



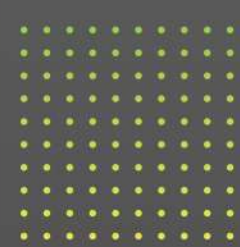
# 2020 EVENT TRENDS

BY ENDLESS EVENTS

NEW YEAR  
TRENDS

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# 2023 EVENT TRENDS:

BETTER MARKETING IDEAS  
FOR THE NEW YEAR



It's official, folks: 2022 is in the books. With 2023 around the corner, it's essential for event planners and marketers to think about the coming year.

While it's tempting to rehash what worked for your brand last year, trends come and go in every industry – marketing included.

## So, what does 2023 hold for marketing and events?

The Endless Events team put our heads together and predicted that **8 trends will make big waves in 2023:**

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**Sustainability**

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But instead of just talking about these big trends, it's time to put them into practice. Check out our favorite 2023 event trends, plus actionable tips to use them for your events in the coming year. It's the best way to boost engagement, save money, and put on your best events yet.



# Why Marketing Is Different in 2023?

First, we must acknowledge that marketing doesn't work like it did in 2022. To get more mileage out of your events, you need to clue your brain into how marketing works in 2023.

## Inbound Marketing Is Getting Crowded

Inbound marketing is an intelligent way to make your brand more appealing to customers. Instead of pushing your brand onto customers, you can create A-plus content that brings customers to you. More often than not, this includes content like:

- 01 **Infographics**
- 02 **White papers**
- 03 **eBooks**
- 04 **Blogs**
- 05 **Social media posts**
- 06 **Podcasts**
- 07 **YouTube videos**





Inbound marketing is great, but your competitors have caught up. Everyone's doing inbound marketing. You can't do a Google search without seeing branded blogs, videos, and podcasts pop up.

**74% of businesses report using inbound marketing.**

Don't get us wrong. We love inbound strategies, but they're the rule, not the exception. To differentiate your brand in 2023, you must do much more than start a blog.



Feel free to continue investing in inbound in 2023, but don't dedicate all of your marketing resources here.

**32% percent of U.S. adults feel overwhelmed by content in the wake of COVID-19,**

so you need to take a different approach.

Instead of contributing to a tidal wave of so-so content, 2023 is the year you should invest in quality content. That means conducting your own research, interviewing experts, writing long-form content, and fact-checking yourself before you publish anything.

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## No One Answers the Phone

Even if customers express interest in your business, they probably don't want to talk to you on the phone about it. In fact,

**80% of Americans won't answer a call from an unknown number. 81% of millennials experience apprehension before they take a phone call**

— and that's hardly the first emotion you want people to feel about your brand. To be honest, consumers just don't want to talk on the phone.

**75% say it's because phone calls take more time than a quick text or email, but this is also because of concerns over spam calls.**

To customers, there's no need to make a time-consuming phone call. They're used to information being a Google search away, so give them the info they need without a full-on conversation. If possible, make information available online. Consumers want the power to review the information and do research on their own, so don't insist on a phone call when your chat could have been an email. You can lock information behind a paywall or login if you don't want to make it publicly accessible.

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## Nobody Likes Ads

Your Facebook Ads aren't fooling anybody. Consumers are savvy about ads and, frankly, don't want to see them.

**In 2021, 27% of people used ad blockers,**

so over a quarter of people are so annoyed by ads that they installed software specifically to avoid them.

**74% of people say they're tired of social media ads, and 91% of consumers say ads are more intrusive today than ever before.**

Read the writing on the wall: your audience hates seeing ads. Why force your brand on someone who doesn't want to engage with you?

If you really want to do ads in 2023, they must be unusual, funny, and quirky. Think Old Spice or Lume. Of course, that would require a big production budget, so for the money, you might be better off investing in something that people aren't trying to actively avoid. Instead, lean into organic content and in-person connections through events. When you start customer conversations with consent, you'll find people will be more receptive to your message.

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## Here's What To Do Instead

If inbound marketing, phone calls, and ads are so last year, what should you do in 2023? We recommend you lean into partnerships, build communities, and plan events.

### **Focus On Partnerships:**

Teamwork makes the dream work, and that's true for marketing your business in 2023. Partnerships are a reliable way to stop more thumbs and put your brand and partner in the spotlight.

Instead of doing everything yourself, try out these different partnerships to see what sticks:

### **Complementary Brands:**

If you're a shoe brand, you can create a joint campaign with a sock brand. Since your products don't compete against each other but are somewhat related, you likely share an audience. This is a smart way to share audiences, split the work, and get twice the results.

### **Sponsors:**

This type of partnership is ideal if you host many events. Try to partner with sponsors to lighten the load of paying for your events. Ensure the sponsors are a good fit for your audience so the sponsors see ROI.



### **Content Creators:**

If you haven't partnered with creators or influencers yet, you're missing out. Influencers promote you to their audience in exchange for a flat fee or free products. Consumers love influencers because they come across as more genuine than branded messages. Just make sure you **follow FTC guidelines**; influencers have to disclose paid relationships, and you could get fined if they fail to disclose.





Partnerships are a fantastic way to market your brand in 2023 because they don't just make your business the star of the show. They build hype and amplify your message to connect with more people for less effort.

As always, do your due diligence before pursuing a partnership. You don't want an Adidas-Kanye West scenario on your hands, so do a little recon to choose partners who share your values.

**Build a Community You Can Market To:** After three years of pandemic-related isolation, people are craving connection and community. This is a big reason why impersonal emails and shotgun-style ad campaigns won't move the needle in 2023.

To cut through the static, you need to create genuine connections with your customers. You can do that through the other strategies in this guide, but communities are the quickest way to win people's hearts.

Instead of a one-time event or an ad campaign that runs for a few weeks, you can build trusting relationships with your target audience. Create an exclusive community for your top fans that will allow you to:

- **Create contests and giveaways**
- **Share exclusive content and interviews with industry experts**
- **Conduct surveys and polls**
- **Offer networking opportunities**



This strategy isn't just a win for your customers: communities are beneficial to brands, too.

**66% of community members say community membership impacts their loyalty to a brand. Branded communities are 13% more likely to have an impact on customers than social media communities like Facebook groups, too.**

If you want to boost loyalty, communities are a must. Plus, you own the data. If Instagram, TikTok, or Facebook go belly-up tomorrow, you'll still own the customer relationship.

#### **Use Events as a Marketing Asset:**

Remember, authentic connections are critical in 2023. After COVID-19, people are itching to connect in person again. While COVID is an ever-present threat, you can still plan a safe, fun event that puts your brand front and center with your target audience.

**97% of B2B marketers say in-person events significantly impacted their business outcomes, and 68% say most of their leads come from virtual events.**

You don't need a huge budget to do event marketing, either. You can opt for a virtual event to reduce costs and open your event to an international audience to boost ticket sales. Nice, right?



# EVENT TRENDS

## 8 EVENT TRENDS: TO EMBRACE IN 2023

As an event management agency, Endless knows the new year holds great promise for events. But remember, this isn't 2022: now is the time to reinvent your marketing strategy and embrace a fresh perspective. Every brand can take its own approach, but you should consider these 8 upcoming event trends to stay ahead in 2023.



Thanks.



# 1. Sustainability

We know sustainability isn't a "new" trend. But why is it that so few businesses invest in sustainability? 2023 is the year to actually plan a sustainable event that turns heads. You don't have to go all-in if you have a modest budget or are new to sustainable events – even small changes can have a significant impact.

If you don't want to be more sustainable for the environment's sake, do it for your attendees.

**80% of U.S. consumers care about sustainability, and 70% would stop buying from a brand if they knew it wasn't sustainable.**

Who needs that lousy PR? Plus, sustainable events are often cheaper than conventional events. It's a win-win, so try to incorporate a few sustainable elements into your 2023 events to go green.

Endless knows a thing or two about sustainable events. Check out a few of our favorite guides to designing sustainable events in 2023:

[🔗 10 Smart Strategies for Planning Sustainable Events](#)

[🔗 Endless Events Commitment to Sustainability](#)

[🔗 Sustainability In Events: Recognising The Social & Human Impact of the Industry](#)

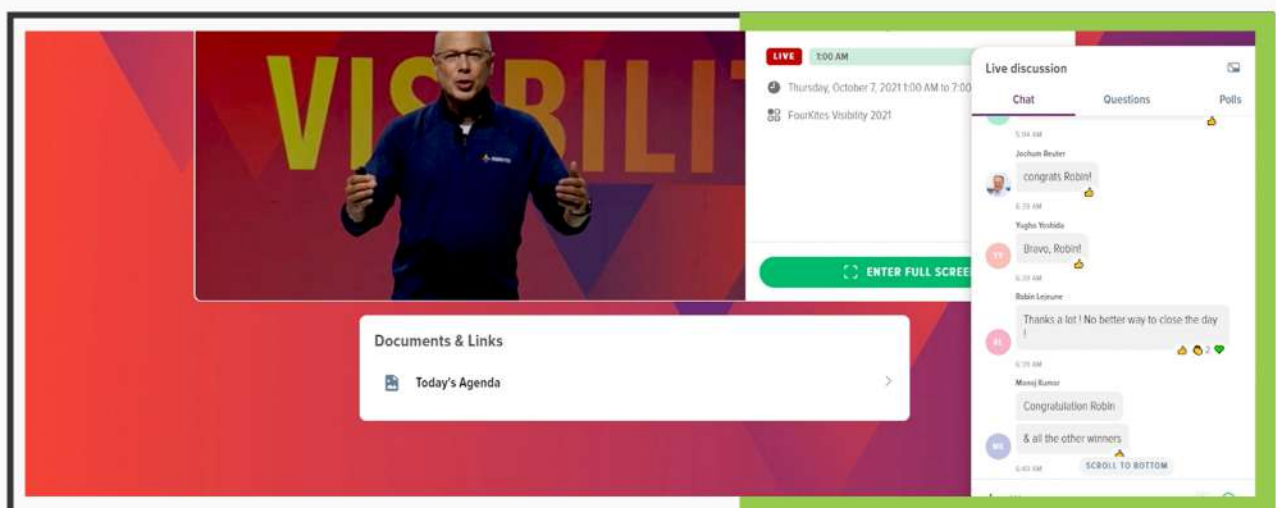
[🔗 Are You Creating Sustainable Events?](#)

[🔗 The Sustainable Event Awards: What They Are & Why They Matter](#)

[🔗 Go Green: How To Start Creating Sustainable Events](#)

[🔗 Planning Sustainable Events: What You Must Know](#)

[🔗 Planning Sustainable Events: How We Can Solve Global Issues](#)





## 2. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

2020 was a year of upheaval for several reasons, but it also exposed America's equity gap. Whether it's race, disability, or gender identity, our country still needs to progress to become a more welcoming space for all.

**Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)** should be part of every company's strategy, but you can also incorporate DEI into your events. It's all about bridging the gap: the goal is to make your event so accessible that everyone can enjoy it equally.

Incorporating DEI isn't just a nice-to-have that makes you look good. We're talking about making events more accessible to boost attendance and engagement.



**26% of U.S. adults live with a disability, so ADA-compliant venues and remote-friendly events are a must.**

**74% of Americans have desktops, but 97% own smartphones, so virtual events must also be mobile-friendly.**

It also isn't a bad idea to consider the following:

- **Captions**
- **Translations**
- **Diverse speakers and topics**
- **Gender-neutral language**



DEI is a complex and nuanced topic. We could go on about it for ages, but if you'd like to learn more about it, check out these DEI guides from the Endless Team:

- [!\[\]\(5ba1bc70d78f05c00988641e5e513c62\_img.jpg\) \*Diversity In Events 2021\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(0d3dd579ab24f8020cd6c2659f3acb8c\_img.jpg\) \*Diversity and Inclusion In Events: Paving The Way For a Better Tomorrow\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(77aacc67724f470ed5556217e9f1530a\_img.jpg\) \*Diversity At Events – Best Tips for Event Profs\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(2f0a16d48331670e3ba1ef62cc117e02\_img.jpg\) \*Designing Events With Empathy: How & Why\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(f54e37e084c1f0536e5af6fd7937c2e4\_img.jpg\) \*Are Virtual Events Really More Inclusive & Accessible?\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(c79dc11ec47786281cf0341daa788e56\_img.jpg\) \*Breaking Barriers: Translation & Captioning For Events\*](#)

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### 3. Hybrid Events

Virtual events are all the rage, but people sometimes want to connect in real life. The good news is that you don't need to choose between in-person or virtual; you can host hybrid events in 2023 to enjoy both benefits.

You set up a smaller in-person experience with a hybrid event and connect cameras, audio, and lighting to your virtual event platform. A hybrid event allows attendees to choose between attending your event in person or tuning in virtually.

Hybrid is a smart idea because:

- **Some international attendees still can't travel because of COVID restrictions.**
- **Travel is downright unaffordable for many people right now.**
- **Introverts shudder at the thought of attending an in-person event.**

Whatever their reason, attendees want to see more hybrid events in 2023.

**86% of B2B event planners saw positive ROI on their hybrid events, and 81% say the opportunity to network is a big plus for attendees.**

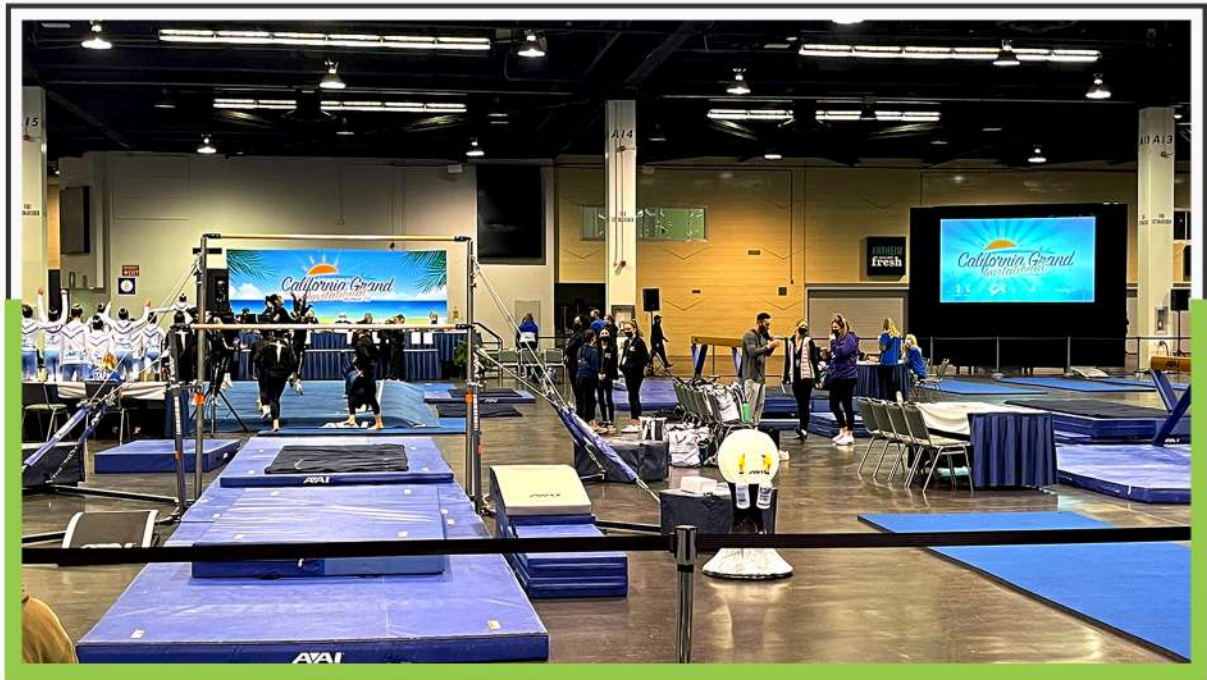
Hybrid events can make your event more accessible and sustainable, so what's not to love?

All you need is a hybrid-friendly event platform. And you don't have to look far, either: ***Endless connects brands with a hybrid-friendly event platform that's ready out of the box.*** It's the best option for ensuring that in-person and remote attendees have an equitable experience.

For more guidance on hybrid events, check out Endless' guides:

- [!\[\]\(e662c6fdc679f154c0e75d901761d894\_img.jpg\) \*\*Hybrid Event Budget: 7 Items & Tips to Consider\*\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(e0657301a840725a62b5d9c03de7d165\_img.jpg\) \*\*These Are The Top 5 Benefits of Hybrid Events\*\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(c84b30d7d5311af020af6bce6a2c548f\_img.jpg\) \*\*5 Hybrid Event Examples to Inspire your Process\*\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(a9333260d8ffbbfeaa1095df6db7bccd\_img.jpg\) \*\*Your Essential Hybrid Studio Checklist\*\*](#)
- [!\[\]\(7910f03a1b4fed5edeef128d22723166\_img.jpg\) \*\*5 Reasons Why You Should Produce A Hybrid Event in a Studio\*\*](#)





## 4. Event Workspaces

Don't let the Quiet Quitting trend fool you: hustle culture is still alive and well, thanks to remote work. As much as you want attendees to focus on the event, you're still hosting an event for professionals. Not everyone can disconnect from work for eight-plus hours, so they'll need to work while they're at your event.

Don't force attendees to sit on the floor near wall outlets. With more people working remotely, you need to **offer event workspaces that allow attendees to work between sessions**. A dedicated coworking space will make this much more enjoyable — and less stressful — for everyone.

- **Mixed seating options and tables. Include seated desks and tall tables that allow people to stand as they work.**
- **Lots of power outlets. Some venues will even let you rent rapid charging stations to charge phones and laptops in just a few minutes.**
- **High-speed wifi.**

Try to keep the coworking space indoors, so people don't have to squint at their laptops through the sun, wind, or rain. Your coworking space should also be reasonably quiet. Don't put it smack-dab in the middle of the expo hall; it should be quiet enough that attendees can make phone calls.



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## 5. Smaller, Localized Events

2023 is the year event planners need to throw the manual out the window. Maybe you're used to hosting one huge international event every year. That's all well and good, but perhaps it's time to take a different approach.

More and more brands are hosting smaller events across the country instead of one massive event once a year. You might have to juggle more by planning satellite events across the U.S., but you can spread them out. Treat this like a band going on tour; you can space your events a few weeks apart to replenish and recharge in between events.

- **They're more sustainable:** By taking your event on the road, more local attendees will go to your events. Local events cut down on the number of people flying to your event. You and your team will need to travel, which creates a smaller carbon footprint than hundreds of people flying to one big event.
- **They're more intimate:** Huge events are fun, but attendees want one-on-one connection.

**Big, annual events make people feel small and anonymous, so they don't get many opportunities to connect. Small, local events allow people to connect beyond the surface-level business card exchanges that happen at bigger events.**

- **They're easier to book:** Why host an event in a pricey place like New York City? Choose Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities to host your events instead. They have the amenities of big cities, but they're often cheaper and easier to navigate. Be sure to choose cities with an airport if attendees need to fly.



You don't have to hire a separate event production team for every single event, either. **Endless offers end-to-end event production** at just about any location in the United States, so if you're going on tour, consider us your roadies.

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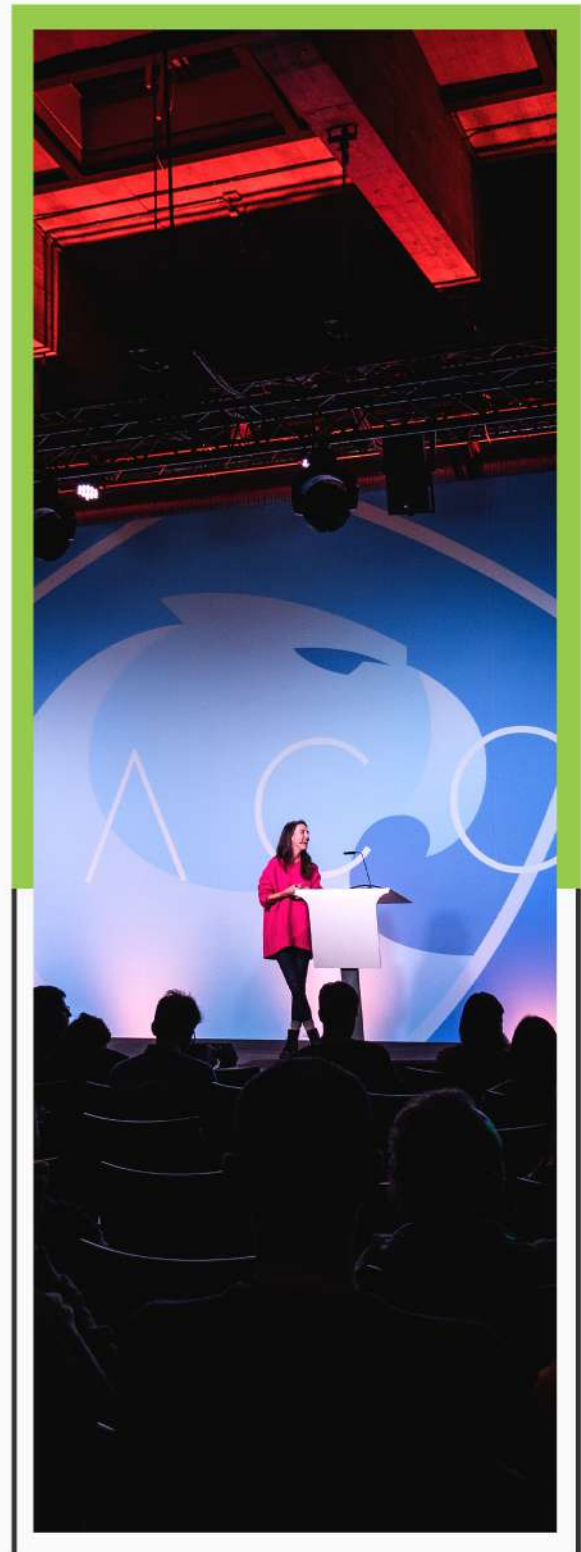
## 6. Community for Year-round Engagement

We mentioned this earlier, but a community can significantly boost attendance if you host an annual event. Instead of creating local chapters, you can create a central online community for all your global members to connect in one place.

Communities should primarily offer value to members in the form of content, networking opportunities, and even a few freebies. But the real point is to create a ready-made audience to promote your events.

By creating a community, you create an audience that can connect with your brand throughout the year. A community makes creating excitement much easier before you launch ticket pre-sales.

You can also ask your community for feedback after the event. You would typically have to pay out the wazoo for this information, so treasure the advice you receive from the community.



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## 7. Data-driven ROI

Regardless of your investment, you must prove that your event marketing dollars matter. In 2023, planning an event and hoping it will bring in leads isn't enough.

You can monitor your event metrics in real-time thanks to data-driven **event platforms from experts like *Endless***. This is the best way to prevent budget cuts (an event planner's worst nightmare). When you can prove the ROI of your event, it's harder for managers to cut your budget because they can see how events contribute to the bottom line.

Now's the time for event planners to start thinking more about their data and getting comfortable with numbers. Budget-conscious executives want evidence of ROI, an essential measurable for success.

No, you didn't get into event planning for the math. But even so, you need to know a few basic formulas to help you determine if your event was a success or a flop. Educate yourself on these KPIs to give yourself a head start in 2023.

[!\[\]\(a03a7eb2f4046e1d3c76772003e549ea\_img.jpg\) 13 Community KPIs You Need In Your Analytics Dashboard](#)

[!\[\]\(cbe2492b119e39e02a1dab2af4a4b296\_img.jpg\) The 14 Most Important KPIs For Event Audience Engagement](#)

[!\[\]\(e474458956c9a37fbf9586ddb60a7fa1\_img.jpg\) 9 Methods To Measure Your Real Event ROI](#)

[!\[\]\(3e2231b1ad3ca8da8658228c00dd08e0\_img.jpg\) 77 Event KPIs To Measure Your Event Success](#)



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## 8. Include Cannabis in Your Events (Where It's Legal)

We know this sounds crazy, but event planners have to accept it: cannabis is legal in more places than ever before, and the taboo is fading quickly. We're facing a future where people want to smoke or eat edibles instead of drink.

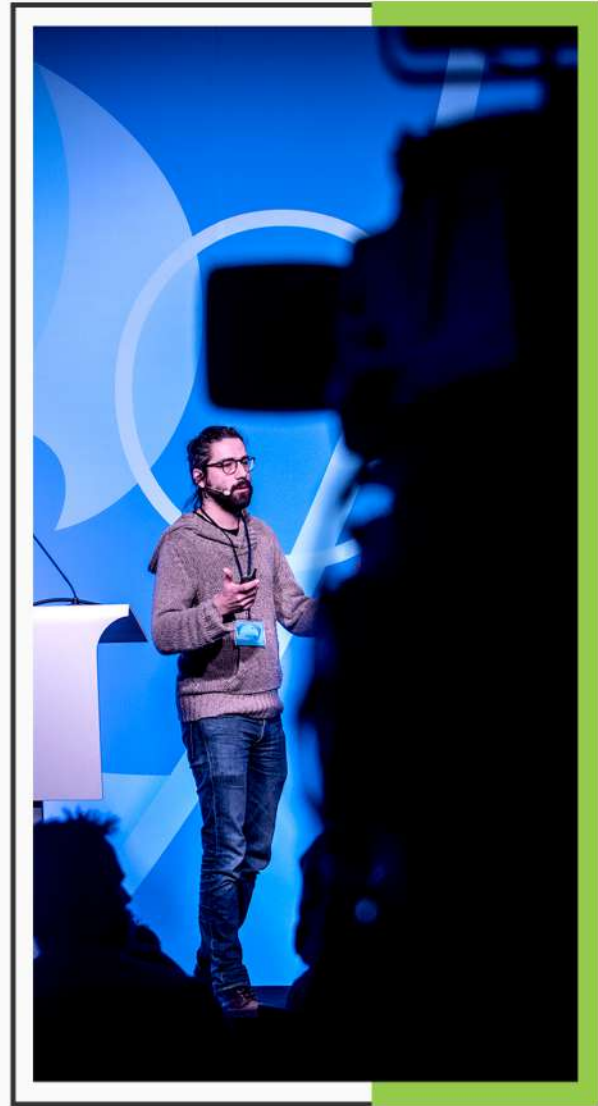
Younger event attendees just don't want to drink alcohol.

**26% of adults aged 18 to 25 don't drink at all, compared to 15% of adults aged 55 to 74 who don't drink. Plus, 43% of people aged 19 to 30 reported using cannabis in the last 12 months – a 34% increase over 2016.**

**Since just 25% of cannabis users smoke alone, most people use it socially.**

As a result, some event attendees sneak into the alley behind event venues to smoke or ingest edibles before an event. If you're holding an adults-only event in a state where recreational cannabis is legal, consider incorporating it into your event.

First things first, you need to know your audience. This plan can seriously backfire if they aren't receptive to cannabis-friendly events.



You likely can't supply the actual cannabis because of strict regulations. However, you can make cannabis less taboo at the event, which can include:

- **Designating an outdoor space that's 420-friendly.**
- **Providing lots of snacks for folks with the munchies – and maybe some cough drops.**
- **Offering shuttle services back to the hotel for attendees who choose to partake.**

# 3 2023 Event Trends That Aren't Worth the Hype

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At this point, we know where brands need to focus their energy in 2023. But let's be honest: not all trends are worth the hype. In 2023, the metaverse, NFTs, and Web3 won't have enough meat to affect the events industry – at least, not yet.

Here's why you shouldn't bother incorporating these trends into your events just yet.

## **The Metaverse**

Not to rehash the drama, but Facebook released its metaverse project in [an effort to cover up whistleblower allegations](#). Facebook (now Meta) released a project that isn't ready for practical use. There aren't many tangible ways that event planners can use the metaverse.

Plus, the metaverse would require more widespread acceptance of the proper hardware and software, which is still expensive and glitchy as of this moment.

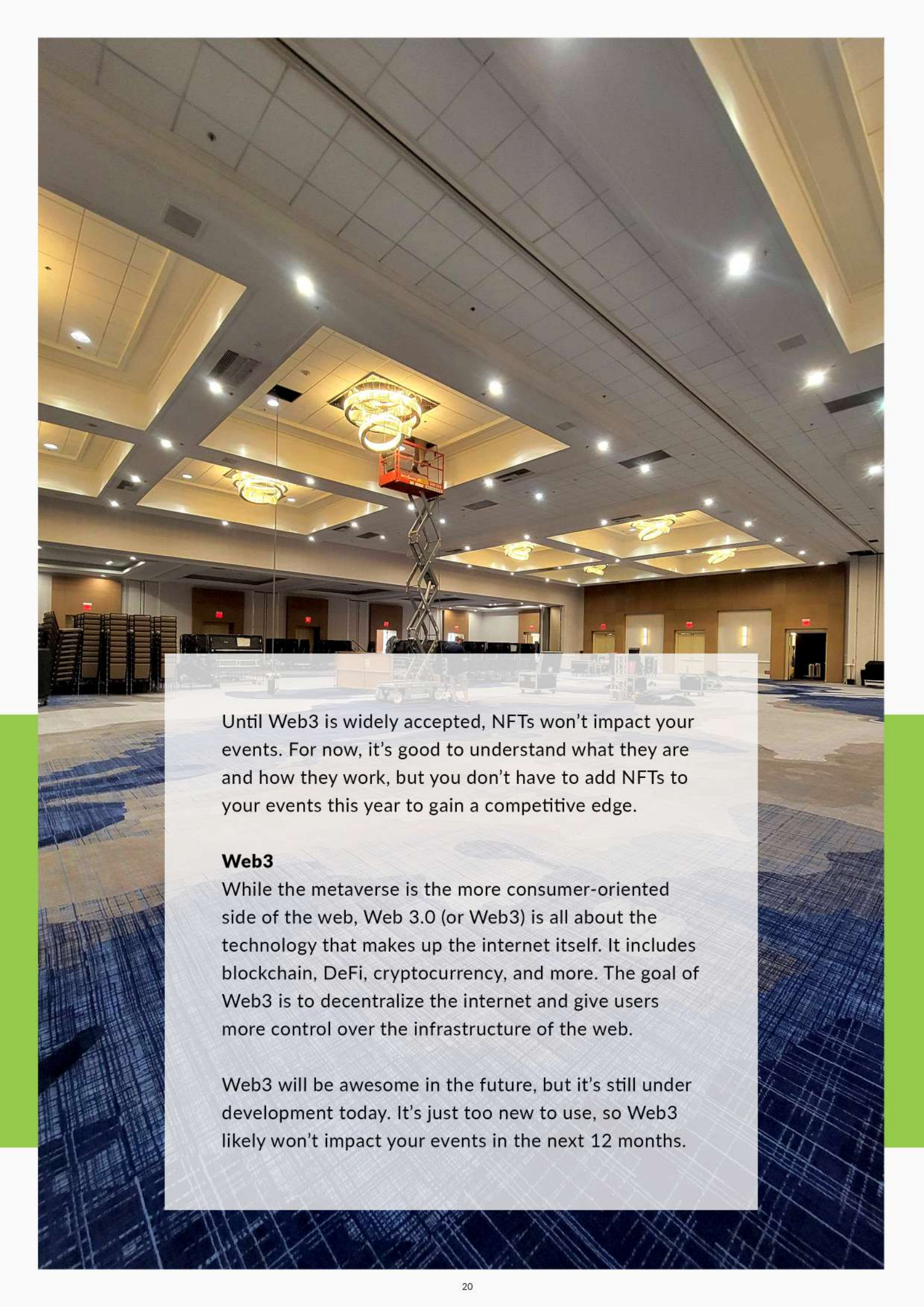
And even if everyone had the right gear, you still have to worry about interoperability between the different metaverse platforms and technologies.

If we're being realistic, the metaverse is at least several years away. If you really want to incorporate the metaverse into your event, we recommend waiting until the Apple Headset release.

## **NFTs**

A non-fungible token (NFT) is a digital property backed by the blockchain. It's an exciting concept, but ... most people don't care about NFTs. Overvaluation and NFT-flipping created short-term hype over NFTs, but most people don't want them.

For example, if you give away NFTs at your next event, most attendees would say, "Oh. Okay." They're much more excited about tangible stuff, like goodie bags and discounts.



Until Web3 is widely accepted, NFTs won't impact your events. For now, it's good to understand what they are and how they work, but you don't have to add NFTs to your events this year to gain a competitive edge.

### **Web3**

While the metaverse is the more consumer-oriented side of the web, Web 3.0 (or Web3) is all about the technology that makes up the internet itself. It includes blockchain, DeFi, cryptocurrency, and more. The goal of Web3 is to decentralize the internet and give users more control over the infrastructure of the web.

Web3 will be awesome in the future, but it's still under development today. It's just too new to use, so Web3 likely won't impact your events in the next 12 months.

# Weathering the 2023 Recession as an Event Planner

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Not to be the bearers of bad news, but we have to be realistic about the challenges marketers will face in 2023.

Reports say *the U.S. has a 100% chance of a recession in the next 12 months*. We don't know when it will hit or how bad it will be, but event planners need to account for this new reality. Since events are often the first to feel the brunt of recession-related budget restrictions, here's what you can expect in 2023:

- **Rising costs:** You already know this, but everything is expensive AF right now – and the recession will, sadly, make it worse. Even if your budget stays the same, you'll need to spend more to get the same value for your event.
- **Budget cuts:** All it takes is a vague feeling of uncertainty, and leadership will trim your budget to prepare for the recession. Event planners should expect a 20% decrease in their 2023 budgets.

- **Staffing issues:** It's already hard to find qualified people to staff events, and the recession will likely worsen staffing issues in 2023. You'll need to learn how to do more with fewer people, which is one reason why hybrid events are so popular in 2023. However (and this might sound a little bad), recessions often lead to layoffs, so you could also hire short-term, laid-off workers to help with your events.

As you can see, budget restrictions mean that event planners will have to get creative. For example, you could eliminate your catering budget. Instead, encourage attendees to go off-site for lunch. You can make this fun by inviting food trucks to rally around your event venue. Sure, it isn't ideal, but this saves you a lot of money. It's a better alternative to not hosting an event at all.

# 2023 Won't Be Easy, but It Will Be Rewarding

We wish we had a time machine to make things the way they were in 2019, but that just isn't doable. Even so, 2023 is the perfect time to crush the box and start fresh.

You've got to do more with less, so consider tossing out your old plans and taking the opposite approach. If you've been all-in on in-person events, try a hybrid event. If you're gun-shy when interacting with event attendees, create a community to forge connections.

2023 will have its challenges, but you managed to succeed in 2022 – and you'll do it again! All in all, our hopes are high for 2023. Follow the trends in this guide to boost ROI and keep your brand top-of-mind with your target audience in 2023.

