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# Shaking up Virtual Meetings

By **Andrea Doyle** - August 11, 2020



The second **Mission Critical**, a one-hour event sponsored by The Knowledge Exchange providing timely and important information to the meetings community, recently featured well-choreographed segments akin to a television show, top speakers providing valuable insights in the industry's future, entertainment and lunch, and a virtual meetings gift bag.

Meeting planners who presented during the virtual event shared that they believe small events will resume the middle of next year with larger events coming online toward the end of 2021.

Mission Critical has also proven to be a hub filled with innovative features by partnering with organizations like Grubhub to treat over 1,000 viewers to lunch during the show, thus supporting 1,000 local hospitality businesses. They have also launched their signature VIP Virtual Gift Bag and MC24Seven, a living and breathing, around the clock new hub for planners and vendors to interact featuring built-in 1:1 video chat, unlimited appointment booking, and multiple points for brands to engage directly with the high-level planners Mission Critical attracts.

More than 3,000 meeting and event planners from major industries virtually traveled from New York City's newest attraction, The Edge, to Nashville, TN where they enjoyed a tour of Nashville's Noelle Hotel and downtown hotspot Redneck Riviera, with a special performance by Grammy-Nominated Country Superstar John Rich.

The trip was capped off with a special word from HSMAI Nashville that included a "Tennessee Wave" where hoteliers gathered to applaud planners and welcome their future return. They also heard the state of the meetings industry by Microsoft's Corporate VP of Global Events, Production Studios & Marketing Community, Bob Bejan, as well as Executive Director of Yale Conferences & Events, Suzanne Shaw, RBC Capital Markets Head of Conference & Event Marketing, Janae Henderson, and SAP Global Head of Event Marketing Strategy, Nicola Kastner.

"Where corporate and political leaders head to the World Economic Forum to share ideas and address pressing global issues; now the Meeting and Events Industry will head to Mission Critical," said Joseph Lara, Executive Producer and Creator, The Knowledge Exchange. "We knew from our first

broadcast in May that we had hit upon a model that lays the groundwork for the successful future of virtual events.”

Mission Critical attracted C-Suite and senior-level marketing, meeting and event executives. “When the pandemic hit, I knew that we could do something that could be more exciting than the run-of-the-mill webinars and video conferences that were causing burnout,” said Lara.

The Knowledge Exchange is one of the fastest growing, invitation-only, hospitality trade showcases for the meetings and events industry. They are also the co-creators of the #SaveTheMeetings.org campaign crafted to reignite the Meetings and Events industry post COVID-19.

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### Andrea Doyle

Award-winning journalist Andrea Doyle has a career that spans more than 30 years. She has worked as a senior editor at Successful Meetings Magazine, a senior writer at Convene, and a staff writer at The Record, a daily N.J. newspaper. Her work has graced the pages of publications including Avenue Magazine, New Jersey Health and Beauty, and Bergen Health & Life Magazine.