



SIAA Uses 6Connex Virtual Event Platform to Drive Membership

SIAA (Strategic Insurance Agency Alliance) is dedicated to the creation, retention, and growth of the independent insurance agency distribution system. Through its partners and staff, SIAA provides insurance network and consulting services to its member agencies, helping them grow profitably. Today, approximately 13% of all independent insurance agencies in the U.S. are members of SIAA, with more than \$9.2 billion in combined premium.

The Challenge

For more than 37 years, SIAA and its regional master agencies have held business meetings and conferences, where top insurance carriers and agencies come together to exchange ideas, gain insights on economic and industry trends, and network with their peers. Consistently attracting hundreds of participants, SIAA events reflect its commitment to mentorship and training and provide agencies with necessary information and resources to grow income and become more efficient.

In 2019, the SIAA event team began planning for a unique conference on innovation and available technologies specifically designed to help independent insurance agencies expand their digital capabilities: IA Evolve. In keeping with the “digital” theme, SIAA chose to hold the event virtually, and the team built a packed agenda designed to provide access to a wide range of tools and information necessary for independent agencies to be well prepared for 2020 and beyond. Having never held a virtual event, SIAA knew they needed to



identify the right partner to shepherd them through the event plan and execution processes, and they immediately began this search, defining their “must have” features and functionality as follows:

- ▶ Custom branding and communication
- ▶ Real-time Q&As with keynote speakers
- ▶ Interactive workshops
- ▶ Live chats
- ▶ Panel discussions
- ▶ Networking lounge
- ▶ Exhibitor booths
- ▶ Broadcast messages
- ▶ Single sign-on
- ▶ Best-in-class professional services and support

Summarizes Lisa Grover, Vice President, Marketing at SIAA, “We have a large number of attendees and it was important the virtual event experience mimic that of a physical one, with keynote addresses, an event lobby, and rooms for participants to interact with content. We also wanted to target specific content to certain constituents, so participants were continually engaged and motivated to attend for the duration of the event.”

The Solution

Convinced the 6Connex virtual event platform was the best way forward, the SIAA team rolled up their sleeves and began to plan their virtual event. Grover describes the 6Connex project manager as instrumental during the event planning stages, stating, “Our 6Connex project manager was the best project manager with whom I have ever worked, and please know I have participated in several technology projects in my career. Our schedule was laid out perfectly, he was flexible and responsive, and the teamwork was top-notch. We pride ourselves on being ‘do-it-yourselfers,’ and 6Connex respected this. Our team lent our expertise to producing the content for the event and building our exhibitor booths, and the 6Connex team lent their expertise to the virtual event build.”

In addition, Grover states their 6Connex project manager encouraged the SIAA team from over complicating the event. “With so much content, it’s tempting to offer multiple tracks, but our project manager encouraged us to create a nice rhythm of sessions, which not only allowed participants to follow the content and understand the sequence easily, we prevented our audience from having to choose between multiple sessions, or even worse, trying



to attend two sessions at the same time. At the advice of our project manager, we also leveraged broadcast messages to notify the audience of what was taking place. The fact that we could pre-schedule these messages made them simple to deploy, and they were a great way to inform and drive the audience throughout the event.”

Grover also has advice for event planners who are new to the virtual space. “Be realistic. When you do a virtual event for the first time, it will feel like more work than a physical event, but this is partly because you don’t know what to expect. Pre-show organization is extremely important. The more organized you can be, with firm goals, navigation design, space template ideas, branding components, and overall event navigation, the easier it will be to project manage.”

Furthermore, Grover emphasizes it’s important to give extra attention to event exhibitors. “For exhibitors that have never done a virtual event, it’s difficult to conceptualize what will happen on the event day. Our 6Connex project manager encouraged us to take time to walk our exhibitors through our thoughts, plans, and ideas so they understood and managed their expectations, and our exhibitors appreciated the outreach and attention.”

Results

Despite the fact the majority of SIAA’s audience had never participated in a virtual event, IA Evolve attracted more than 2,300 registrants, and approximately 1,300 attendees concurrently watched event sessions. Even better: SIAA was able to identify new prospects, drive existing prospects further down the funnel, and close several new memberships during the event.

Grover also reports all 25 exhibitors were thrilled with the data they received on their booth attendees, noting the actionable metrics allowed the exhibitors to continue conversations with their prospects after the event.

Concludes Grover, “We definitely believe this event contributed to elevating our position in our space. The feedback we received from our attendees was that the content was really good and their overall experience was very positive. Our senior team has referred to our event as a real ‘home run’ that did a wonderful job promoting our brand, goals, and objectives, and based on the attendees’ extremely positive feedback, delivered significant value to new and existing members. And because content is still available for on demand consumption, this is a gift that keeps on giving. We will certainly leverage the space going forward by refreshing content and using it for future events.”

About 6Connex

6Connex is the leading provider of virtual event solutions. Our secure, cloud-based platform expands audience reach and drives in-depth content engagement for marketing, sales, recruitment, training, and HR communities.

Our product portfolio includes virtual environments, learning management, and webinars.

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