

m&i healthcare insight report.



m&i

evolution or revolution...

From 5-7 October 2021, we held our third m&i Healthcare Europe Forum, which took place in Madrid, Spain. Partnering with the Madrid CVB and the Riu Plaza Espana Hotel, this event brought together agencies, corporates, associations, venues and destinations to meet, connect and share their insights and experiences from the past year.

We decided to focus this Forum on the future of healthcare events and the impact of moving into a multi-channel solutions environment. Back at our February 2020 healthcare Forum in Helsinki, the expectation was that the evolution of digital solutions and their integration with in-person events would take between 3 to 5 years. Little did we know that our world was going to rapidly change with the onset of a global pandemic, and that the introduction of digital solutions would need to be significantly fast-tracked.

m&i Healthcare Europe 2021 in Madrid created the opportunity to ask whether this was an industry evolution or a revolution and, most importantly, what it meant for the future of healthcare events.



keynote



**mark
lightowler**

Founder & CEO Phorix
Behavioural Change Expert

keynote contributors



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Community Pharmacy
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CEO
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supplier question time.



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elene eichhorn

Project Manager at MCI Germany

Prior to the start of the main event, suppliers attending this year's m&i Healthcare Europe event had the opportunity to ask questions to three agency experts who work with several global healthcare companies. There were several topics of conversation that the Question Time format covered, including:

sustainability and diversity

The panel confirmed that these are now much more than buzz words. Clients are keen for more effort to be put into both making sustainable events and highlighting staffing diversity. This means that agencies are now including questions about supplier policies and actions in RFPs. These are not currently part of their SLAs but they do expect them to be included in the future.

destination selection

Outside of the events that can ONLY be held in large city hubs, clients are looking at 2nd and 3rd cities for national meetings to avoid asking attendees to travel by public transport. Often selecting out-of-city venues as they're considered 'safer'.

partnerships

Partnerships are considered more important than ever with buyers relying on 3rd party suppliers to create innovative proposals. The panel were all in support of suppliers undertaking healthcare training to better understand the needs of agency and client objectives for the event. Having a higher level of sector knowledge will help build buyer confidence and forge stronger relationships.

opening session



The opening session started with a warm welcome from m&i, followed by a few words from the Madrid CVB about why the city is so well equipped for hosting healthcare events. We then moved on to introduce our keynote contributor, Mark Lightowler, for his presentation.

Mark, a behavioural scientist, highlighted that the healthcare events industry became asynchronous during the pandemic, and we are now moving to a synchronous world. But what does that mean as we move forward into 2022 and beyond? Mark's view is that we will have a blended approach of both synchronous & asynchronous. We will have a different world that includes technology as we take the best from both the synchronous & asynchronous space. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity.

These days, people are looking for curation by creators - they want to be guided through event information, education and entertainment. One great example is Netflix and the way they present information to consumers. Personalised content is becoming the new norm for helping consumers meet their needs, and a great example of that is how m&i creates smarter, personalised 1-2-1 meetings through the power of AI at events.

There are things developing in immersive environments through augmented reality & artificial intelligence that will provide a greater understanding of customer journeys, and learning about networking and audience engagement. Bringing all those elements together is really important.

**“ this is a once
in a lifetime
opportunity. ”**

6

things you need to consider to enhance meeting participant's engagement and education at your events.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Understand the educational objectives | 4. Additional networking opportunities to make up for time spent isolated from the industry |
| 2. Wellness, both physically and mentally | 5. More variety in event content |
| 3. Creating tailored content that can be delivered in bite-size pieces | 6. Include some downtime within the programme, which will enhance reflection and aid both mental and physical health |

“ the future is already here. it's just not evenly distributed. we just don't see it all in one place at the same time. ”

the impact of asynchronous meetings.

the asynchronous format presents new opportunities:

- Flexibility
- Easier participation
- Deeper conversation
- Convenience - attendees can contribute on their own time, at their own pace

but asynchronous also comes with its own challenges:

- Decreased efficiency
- Lack of connection
- Loss of spontaneity



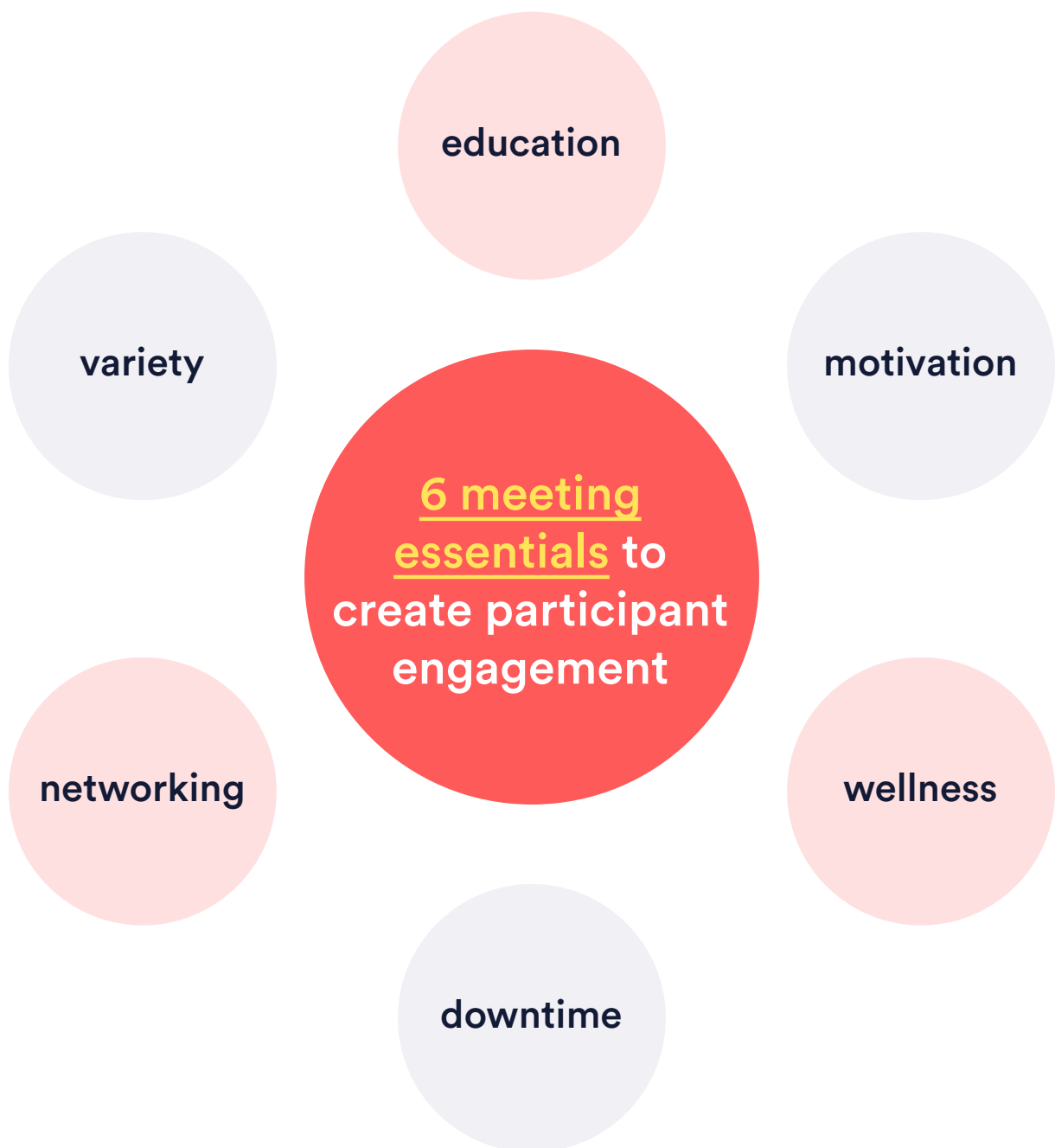
the future to build today.

people, places and technology

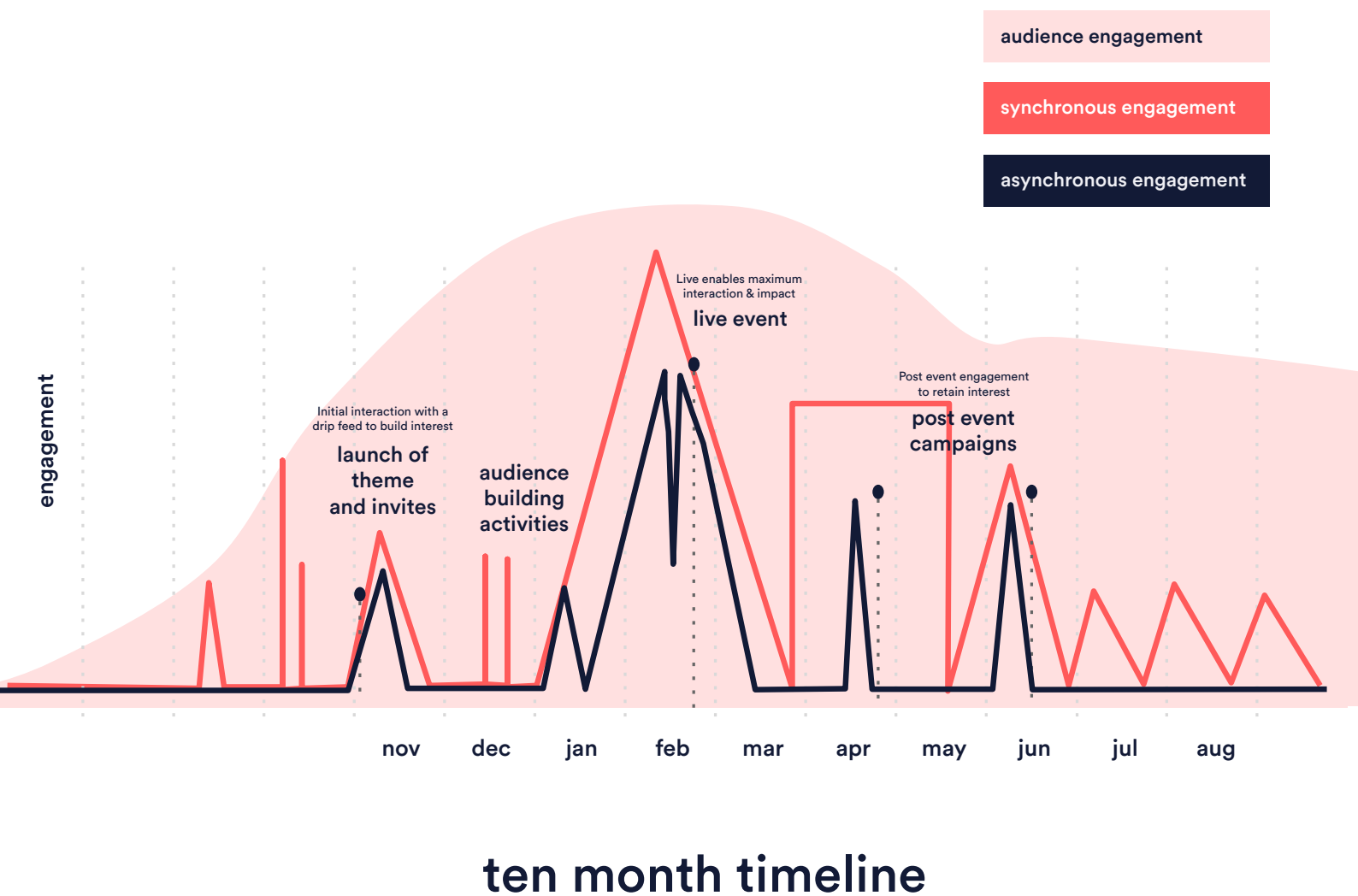
- curation
- entertainment
- experience
- engagement
- freedom
- change
- trust



identified improvement for medical meetings.



projected asynchronous and synchronous engagement



panel discussion

Our expert panel, made up of **Jaime Acosta-Gomez**, **Mark Lightowler** and **Maarten Kruijff**, discussed whether the past 18 months have been a revolution or an evolution in the Healthcare Meetings space. The feeling of Jaime, Mark & Maarten was this is definitely an evolution that has been fast tracked due to the global pandemic. The following questions were also discussed by the panel.

will things go back to how they were in 2019?

Absolutely not, a lot of technologies we have been using over the past 18 months are here to stay and, as Mark said in his presentation, they will blend together to create an asynchronous & synchronous blended world.

will healthcare events professionals still attend in person events in the future?

Jaime Acosta Gomez felt HCPs will still attend events but will be far more selective when it comes to the educational and networking opportunities incorporated into the programme.

what do healthcare companies expect from their partners?

Healthcare companies expect their business partners to be able to consult and advise them on the best solutions for delivering digital, in-person and hybrid events. Agencies & suppliers need to really understand the business and learning objectives of the clients, so they can provide the best digital & in-person solutions.

what infrastructure do venues & destinations need to have in place?

There is a great opportunity for destinations to create connected cities that provide infrastructure connectivity and technology to make clients' and associations' lives easier. In this model, it is critical that they can demonstrate that they truly understand that a digital component will be required for the majority of future events.

what is the key takeaway message you think people need to consider?

It's important to consider meeting participant's behaviours and understand their motivations. That will provide meeting creators with real insight into the market and lead to a deeper understanding of their needs. We don't believe business is going to change dramatically in the short term, but it's going to change dramatically in the medium or long term. The industry has the opportunity to be experimental and try to understand what their customers are expecting from them as we move towards a more blended event environment.

Think about how to regain your clients' and delegates' confidence for attending in-person meetings again and the benefits of attending them, whilst recognising that their expectations will have changed. They will be far more selective about what events they attend in person versus virtually.



educational workshops

Prior to the event we interviewed a number of industry experts from across the Healthcare Events Ecosystem, including a corporate organisation, a medical communications agency, a professional congress organiser, a strategic meetings management programmes (SMMP) professional, a virtual technology expert, a healthcare event agency, and an expert in clinical trials organisation. We asked each expert to pose a question to a mixed group of meeting planning professionals, venues and destinations to discuss & debate their top 5 solutions that could be applied across their businesses.

Below, you'll find the questions that were posed and the collective responses from each of the participant's tables.



The image features a large, white, stylized number '1' centered on a bright yellow background. In the top-left and bottom-right corners, there are partial views of large blue circles, suggesting a larger pattern or design. The overall aesthetic is clean, modern, and vibrant.

1

session

workshop: session 1



antonio guadagnoli

Director Global Operations,
Congress Management (PCO) at MCI

Antonio talked about three challenges that associations will have as they plan their events.

1. Making sure destinations are able to stay connected with the latest technological updates.

2. The ability to be flexible around the changing landscape of meetings over the next 3 to 5 years.

3. Shorter lead times on booking events due to changing requirements.

workshop: session 1

Antonio's question to the buyers & suppliers in the room:

“ how can destinations & venues work with PCOs and agencies to stand out and attract association business? ”

top 5 responses from the question antonio posed...

- 1.** Destinations to be proactive around their credentials for sustainable meetings that provide a legacy.
- 2.** Being supportive to associations that may need to contract later and cancel at short notice. Offering credits against future meetings.
- 3.** Provide Government guidance on city Covid management.
- 4.** Promote ease of access to support face-to-face meetings with well-defined educational outcomes.
- 5.** Better IT support for hybrid solutions plus the potential for a collaboration of Hybrid destinations around the World.

workshop: session 1



betsy bondurant, CMM, CTE

Proven Leader in Strategic Meetings
Management

Betsy has been involved with Global Strategic Meetings Management Programs (SMMP) for over 10 years. The main messages from her interview were:

- 1.** Future SMMPs need to factor in the capture and consolidation of event data taken from in-person, virtual and hybrid events.

- 2.** A company's decision-making process for the type of events they will organise will now involve a cross-functional team, not just the events department.

- 3.** Clients require agencies & suppliers to take duty of care, health & safety, Covid safe protocols, and sustainability for their events into account more than ever.

workshop: session 1

The question posed by Betsy ...

“

how will agencies, destinations & venues navigate their way through the evolution of health and safety regulations for events, considering hotel operations, risk assessments/due diligence, new COVID protocols etc?

”

top 5

**responses from
the question
betsy posed...**

- 1.** Agree event protocols for all attendees including supply chain based on city regulations and invest in best practices - be more positive about the future.
- 2.** When designing an event consider the mental health and wellbeing for the participants
- 3.** Accept the changes and needs of clients - regulatory / reporting.
- 4.** Work with city hosts to provide connected access when a corporate organisation or medical society brings an event to your city.
- 5.** Provide staff training around regulations including reporting needs.

workshop: session 1



peter Ilewellyn

Community Facilitator in Global Medical
Communications
Medcomms

Peter has been part of the medical communications industry for over 30 years, championing best practice across the sector. His key take away messages were:

1. Digital solutions have been part of the Medical Communication space pre the pandemic but Covid has accelerated everything over the past 18 months.
2. Finances have a role to play, as people place a different value on digital vs in-person events.
3. Most importantly, how do we measure the success of digital events, and what metrics are we using to do this?

workshop: session 1

The question we were going to pose to the group was...

“ how can meeting planners work in collaboration with suppliers when delivering hybrid meetings? ”

but after some heated debate the group felt that the question we should pose was...

“ how do we get back to live? ”

top 4 things the group felt were important to consider:

1. We should see hybrid as an add on not a replacement.
2. More communication around safety at hybrid and in-person events.
3. The commercial model, including how to apply fees for online attendees.
4. How important is it for everyone to promote the benefits of in-person events?



2

session

workshop: session 2



tarquin scadding-hunt

CEO MD Group

MD Group specialises in delivering events and services around the clinical trials process, from patient recruitment through to advisory boards and online & offline investigator meetings.

1. Certain agencies had already diversified their business to provide hybrid solutions pre the pandemic so they were better placed to meet clients needs.

2. In the future there will be more regional clinical events with kick-off meetings in-person solutions blended with virtual meetings.

3. The flexibility of contracting is important for giving clients the confidence to book in-person events in the short to medium term, and to try to avoid such short lead times, which is hard to manage for venues and agencies.

workshop: session 2

The question we posed to the group was...

“ how can agencies & suppliers work collaboratively in contract negotiations for healthcare procurement and legal departments to create the best outcome? ”

top 5 responses from the question tarquin posed...

- 1.** When an event is postponed allow clients to rebook at same rates.
- 2.** A negotiated agreement that both parties can cancel events at zero cost.
- 3.** Consider Covid force majeure clauses in contracts.
- 4.** Agencies & clients need to consider contracting to lower / realistic numbers.
- 5.** We need to factor in the level of Covid /legal restrictions in host destination / venue.

workshop: session 2



cerstin steindorf

Global Business Director Healthcare MCI

Cerstin is responsible for the global relationships with MCI Life Sciences clients, particularly in the areas of compliance and change management. Her key takeaways were:

1. Stakeholders will consume content very differently in the future as they have multiple communication channels available to them.
2. The way Healthcare companies connect with their customers will be more tailored specifically by specialist areas.
3. Agencies & Venues need to make sure they have the skillset and infrastructure to meet the demands of healthcare companies in this new Omnichannel space.

workshop: session 2

Cerstin's question to the group was...

**“ the supplier partnership:
what has changed and
what best practices
have you experienced? ”**

top 5

**responses from
the question
cerstin posed...**

- 1.** Strong partnership developed through honesty, trust and transparency.
- 2.** Shared experiences - mutual understanding.
- 3.** Change on content consumption - digital delivered from hotel 'studios'.
- 4.** Focus on sustainable programmes.
- 5.** Partnerships within the industry are changing. CVBs across regions are connections and DMCs are recommending each other etc.

workshop: session 2



braydon mccormick

Intempio CEO, co-founder and practical business strategist

Braydon has been involved with delivering virtual solutions to healthcare clients for over 10 years. Over the past 18 months, he has seen a real evolution in the services he provides, as well as how events are evolving to be more engaging online. Here are his key takeaways...

- 1.** Digital is a bit of a red herring. Data shows that digital now comes first. People consume content digitally, whether at an in-person or digital event. This continuous interaction means we need to look at a digital-first approach when designing events.

- 2.** Ideas are now driven by digital interactions. For example, interactive white boards, where an in-person and virtual audience can interact at the same time.

- 3.** There needs to be a mindset shift in the way agencies and suppliers design and deliver content through a digital first environment.

workshop: session 2

The question...

“ how can clients, agencies and suppliers work in collaboration to deliver a digital first event? ”

top 5 responses from the question braydon posed...

- 1.** More investment in technology and upskilling staff.
- 2.** Making sure that the infrastructure to support events is of a high quality with excellent connectivity.
- 3.** Use digital tools to make events Interactive.
- 4.** Use a professional host or facilitator to bring the event together for a online and offline audience.
- 5.** Consider clever use of pre-recorded elements.

summary

The optimism in the room in Madrid was quite motivating for everyone who attended m&i Healthcare Europe 2021. The question everyone was asking was “what does the future hold for our industry?” and the simple answer to this question is that no one really knows, not even our clients.

This uncertainty creates opportunities for agencies, destinations and venues if they successfully understand the evolution we have gone through over the past 18 months.

In the workshop sessions, it was clear that there were differing opinions in the room from people who felt we should get back to in-person meetings as quickly as possible, whereas others felt that virtual and hybrid are here to stay, at least in the short to medium term.

Ultimately, there is no right or wrong answer, but our jobs as specialists in the healthcare events space is to provide all the options to our clients and deliver the best solution to meet their business and educational needs. This will require us to understand both the in-person and digital environments, and consult with all stakeholders to create the best outcomes, be they virtual, in-person or hybrid (or a digital-first approach, as Braydon suggested).

Mark Lightowler said in his keynote presentation that “this is a once in a lifetime opportunity”. The big question is: who will take the opportunity to adapt their business model and be agile enough to meet the needs of the healthcare events industry as it continues to evolve?



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