

# CAN- CELLING ...NOT AN OPTION

Every year Danish Regions, the interest organization for the five regions in Denmark, organizes a national health conference. In 2020 the conference theme was the well-being of children and young people. Originally, the conference had been planned as an on-site conference, but less than four weeks before the conference, in November 2020, it became clear that the Covid-19 situation made it impossible for a large number of people to meet face to face – unless they were seated well apart all the time.

Cancelling the 2020 version of the conference was not an option for Danish Regions as the theme of the conference was extremely important. Also, the health conference is an important meeting place for, among others, politi-

cians at all levels, interest organizations, experts and scientists. Participants attend the conference to learn about new research, find inspiration, exchange ideas, debate and network.

## **DANISH REGIONS' OVERALL MISSION IS TO SAFEGUARD THE INTERESTS OF THE REGIONS NATIONALLY AS WELL AS INTERNATIONALLY.**

The most important tasks of the Danish Regions are:

- to safeguard regional government interests within health care, hospitals, special education, regional development, environment and finance.
- to act as spokesperson on behalf of the regions vis-à-vis national government, the EU, other interest organizations and the media.
- to negotiate the annual financial frames of the regions with the national government.
- to negotiate pay and working conditions for regional employees as the regions' central employers and bargaining organization.

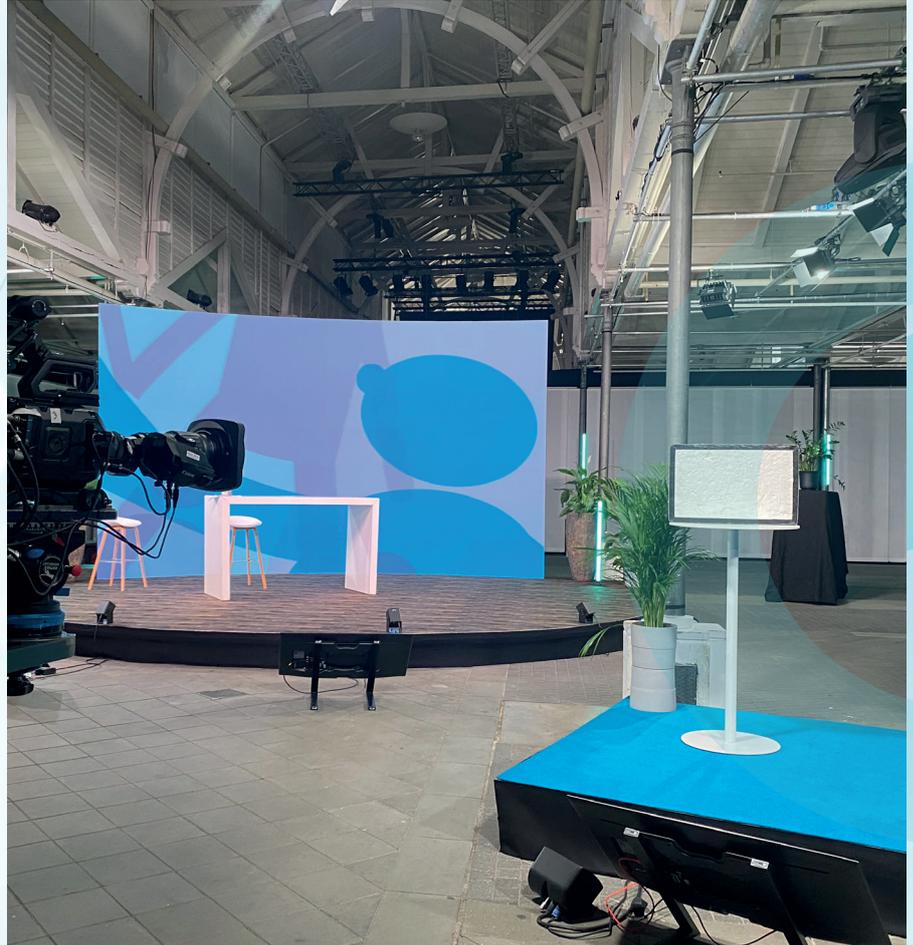


In close cooperation with the venue and the technology partner, which had both been booked before the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic were known, Danish Regions decided to go ahead with the conference. However, the conference was converted into what could best be labelled as a very professional television production using two stages. The 366 conference participants followed the conference online while the speakers, debate participants and other content providers were live at the venue. A well-known and highly experienced television host made sure that everything ran seamlessly. It was important for Danish Regions that presentations, discussions, debates and interviews all were of the highest quality possible so that the participants felt that the conference provided value at the highest possible level.

Danish Regions and its partners knew that it was important to engage with the participants. Therefore, participants were encouraged to ask questions during the debates by using a call-in function. Moreover, debates and other activities were kept relatively short in order to keep participants engaged. Another focus point was to make transi-

tions between the two stages seamless – not keeping the participants waiting. One of the methods used to make transitions seamless was to show short high-quality videos with content directly relevant to the theme of the conference. The videos used had been produced specifically for the conference.

For Danish Regions it was a new experience to have a conference where the participants were not present at the venue. However, the 2020 version of the conference was an interesting and highly informative experience, which the participants have since evaluated positively.



## KEY LEARNINGS POINTS:

1. Networking is a challenge online.
2. Today people are used to professional set-ups – online and offline. Therefore, professional high-quality solutions are important keys to success.
3. No matter what, high-level content is a must.
4. Activities must not take too long – this goes for, for example, debates, interviews and Q&A sessions.
5. Everything should follow a detailed script.
6. The hybrid format creates an increased need for technology and technicians.
7. The videos that functioned as breakers were very effective.
8. All participants should be able to ask questions in real time – all the time. At the conference an editor forwarded questions to the host.

Client: Danish Regions  
Venue: Oeksnehallen, Copenhagen  
Tech: Gear Guys



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# TWELVE STAGES 268 LIVE EVENTS AND 198 DIGITAL EVENTS!

In June 2019 the popular Folkemødet (The People's Meeting) on the beautiful island of Bornholm welcomed around 114,000 guests for four days of debates, discussions, workshops, concerts, conversations and meetings. In 2020 Folkemødet was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. What about 2021? For the organizers the answer was to work closely with technical experts in order design a large-scale and hugely successful hybrid event.

The uncertainty created by the Covid-19 situation caused the organizers to completely rethink Folkemødet for 2021. The goal was clear: The 2021 Folkemødet should have at least the same impact and quality of content as previous meetings. Afterwards, it was with great pleasure that the organizers

could conclude that it was indeed possible to create the traditional, informal and beloved atmosphere of Folkemødet using a hybrid format. The 2021 debates and discussions were as intense, entertaining and professionally executed as in previous years.

Folkemødet, held in the small town of Allinge, Bornholm, is Denmark's festival focusing on society's opportunities and challenges. It provides a unique platform for open debates between citizens and politicians, business representatives and organizations in an informal atmosphere. The first Folkemødet was held in 2011. Folkemødet is organized by a large number of associations, companies, organizations and political parties.



In 2021 Folkemødet welcomed 8,000 guests inside a fenced off area divided into four separate sections where 268 events took place on 12 different stages. The activities on six of the stages were streamed live through Vimeo on the Folkemødet website – more than 150 hours of live streams in total. 30,000 unique users visited the website during Folkemødet. 16,000 unique users followed the debates and events that were streamed live. The fact that it was a large-scale hybrid event meant added flexibility – seen from a geographical perspective – allowing the organizers to add 198 digital events, taking place all over Denmark, to the program.

From an infrastructure perspective the decision to organize a hybrid event without compromise to quality and impact of the event meant a new set of challenges compared to previous years. All infrastructure challenges were met in close cooperation with local partners, such as a local broadband provider that set up a dedicated internet connection for Folkemødet. Also, steps were taken to ensure additional power to support the event.



Moreover, streaming live from six different stages required highly complex technical solutions to be put in place. Especially, since it was a priority to offer both on-site and virtual guests a high-quality experience. This was achieved by ensuring that all live feeds had the quality of a professional television production. The technology partner had a least three experts present at each stage during the activities that

were streamed live. Special attention was given to making sure that the many call-in speakers and interviewees were presented with the same technical quality as the productions on the stages in Allinge. In total the technology partner had a crew of 51 experts managing all aspects of the live streaming production during the four days that Folkemødet took place. 2021 was the first time.

## KEY LEARNINGS POINTS:

1. For the technology partner it was important to be in close dialogue with the many different organizations that were responsible for activities that were live streamed.
2. Many of the debate participants etc. had to get used to hectic backstage activities where a lot of things had to take place simultaneously. This due to the fact that every production had its own very tight schedule so as not to run late and negatively influence the experience of, particularly, the virtual guests.
3. It is difficult – if not impossible – to be completely on top of call-in speakers in terms of quality. For example, local broadband connections and individual presenters' Power-Point presentations can vary a great deal.
4. Technology is scalable and extremely flexible.

Client: The Folkemødet  
Venue: Allinge, Bornholm  
Tech: Make Sense



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# ADDING VALUE THROUGH INNO- VATIVE THINKING

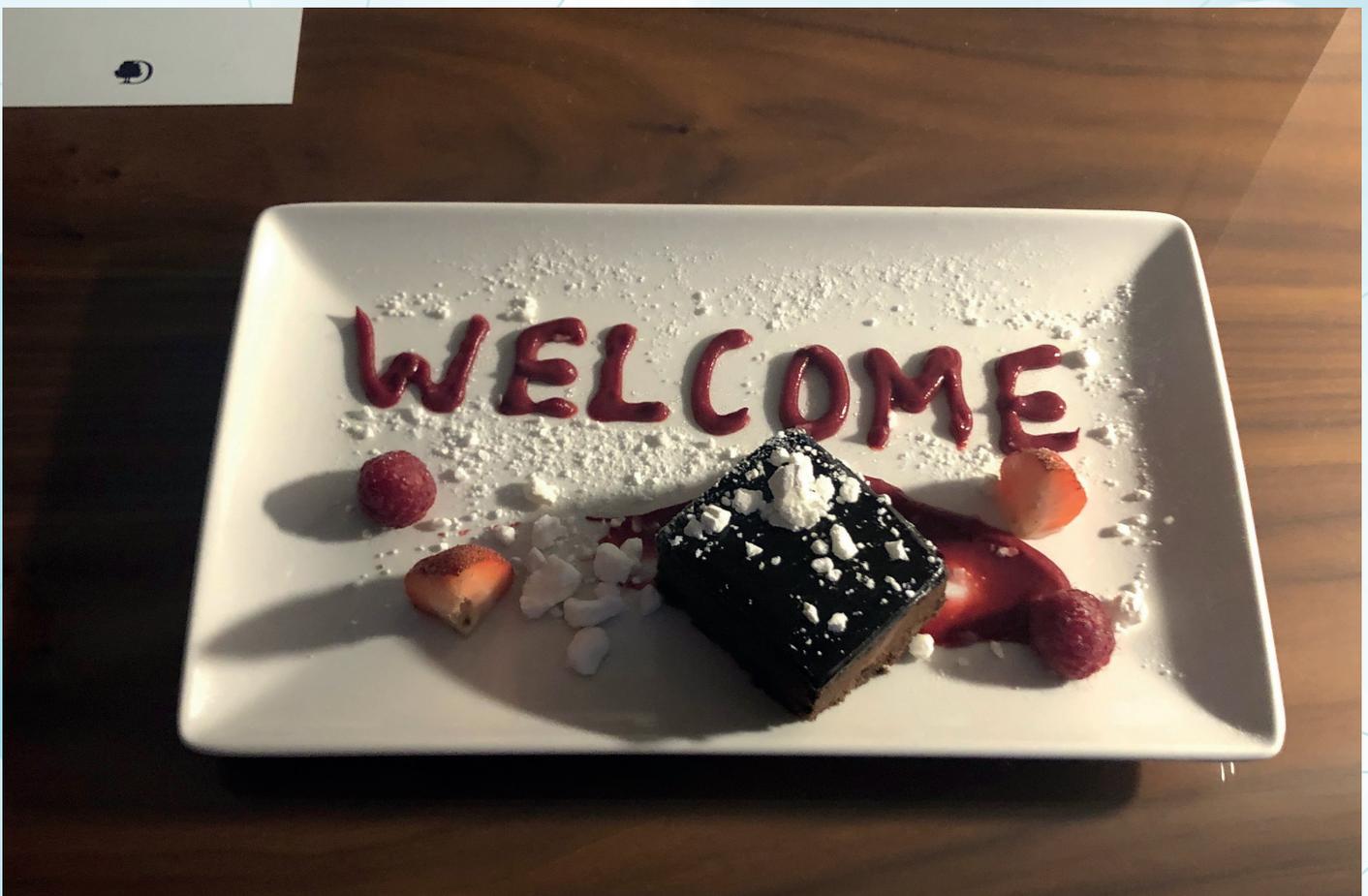
The launch of the Michelin Guide Nordic Countries took place 18 February 2019 in Aarhus. Innovative thinking by the local organizers added significant value to the launch by, for example, creating a hybrid hub.

Of course, a lot of people in and around Aarhus thought the Michelin Guide Nordic Countries launch was an extremely interesting event. However, due to its popularity and importance within the gastronomic community, it was extremely difficult to obtain a ticket. In an attempt to counteract this, the local organizers decided to create an additional hybrid hub at Aarhus City Hall – only a stone's throw away from the main event at Aarhus Concert Hall (Musikhuset).

For the event at Aarhus City Hall, The Michelin Star Revelation Viewing Event, the organizers invited almost 700 on-site guests to spend an evening with Michelin. The event took place simultaneously with the main Michelin event, which was streamed live to the city hall – and the rest of the world. At city hall the live feed was used as a catalyst to create an event inspired by, and carefully built around, the main event,

but it had its own host and its own content which mixed seamlessly with the live feed. Also, local food suppliers and innovators were given the opportunity to present their companies, products, services and innovative ideas.

In order to give even more people in Aarhus the opportunity to experience the world of gastronomy a significant number of innovative local events were set up around the city over the course of three days. Each of these events had their own identity, but they were all clearly connected to the main Michelin event. One of these local events was a workshop created by Aarhus University called "Eating with all your senses". It was hosted by ARoS, which is one of the largest art museums in Northern Europe. The local events were collectively marketed under the name Nordic Gastronomy Celebration.



The launch of the Michelin Guide Nordic Countries 2019 was hosted by VisitAarhus in close cooperation with Aarhus Municipality, Central Denmark Region, Business Region Aarhus and the Food Organization of Denmark. It was the first time a city other than a capital hosted the prestigious event. Traditionally, the Michelin Guide Nordic Countries launch is an event that welcomes 500-700 on-site guests as well as thousands of online guests from all over the world to an exciting evening celebrating gastronomic artistry.

The fact that the main Michelin event was not only supported, but also expanded, by a number of additional events over three days contributed to extensive media coverage both interna-

tionally and locally. The organizers have no doubt that a lot of people in Aarhus learned about Michelin and its role in the world of gastronomy through the local events.



#### KEY LEARNINGS POINTS:

1. The importance of constantly seeing limitations as platforms for creative and innovative thinking. One such example was the limited number of tickets for the main Michelin event.
2. The local events meant that people in Aarhus paid a lot of attention to the main Michelin event – the main event became part of the city for three days.
3. The three days of intense activity demonstrated that there is a lot of innovation potential in the meeting and conference industry.
4. Local involvement and backing can have a positive effect on a global brand.
5. The presence of a global brand boosted the local gastronomic scene.
6. Michelin and the many events contributed to putting Aarhus on the gastronomic world map.



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# FROM VENUE TO MEDIA HUB ...AND BACK

In early 2021 Musikkens Hus (House of Music) in Aalborg teamed up with one of Denmark's most respected and experienced television personalities, Clement Kjersgaard, with the aim of creating a truly hybrid festival celebrating democracy through debates, art and music: The Echo of Democracy. The festival took place September 5th and 6th 2021 and tested several of the major investments that Musikkens Hus had made to turn itself into a media hub – a venue for the future.

When Clement Kjersgaard presented his initial thoughts on a festival celebrating democracy, it didn't take long for the creative people at Musikkens Hus to come up with a complete concept for a truly hybrid festival.

The topic of democracy is as important as ever and a hybrid festival format

meant that a lot of people would be able to listen in and participate actively – virtually or in-person at Musikkens Hus. More than 2,000 people visited Musikkens Hus during the festival, while close to 15,000 opted for the online experience.

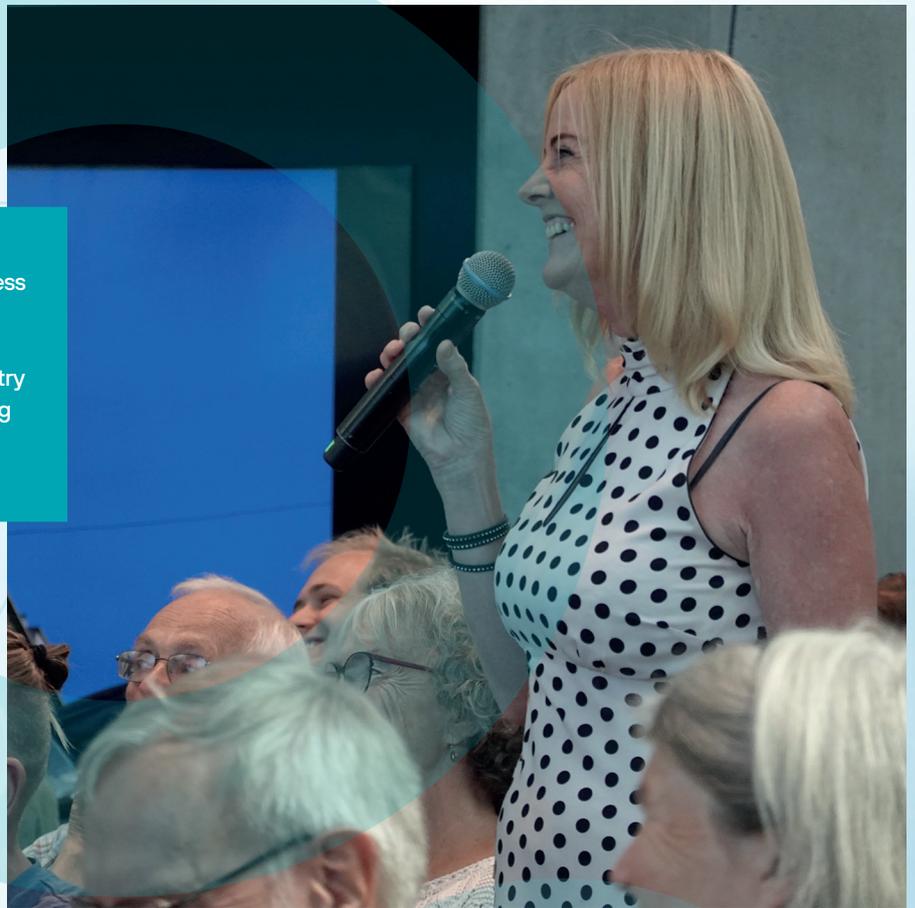
The aim of the 2-day festival was to explore the many different aspects of democracy and to reach as many Danes as possible. All the debates were streamed via Facebook and YouTube. During the debates a chat moderator present at the venue conveyed comments and questions from the online attendees to the debate moderators onstage. This way, all the debates became interactive hybrid events.



Experience from many virtual events during the Covid-19 pandemic had taught Musikkens Hus and Clement Kjersgaard that virtual debates should be kept fairly short – while maintaining a high energy level. Interestingly, this approach worked very well with the in-person attendees during the festival. For the organizers this was very important in relation to future hybrid events. Moreover, the organizers were pleased to learn that virtual attendees will indeed join the conversation if the topic and the debate participants are interesting and engaging – provided the energy level is high enough.

Unlike the debates, concerts at the festival were not streamed due to copyright issues. However, for both the organizers and the on-site attendees this only added to the attractiveness and exclusivity of the concerts.

At the venue six artists presented examples of their work. Also, business partners and organizations were given the opportunity to meet the on-site participants in the large entry hall of Musikkens Hus, transforming it into a hub of activity during the festival.



Consequently, the venue has decided to continue investing heavily in sophisticated in-house technology such as robotic camera equipment for use in the main hall that seats 1,298 guests. This

means that it is now possible to create high-quality events, on short notice, with a small crew – online, offline or both.

## KEY LEARNINGS POINTS:

1. Reach – a lot of people can listen in and even take part in debates.
2. Sustainability – reduces the need to transport large numbers of participants.
3. Data – the virtual elements provide organizers with valuable data about participant behavior.
4. Time – participants can easily choose to participate in a few select debates which interest them without having to travel to, and participate in, the event as such.
5. Quality is important regarding content, venue and technology. For example, the debates at The Echo of Democracy featured leading Danish thinkers, business leaders, academics commentators and politicians. The latter including current and former government ministers.



Organizers: Clement Kjersgaard and Musikkens Hus

Venue: Musikkens Hus

Tech: Musikkens Hus and Gistrup Film



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# TIME TO MEET AGAIN

In June 2021 the Annual Scientific Meeting of the One Health European Joint Programme (OHEJP ASM 2021) took place in Copenhagen. The congress was successfully held using a hybrid format and welcomed 69 on-site participants together with more than 450 online participants.

OHEJP ASM is part of an EU initiative and must be held annually in a major European city. The presence of a strong scientific community within the field, the city's focus on sustainability and its attractiveness as a tourist destination ensured that Copenhagen was chosen as one of the first three venues.

The 2020 version of congress had been entirely virtual. It was therefore a great

pleasure for the OHEJP ASM team to be able to welcome some of the participants to Copenhagen for the 2021 congress. Actually, the decision to organize a hybrid congress in 2021 was made right after the 2020 congress. However, due to the uncertainty caused by the Covid-19 situation the OHEJP ASM team worked with many different scenarios based on the potential number of on-site participants.

The One Health European Joint Programme is partnership between 44 acclaimed food, veterinary and medical laboratories and institutes across 22 member states in Europe. The partners address the existing and emerging threats of zoonotic disease and antimicrobial resistance.



The decision to move forward with a hybrid version of the congress in 2021 proved to be a success and a great learning opportunity for all the people involved in planning and carrying out the congress.

From the outset it was clear to everybody involved that organizing a hybrid congress was indeed different from organizing both an entirely virtual and an entirely live congress. For example, there are two audiences that need to be inspired, professionally challenged and engaged for the duration of the congress.

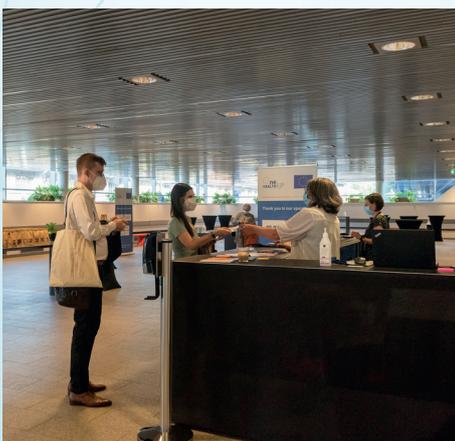


The  
3-day congress  
welcomed  
participants from  
33 countries



#### KEY LEARNINGS POINTS:

1. Strong partners that are both experienced, fast thinking and flexible are of the utmost importance.
2. Start out by identifying and agreeing on clear goals – for the virtual and for the on-site components as well as for the congress as a whole.
3. Many of the speakers present at the venue enjoyed having an on-site, live audience in front of them.
4. It is important to focus 100 % on both audiences as they are very different. Also, it is important to have a clear idea of how to make both audiences feel that they are indeed attending the same congress.
5. Timing is extremely important. In principle the congress was run like a high-quality television production with an 8-person production team present onsite to manage and take care of what was shown to the audience present at the venue, what was shown to the virtual audience at home and what was shown to the virtual speakers, who must be live and on time for both audiences. The virtual speakers could communicate directly with the moderators and the audience present in the room once they were live. However, to avoid delays the organizers decided that the virtual audience could only communicate via texting in the Q&A.
6. Different online networking activities proved to be successful using Wonder.me. Also, during all presentations, participants had the opportunity to ask questions in real time using Slido.
7. The moderators were all on-site.
8. Presentations were streamed on the congress website as well as via Zoom.
9. Engaging online participants is a key to success as they are far removed from the atmosphere at the venue and the other participants. Creating interesting breaks between presentations is a key to success in relation to the online participants. At the conference activities using Kahoot! were valuable when working to engage both on-site and online participants.



For OHEJP ASM and its partners the discussion on hybrid congress formats will continue for a long time. One of the issues that will no doubt be discussed is whether it is possible to leverage the online component to promote future on-site congresses.

**Client:** 3rd One Health European Joint Programme Annual Scientific Meeting (OHEJP ASM)

**PCO:** CAP Partner

**Venue:** DGI Byen

**Tech:** AV Karnov /DGI Byen /CAP Partner (Zoom)



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# HYBRID IS THE FUTURE

In August 2021 Copenhagen hosted the 47th annual international conference on very large data bases (VLDB 2021) as a hybrid conference. VLDB is a premier international forum for data management and database researchers, vendors, practitioners, application developers and users. The success of the hybrid format used for the Copenhagen conference means that future conferences will also welcome both virtual and in-person attendees.

VLDB 2021 featured a substantial amount of research talks, tutorials, demonstrations and workshops – on-site in Copenhagen as well as virtually.

Like previous conferences, the 2021 version covered issues in data management, database and information systems research.



Very Large Data Base Endowment Inc. (VLDB Endowment) is a non-profit organization incorporated in the United States for the sole purpose of promoting and exchanging scholarly work in databases and related fields throughout the world.

Planning for the conference started in 2018. Originally, the plan was to create a high-quality conference that would attract more than 1,000 professionals to the Danish capital. However, the organizers were forced to change their plans due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Consequently, VLDB 2021 was converted into a hybrid conference. The 2020 conference had been an exclusively virtual conference.

In order to create a professional and seamless experience for all participants, the organizers knew that attention to detail was the key to success. They had two separate audiences: 200 in-person attendees in Copenhagen as well as

several hundred virtual attendees all over the world. All sessions consisted of a hybrid component via Zoom and an in-person component in one of seven conference rooms in Copenhagen. The Zoom component was managed by a Zoom manager in the U.S., while the in-person component was managed by an AV technician at the venue. There were also two session chairs per session, who both had a dedicated desk for their laptops so that they could monitor the Zoom component. The session chairs were given detailed instructions before each session. Particularly, regarding the many technical aspects involved in running a professional production on tight schedule. For example, it was important that the in-person presenters did not run Zoom on their laptops while presenting.



For the session chairs it was important to know that each session could be comprised of several presentations which could each be given in one of the following formats:

- **Video presentation**
- **Live presentation on Zoom**
- **Live presentation in person in Copenhagen**

The organizers developed detail instructions for each presentation format. These instructions were distributed to the session chairs and the presenters.

## KEY LEARNINGS POINTS:

1. Attendees interact more with each other and with presenters at hybrid conferences than at virtual conferences. For example, a lot more questions are asked.
2. Before the conference the organizers worried that some of the in-person participants would join the conference virtually from their hotel rooms. This was not the case.
3. Hybrid conferences give more people the opportunity to participate despite, for example, travel restrictions.
4. The schedule was developed using Copenhagen time (CEST). This works only if the program and individual sessions are of very high quality as some virtual participants had to join, for example, very early in the morning local time.
5. The technical set-up was extremely elaborate, which called for careful planning.
6. Flexibility in terms of the conference registration deadline. Quite a lot of participants registered during the conference. Some even registered after the conference in order to get access to the recordings of the sessions.
7. The sessions were all recorded and will therefore be accessible for future viewing.

Client: Very Large Data Base Endowment Inc.

Venue: Tivoli Hotel & Congress Center

PCO: Kuoni Congress

Tech: Tivoli Hotel & Congress Center



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