



Events in a Digital World

A guide to technology enabled
experiences in 2024 and beyond



Welcome

The world of event technology has evolved rapidly over the past few years, with cutting edge tools emerging at an unprecedented rate. To navigate this changing landscape, many organisations need to balance innovation with constraints and face a crowded digital world where communications need to be bold, brave, and bespoke.



Content

Creating WOW in the now

Creative Director, Martin Walton, shares what WOW factor means to him and the events we create against a backdrop where wonder can be found around every corner.

How planners are using AI

If you aren't using generative AI, you could be missing out on the opportunity to streamline your event planning or even forecast the future with predictive AI.

Are virtual events here to stay?

How can we further utilise technology to create immersive, engaging, and personalised experiences online? Dive into case studies by Broadsword spotlighting virtual interactivity.

How data is maximising the attendee experience

How digital event hubs can harness data and measure engagement

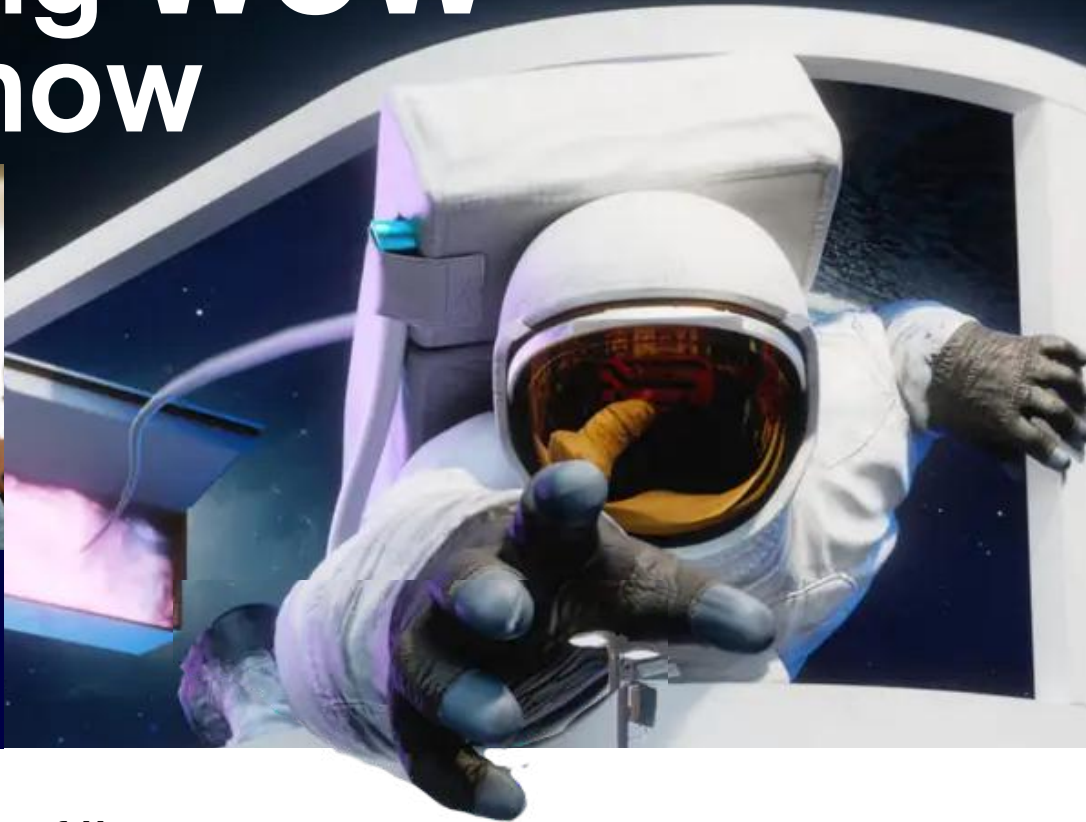
Embracing the digital world

How leaning into human drives can elevate event technology and gamification.

Creating WOW in the now



Martin Walton,
Creative Director
Broadword



“Wow Factor is one of those phrases that is easy to put on a shopping list but incredibly hard to interpret, and completely subjective. We know that Jude Bellingham has it, but which branch of Argos he found it at we have not a clue.

But when our clients ask for, not good or great events, but WOW - we know what they mean. It's something you haven't seen before, that you can't quite figure out how it's been done, and that stays in your mind even after the event has come to an end. In a digital world, where wow is on every screen, creating a stand out effect is more difficult than ever.

“Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic” - Arthur C. Clark

I like to think that WOW stands for wide-eyed, original and wonderful, and our imagination is the portal to exciting new worlds of ideas.

The interest in immersive technology like AR, VR and XR proves that audiences want to experience versions of reality that send them back in time, not forward, to the days when their imagination was in charge of learning new things, and a new world was a twist of the kaleidoscope away.



See Beyond

To encourage the audience at Taylor Wessing's partner's conference to See Beyond, Broadsword created an event with a MetaHuman host at its centre.

With the live human host backstage wearing a motion capture suit, the MetaHuman came to life and was amplified by the huge LED wall as a realistic avatar. The avatar could respond in real time, interacting live with the audience and answer questions.

See Beyond also extended to our opening animation in which we used 100 AI generated images to create thousands of frames for our camera to fly through in an endless loop of portals.





Chatbot or personal assistant?

HOW PLANNERS ARE USING GENERATIVE AI

With tight deadlines and unexpected tasks, don't we all need an assistant when planning events? Generative AI, including ChatGPT, Claude, and MidJourney can create new content such as text and images through learning from online examples. This can be used in a number of ways to automate and streamline tasks, increase efficiency, and assist creativity. However an assistant is exactly what it is - always remember to fact check, be transparent about your use of AI, and combine the results with your own human creativity.

Brainstorm

No more staring at a blank piece of paper. AI can generate creative ideas for themes and stage designs based on current trends and client preferences to assist creative thinking.

Summarise

Summarise large amounts of information into concise actionable insights - contracts, briefs, large amounts of data such as feedback. Planners can quickly summarise and analyse this feedback, or identify common themes.

Translate

AI translation models exist to generate text in one language based on input text in another - streamlining the creation of content for global audiences.

Create Content

write content for promotional materials such as emails and session descriptions, repurpose to create content at scale and promote your event

Organise

Organise your tasks into a schedule with automating calendar management and creating organisational tools such as gantt charts.

Recommend

AI can enhance engagement by dynamically generating tailored content based on attendee preferences to create personalised experiences. From recommending sessions based on interests to networking opportunities based on job titles or even speaker Questions.

Forecasting The Future: The Power of Predictive AI

We invited Behavioural Scientist, Lea Karam, to speak to us about behavioural science as a secret weapon for marketing and event professionals and dove into the use of predictive AI to analyse an audience in a way that goes beyond demographics.

Generative AI



Generative AI creates something new - writing, code, images, even Harry Styles' voice with Taylor Swift's songs. This type of AI is useful for aiding in tasks usually handled by people and creating more efficiently. But it does come with copyright and deepfake dangers.

Predictive AI, in comparison, has potential to deliver more value as it can analyse billions of data points that our human eyes cannot. It forecasts future outcomes based on existing data and patterns. A 'products you might like' section is predictive AI at work.

Predictive AI



For event and marketing professionals, Lea suggests predictive AI is a huge opportunity to really dive into consumer behaviour, market themes, and sentiment and really understand them.

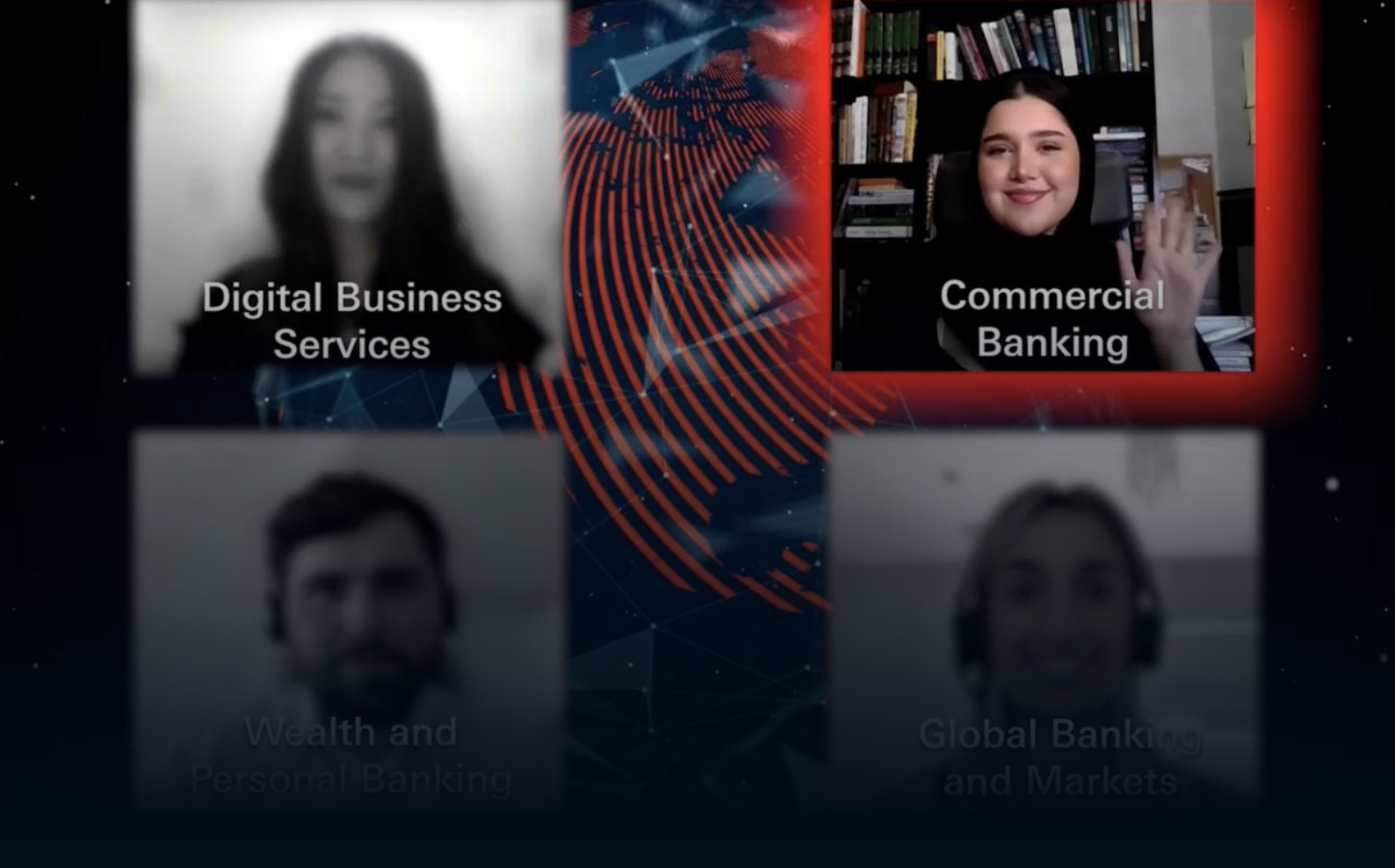
“Because it’s a crowded ecosystem, that means that there are more opportunities and more signals and more consumer nuances than ever. So, this gives you an opportunity to really understand audiences and grasp them. Essentially, for event planners, my main recommendation is to really tap into the new tools that are out there to be able to get those new consumer needs, states, and nuances during an event or in response to a campaign”.

“Predictive AI presents a huge opportunity and now is the time for brands to capitalise on it so they don’t fall behind”



Lea Karam
Behave

- Understand the pain points in an event or the sentiment that happened in relation to a certain stage of the event.
- Detect negative tone of voice in campaign copy to ensure marketers are evoking the emotion and action they are aiming to.
- Predict which content is most relevant for each individual to provide customers can receive better recommendations.



Digital Business
Services

Commercial
Banking

Wealth and
Personal Banking

Global Banking
and Markets

Are virtual events here to stay?

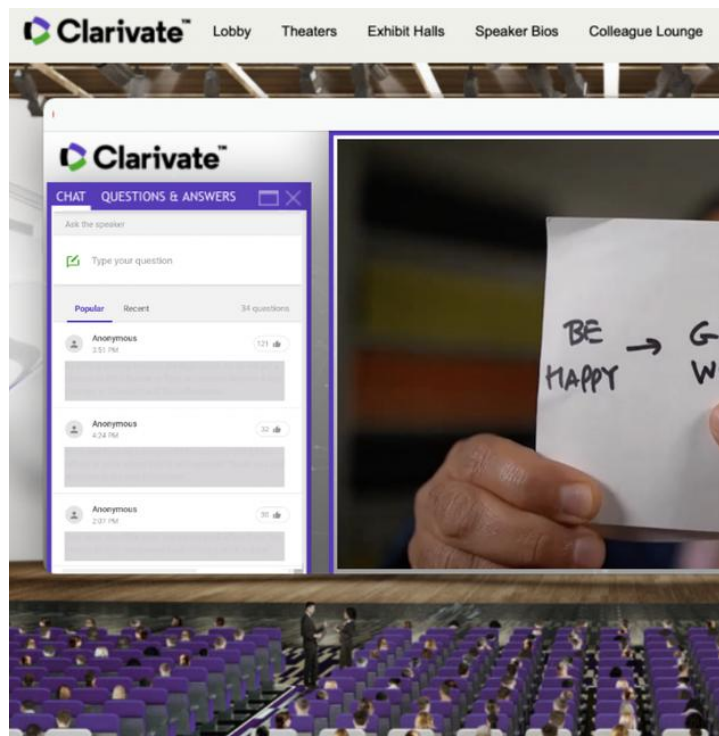
Throughout the pandemic, the events world was pushed into exploring the digital world further than ever before. Broadsword continued to connect people together through virtual event solutions and it proved to be valuable post-pandemic. Although originally born out of necessity, many events continue online (10% of Broadsword's events) to reap the benefits of a more sustainable and accessible approach that is able to connect countless global employees or attendees without need for travel. Hybrid, and broadcast approaches have emerged that combine the best of both worlds by integrating digital with physical. How can we further utilise technology to create immersive, engaging, and personalised experiences online?



CASE STUDY

“One positive from the global lockdown could well be that a companywide engagement piece to start the year is here to stay.”

Attendee expectations go beyond a dull webinar - they seek experiences that extend the main event, with pre and post event access channels, topic themed breakout rooms, hideaways, and subject specific online networking communities that enrich the overall experience.



This B2E sales kickoff catered to a global remote workforce of over 8,000 people. Focused on uniting these attendees together, Broadword’s creation of an engaging event platform allowed attendees to participate and interact live.

Over 95% of employees attended the virtual conference, spending over 10 hours online, contributing content, taking part in virtual wellness clubs, and networking across departments and regions.

Using Data to Maximise Event Experiences

There is a lot we can learn from the data collected at events that inform the decisions we make as organisers about how to shape the content and format of an event to provide the best delegate experience. Feedback alone is an integral tool to planners and stakeholders to understand audience needs and evidence ROI, but as attendees are expecting a more personalised experiences - how can harnessing data go beyond surveys?

Many planners struggle to prove ROI from events - most measuring attendance, or repeat attendance. Return on engagement has emerged as a more relevant metric. Different objectives result in different outcomes. If you are planning an event based on thought leadership positioning, it could be having many digital touch points throughout the event to show where audiences are engaging such as attending a session or downloading information.

An event provides the opportunity to springboard engagement with your brand, from an already captive audience who have invested either time or money into your event. Personalisation goes a long way here - think about using AI to direct attendees to tailored content and match attendees to sessions and groups.



78%

of companies that use a mobile event app say it contributes to a positive ROI - Markletic

Having engagement hubs or a 'digital audience homes' provides a single place to convene access to all of your owned media, content and starts an event on its path to 365 engagement

In app games and points leaderboards, live polling, real time notification updates, and easy access to event information and agendas are all ways an event app can be an indispensable tool for event engagement.

Make sure it's user friendly and intuitive - users can tailor their experience by adding sessions to a custom schedule.

Create an interactive experience, with in-app clubs, networking suggestions, and challenges such as a scavenger hunt or audience choice awards.

Your event hub is a great way to collect live data and feedback to calculate return on investment.

Why attendees need more playtime



Gamification involves the application of game-like elements like leaderboards, apps, and rewards to engage participants and transform the attendee experience.

Gamification taps into basic human instincts for competition, achievement, and social interaction - our lives are interspersed with playtime. Even in a corporate environment we are motivated by our little daily treats and rewards, and we all look for ways to make learning more fun. Now more than ever, there is a demand for interactive experiences and content that stands out from the crowd by appealing to human elements - humour, fun, relatability.

Virtual and augmented reality present new opportunities to create interactive event spaces using mobile phone AR experiences to interactive digital games.





The rise of wearable technology

Augmented Reality (AR) headsets have rapidly evolved from a futuristic concept to a transformative tool, reshaping how events are experienced. By overlaying digital information onto the real world, AR headsets can provide interactive, immersive experiences.

AR headsets can deliver dynamic presentations, real-time data visualisation, and interactive product demonstrations including 3D models projected into the physical environment. Virtual prototypes or simulations of a product can be explored in a way that static displays cannot match.

Tech wearables like the Ray-Ban Meta sunglasses are advancing, providing users with a seamless blend of fashion and functionality. Combined with Meta's cutting-edge technology, users can capture content, document and share experiences, interact hands-free, and listen to music through the sunglasses.

While AR headsets and wearables are revolutionising experiences, widespread adoption of AR will likely be reached when these devices become less intrusive and more similar to wearing a regular pair of glasses. As these technologies continue to evolve, they promise to further blur the lines between the physical and digital worlds.

The human element in a digital world

In the era of AI, “quality events and content” seems to mean one thing: human creativity and expert perspectives. Internal expertise, thought leadership, and specialised speakers bring first-hand experience and trust to your content.

As always, it’s extremely important to create an event identity that resonates with your audience. There is a perception that B2B communications must inform and not entertain. Bravery in a B2B world often lies in leaning into the power of emotion and appealing to human drives such as humour, relatability, and personalisation.





Broadsword is a global event agency leading a mission to create experiences that add to our world.



We provide seamlessly integrated event technology to maximise the impact of meetings and events of all shapes and sizes - virtual and hybrid events, webinars, broadcasts, and live experiences.

At Broadsword, we know the importance of a conversation. Let's talk about how we can create your event experience.

Certified



Corporation