, but it's open. Despite what you read, New Orleans is open dining inside all of this stuff, you know, all of the luxuries that we have in certain places in the world, but what we're doing is we are all of the speakers.

Dr. Mark:

Every speaker you're going to hear from or see are going to be there in person in New Orleans, we're running it just like we would any other conference. We've got multiple rooms, we've got breakout things

happening. We got DJ Sammy, who's going to be emceeing. Who's the DJ at, uh, you know, some huge events like traffic and conversion summit, which has like 7,000 attendees. He's the DJ at Mindshare, which is in the health space, health entrepreneurs, which has like thousands of attendees. He's, DJ'ed at AFS and thousands and thousands of other places. So he's going to be there providing energy and excitement and emceeing, both in person, but it's going to pass right over there to our virtual attendees as well. We've got an AV team with multiple cameras, set ups. We've got stages. So the whole thing is happening right there in person.

Dr. Mark:

And then, like I said, we have this select a number of super VIP, which means you get to be there. In-person with all of the speakers. It's almost kind of like having a conference designed just for these 10 or 15 people. You know, if you're in there in person, it's like, wow, you get to hang out with the speakers. You're masterminding with all the experts. You're literally right there getting the information and hanging out, especially in the evening activities we have set up and planned. So if you're ready to get out and be back around people again, I would highly recommend checking out the super VIP pass. I do know we still have a few of those left, so you can go check those out once they're gone. We'll of course pull it from the website. So if it's still there, we still have some.

Dr. Mark:

Now for everybody else, where is it being hosted? Well, it's being hosted virtual for everybody else. So that was kind of our now. So now I kind of get into breaking down the event from a virtual event standpoint or a hybrid event standpoint. So you can kind of hear about Summit Fest, um, but also take, get some takeaways for if you're looking to do hybrid events. In my opinion, or my, let me rephrase that, my prediction, 2021 is going to be the year of the hybrid. We've got so many in-person event hosts that are ready to get back in person, but I don't think anybody's ever going to go fully in-person again, because everybody got kind of spanked pretty hard last year, right? So they're going to be adding virtual to their, uh, to their wheelhouse almost as an insurance clause really. Like if something happens in person, we've at least got a virtual set up, we got all these people anticipating virtual. Well, that being said, there's also an entire demographic of people who don't want to be in person even back when they were in person. They're like, I really don't want to be around people. I like to just stay home. And there's other people that, you know, like, Oh, I don't really want to take off work and this and that. So now in the last year, we have seen the virtual event industry, virtual summits lives from conferences, et cetera, online workshops, virtual masterminds, leap forward almost five years overnight.

Dr. Mark:

Not just from a technological or a strategic or just even a, an amount quantity of them. But also from an acceptance standpoint. People are more open to virtual events. They're okay. Virtual events, uh, they're like, you know what? It's actually for a lot of people just as good, if not better, being virtual than in-person. So we do believe we're going to see 2021 as the year of the hybrid. Um, of course, there's going to be just as many and even more live-streamed conferences, virtual summits, all of that's going to be going down. But I do know there is a whole subset of all of us, like myself who are ready to be back in person with people. I miss people. I miss human beings. My extroverted soul is crying out to hang out with some people. So I cannot wait to be in New Orleans at Summit Fest Live and hang out with those super VIP's and all the speakers there. Now, with that being said, let's break down the hybrid event.

Dr. Mark:

Because all of you that are grabbing a virtual pass, you're going to be streaming the live in real time interactively. So that was actually how we positioned Summit Fest Live. Instead of me telling you what you need to do, whether me saying you should be in person, or you should watch virtually. I said, why don't we just let you choose? Which is, was our kind of theme this year. You choose come be with us in person with a super VIP or interact live in real time with an interactive virtual stream to experience. Now you might be saying, well, how is it interactive Mark?

Dr. Mark:

So the cool thing with this, also the challenging thing with this is this was kind of like a planning and creating two events at the same time that layered over top of each other. So in person, if anybody's ever done an in-person event, you know, there's certain things that have to be taken into consideration for in-person that you don't think about, uh, virtually. For example, like bathroom breaks or water breaks or coffee breaks, things like that. One of the biggest feedbacks we got from, from last year's Summit Fest Live was, Hey, Mark, we need longer breaks in between the sessions because they got to change rooms, run to the restroom, et cetera, et cetera. Well, you don't really hear that ever in a virtual event. So there's things you gotta consider in-person, but you also have to then consider your virtual attendees. So you're taking into perspective two viewpoints, and you need to make sure they're both taken care of. So from the virtual attendees standpoint, we have bonus sessions. We have extra sessions every time in-person because there's multiple rooms with different sessions happening at the same time. So Hey, if you're not that interested in live stream conferences, come check out this session over here on virtual summits. If you're like, I've know a lot about virtual summits, I really want to learn about hybrid events or breakout sessions or sponsorships. Well then come to the other session over here and learn from that.

Dr. Mark:

So you actually get to choose what information you want. We have multiple tracks kind of happening at the same time as well. So with that being said, we had to consider the virtual attendees. So while in-person attendees are actually changing rooms and the speakers are changing, et cetera, we have additional sessions happening virtually for our virtual attendees. So you're going to get bonus breakout sessions, hot seats with the speakers, speaker panels, um, uh, like, um, networking opportunities and more. Extra presentation bonus events. So you're going to get even more, uh, sessions. You're going to have opportunities to ask speaker questions. So how is it going to be interactive, even if you're virtual well, right there at the stage, the speaker is going to have big screens set up. So even though, with your faces on it, they're going to be able to see you. They can see you wave, hold your hand, get excited. You can ask questions, unmute and ask a question, et cetera. So, you know, we're going to have an audience in person, but this, the virtual attendees are going to be blended right there with us. So it's like, you're going to be there except you don't have to put pants on, right.

Dr. Mark:

You can stay in your pajamas or your slippers, whatever. So you get to watch from the comfort of your own home, if you want, uh, with our virtual ticket. So we were considering what extra sessions do our virtual attendees need. We've got in-person, uh, cultural events that are happening, that we're also going to stream virtually so that our virtual attendants can participate as well in the evenings. When the in-person attendees go to do their in-person in person activity, you know, other event in the evening. Well, we have a special separate virtual event for our virtual attendees and experience. So what's really cool about this is not only are you going to be learning all this information about how to create your first

or next super summit or mega virtual event, but you're actually going to be participating in one. It's kind of like inception.

Dr. Mark:

While learning, you're going to be able to look around and watch and see how it works. So it's an incredible opportunity to not just learn, but to also experience and see, see from take away from it, what you like and what you don't like. But bottom line is this year, moving forward, all businesses, all companies, all brands are going to start to have to add virtual experiences, virtual events into their businesses, whether it's, you know, a virtual mastermind, an online workshop, a challenge, a live stream conference, or a virtual summit. You are going to have to add that into your business to stay relevant. As we move forward, all businesses are shifting that way. Why? Because the marketplace is shifting that way. Meaning your customers are expecting to be able to participate, consume and enjoy the, the offers you have in a virtual, uh, uh, in a virtual way.

Dr. Mark:

So now's the time to learn this. The other aspect of this, I released this in episode 195 is when it comes to 2021, I gave him a prediction, uh, episode 195 here on the podcast, Virtual Summit Podcast is, you know, what's going to happen this year with virtual summits, virtual events. And in my opinion, this is the year to claim your space. This is a year to claim your summit space, your virtual event space, because everybody's going to be piling in here. Now, what does everybody do though? Before they host their own virtual summit or virtual event, they always do a little bit of research and see if anybody else has hosted it on that. So if you've hosted one, you claimed your space. Most summit hosts, virtual event hosts do something a little bit different. They go elsewhere. They, you know, take it in a different direction.

Dr. Mark:

They don't repeat a summit that's already been done. So this is the time right now to claim your summit space before somebody else does, because somebody is going to do it. By the end of this year, we are going to see more virtual summits, more livestream conferences, more virtual events than we've ever seen in history probably put together. I know that sounds crazy, but it's going to happen. Now, let me tell you about a couple of the topics that are going to be covered. It is awesome. So let me just pull, you know, because we're going to talk about like, why, like for example, what you might want to participate in during Summit Fest Live. Now remember, like I said, there's different. We have several tracks happening at the same time. So you can participate in summits for a little bit and virtual events for a little bit.

Dr. Mark:

We've even got some people talking on how they run their virtual event and virtual summits agencies. Like we've got virtual summit producers, virtual event, you know, agencies and consultants that be teaching as well. So we have an amazing line of speakers. Again, all experts that are doing these activity. Nobody here is just talking, talking, hypothetically, nobody here is just talking. Theoretically. These are all people that have done this teaching this. So we've got Michael Kilpatrick talking about how to use a virtual summit to enter a new niche. How valuable is that? We've done this for every niche industry or product we've ever launched. We use a virtual summit to enter that. We got Wendy Freeman talking about how to maximize breakout sessions to increase engagement. We all know everybody's talking about breakout sessions. Most people aren't doing them correctly. She's going to be going through this.

She is an amazing event host. We got Dr. Krista Burns talking about a yearly summit profitability plan that scales to multiple six figures.

Dr. Mark:

So this is the time to establish those summits and those events into your promotional calendar. And then learn how to scale that to six figures. We've got Erin Loman Jeck talking about how to monetize your event with the perfect pitch from a virtual stage. So Hey, if you're still going to be making pitches, you're going to still be making offers. You're still being sale selling things. But now from virtual stages, you need to know how to adapt. Scott Carson, talking about how to use organic traffic to build your summit. Like maybe you don't want to do paid traffic anymore. He's going to go through several very, uh, effective ways to use organic traffic to build your summit. We got Ashley Fillingim who is an attorney, specializing in virtual events is going to be talking about legally. You don't know what you don't know about virtual events definitely tune in into this session. We got Luke Wade talking about an omnipresent strategy to promote your clients, virtual events. We've got Mike Broadwell talking about collaborative strategies for co-hosting summits.

Dr. Mark:

Maybe you're like Mark, I've been wanting to do a summit, but I don't have the time and the energy to do it by myself. Well, Mike has been producing summits that have four hosts on them and he's going to talk about how you can do the same. Mike Kim is going to give you a behind the scenes of a marketing consultants campaign of the new normal for a virtual event. Mike Kim is considered one of the top branding, marketing brains and experts on the planet. He's been running virtual summits and virtual events and he's been consulting from the marketing perspective. He's going to talk about the new normal with virtual events. We've got, uh, Alexandria Agresta, who's going to be hosting a successful hybrid event, engaging a live and virtual audience at the same time. This is a must listen to. Sean Osborne, summit tech setups that won't break the bank.

Dr. Mark:

We got Lechon Kirb, ethical ways to leverage businesses that have large audiences, Allison Melody sponsorship 101, how to build your sponsor deck and pay for your virtual event. We got, uh, Kole Whitty summit systems and a launch pant plan for a solopreneur. How to prevent the health crash. Luke Wade, how to improve virtual event with an experience. Dr. Krista Burns a six-figure live stream conference reveals speaker prep strategies that you must know. Just a few months ago. We hosted our own livestream conference, Dr. Krista and myself, and from stage with 50 people, 50 people in attendance, we sold over \$150,000 from a virtual stage. So if they say you got to have thousands of people to have a successful event, that is not true. Dr. Krista is going to tell you how Jesse Paul Smith who's the founder and creator of the worldwide dance challenge is going to talk about his attendee feedback loop to create an epic virtual challenge.

Dr. Mark:

Dr. Melissa Grill Petersen is how to craft your post summit offer for your summit. Kyle Gray, three stories to double your sales on your next virtual event. We got Dr. Justin Moseley getting high-level speakers and how to use that to build your brand. We've got Tamara Thompson, how experience upsells can cover your virtual event experiences. Darin Adams, how to crush your virtual event automations. We got Sammy, uh, tagging DJ Sammy, going to be talking about audio visual setups that you need to know for your virtual events. And even more. We've got more specialty breakout sessions all coming on,

Summit Fest Live. So if you have not, grab your ticket right now, please go get it because this is going to be an epic experience. If you want to come hang out with us in person, we still have a few of those super VIP's tickets. You're going to have essentially a conference designed around you, and you're going to be able to hang out mastermind with all the speakers who will be participating throughout the whole thing.

Dr. Mark:

Coming, hang out in the evening activities with us. Enjoy New Orleans, eat amazing food. Maybe you're in a state that's still locked down and you want to be able to get outdoors for a little bit, enjoy indoor seating and dining. All of that's available in New Orleans. Um, and then of course, if you're like Mark, I want to hang out and watch in my slippers and sandals and I don't want to get dressed. And I just want to watch from the comfort of my own home. Well, that's why we have that live stream. In real time, interactive virtual pass available. You will be sitting there as if you were in the conference with us, we'll see your faces. You can raise your hand, you can ask questions and you'll get some special bonus sessions from the virtual stream pass as well. So I really truly hope we'll see you at Summit Fest Live.

Dr. Mark:

I know I'm excited about it. I got we're heading out here, you know, in a week, we're going to be out there. Um, but no matter when you're listening to this, whether it's for this one right now, or you're listening to this three years later, Summit Fest Live, it is the in-person conference for virtual events. Think traffic and conversions for virtual events. First week in February in New Orleans, check it out. <https://www.summitfestlive.com>. I sure hope we'll see you there. Uh, and tell a friend, tell a friend, this is the spot to be, let them know, and we'll see you in New Orleans at Summit Fest Live.

Dr. Mark:

Now I want to end this episode, by saying to all the summit hosts listening right now, I believe in you and you can do this summits are by far one of the most powerful ways to quickly grow your list, launch your platform, make more money. And most importantly, make an impact in the world, even if you're just getting started. So don't get caught up in analysis paralysis because the world needs to hear your message. And there are people who are waiting for you to help them just get started because imperfect action is always better than no action. Thank you and see you on the next episode.