

Anna Kuell
 Professor Neal Hietz
 Advanced Event Planning
 8 May 2025

Event Project #4: Virtual Event

Event Description

HaHapalooza is a one-day virtual comedy festival packed with live stand-up, improv, pre-recorded sketches, and interactive panels. All content is streamed live via WebEx with built-in chat functions, encouraging real-time interaction between comics, panelists, and attendees. It's a full day of laughter, entertainment, and digital connection, all from the comfort of home.

Attendee Profile

The target audience for HaHapalooza is young adults aged 18–35 who enjoy stand-up, sketch comedy, and alternative online forms of entertainment. They likely already follow comedians on social media and are familiar with streaming culture. The audience is enthusiastic about participating in HaHapalooza because they are fans of the featured comics, are looking to expand their network, and value the affordable and low-commitment modality of a virtual festival.

- **Example Attendee:** Aleesha, 23, is a copywriter in Chicago earning \$55K annually. She's a lifelong SNL fan, follows comedians on social media, and frequently attends local comedy shows. For her, HaHapalooza offers access to big-name comics and rising stars without the price or hassle of an in-person festival.

Event Leadership Process

1. Research

- a. Survey target demographics via a [Typeform](#) survey → Leverage connections with comedy venues to have attendees/performers complete the survey.
- b. Track the fan engagement of potential performers on social media (both performers' accounts and the event's public pages)
- c. Assemble a focus group of 10 target audience members and ask them questions such as who they would like to see perform, how many sessions they would realistically attend, and what they feel a realistic price point for a ticket should be.

2. Design

- a. Decide branding and theme → retro, colorful, nostalgic.
- b. Choose a virtual event platform → HaHapalooza will use [WebEx](#) as the host platform for their virtual comedy fest. WebEx allows for customization, meaning there is the option to upload the branding, color



scheme, and themes, ensuring the branding is consistent across the entire event. Additionally, WebEx can host up to 100,000 attendees and offers real-time closed captions in 100+ languages so that everyone can be accommodated regardless of ability or language. The decision was made not to use Zoom because of the association people have with Zoom to school, work, and the pandemic.

- c. Pre-event messaging → Further, WebEx offers attendee registration services, which can be used to contact, remind, and thank attendees.

3. Planning

- a. Select a date → Saturday, July 26th is the date of HaHapalooza, roughly 12 weeks from today (the recommended timeline to plan a virtual event). This is the weekend before HaHapoolza, which the name of this festival spoofs off of. Thus, this date is timely. Further, people will be looking for a break from the summer heat and won't resist being inside to cool down and tune into the event. The event is on the weekend, so the festival is not competing with people's workday schedules.
- b. Format → HaHapalooza will have live, pre-recorded, and access to re-watch sessions for attendees. Attendees will also have the opportunity to join and perform at an open-mic style breakout room.
- c. Schedule Organization → Program is organized by genre: Stand-up Room, Improv Room, Sketch room, etc.

4. Coordination

- a. Internal/behind-the-scenes communications will occur over [Slack](#).
- b. Each room/panel will have a dedicated moderator to filter the comments, choose questions for Q&As, and ensure everything runs smoothly.

5. Evaluation

- a. A post-event survey will be sent out using Typeform, asking attendees which shows they attended, what could've been done better, thoughts on the performers, etc.

Marketing Plan

- Social media teasers featuring one-liners from acts
 - Montages of acts as well as stand-alone clips.
- Collaborations with student comedy organizations, comedy clubs, and featured acts.
 - Hang posters on and around campuses, comedy clubs, and in other businesses that the target audience frequents.
 - Urge acts to shout out *HaHapoolza* during their sets leading up to the event.
- TikTok/Reels series such as “Meet the Comedians” or “What to Expect at HaHapalooza”
- Early bird pricing and promos offering discounted prices.
- Instagram giveaway prompting followers to repost a flyer for HaHapalooza for the chance to win free tickets.

- Form partnerships with comedy blogs (such as [Comedy Crowd](#)) – offer a 10% discount on tickets to their subscribers in return for PR and promotion in their email blasts and blog posts.
- Targeted ads on relevant YouTube videos.

Invitation, Registration, and Ticket Payment

In order to streamline online modalities, HaHapalooza will be using WebEx's internal/integrated event registration platform. The registration system allows hosts to gather information, restrict and grant access for specific people, and keep event information secure. WebEx also has the option to charge for event tickets, which is how our attendees will purchase tickets. Promo codes can be entered at checkout, and all transactions are fully online.

Program Schedule

Time	Event	Description
12:00 PM (CST)	“The Cold Open”	Parodying the style of shows like <i>SNL</i> or <i>The Office</i> . This will be an energetic sketch comedy intro (pre-recorded), featuring clips from all the day's performers to tease the lineup.
12:10 PM	Kickoff Set	Live, fast-paced 20-minute comedy set by John Mulaney , who can draw a crowd and build hype.
12:30 PM	Welcome + Event Introduction	Emcee, Chris Redd , introduces the day, provides tech tips, hypes up upcoming sets, and a short DJ set and poll (“Who are you most excited to see?”).
12:45 PM	College Comedian Showcase	5 short sets from young, promising comedians from around the US. Audience members can vote for their favorite performer.
1:45 PM	Sketch Stream	A series of short pre-recorded sketches by comedy troupes or acts like Lonely Island , Please Don't Destroy , or Tim Robinson , played with a live chat thread.
2:30 PM	Lunch Lounge a. Themed breakout rooms	Attendees can join themed breakout rooms like Zoom Court for fake disputes, Dating Profile Roasts, a rapid-fire joke-writing

	b. interactive improv games	challenge, or an SNL character bracket debate. Alternatively, guests can opt into classic improv game rooms for a more interactive experience.
3:15	Breaking into Comedy Panel and Q&A	Roundtable style discussion with content creators, comedians, and podcast hosts discussing getting started, networking in comedy, growing a fanbase, going viral, etc. Live Q&A using Slido (compatible with WebEx).
4:15 PM	Open mic <i>OR</i> Roast Room (concurrent)	Two separate rooms: 1.) Open mic – perform or view (3 min slots), 2.) Volunteers get roasted by a panel of comedians
5:00 PM	Headliner Sets	Two full-length (30 minutes) sets from famous comedians — Tina Fey and Pete Davidson
6:00 PM	Wrap-up, thank you, and Live Q&A with headliners (Maulney returns)	Attendees can submit questions via Slido, and others can upvote the questions they're most excited to hear answered. The emcee will facilitate the session with 5–10 curated questions.
6:45 PM	Afterparty	Room with a DJ, plus a chat lounge for mingling. Digital photo booth and social wall for goodbyes.

Thank You, Survey, and Goodie Bags

Directly after the event ends, all attendees will receive a personalized thank-you email with a virtual goody bag. HaHapalooza will be using [Swaggable](#) to orchestrate this. The goody bag will contain vouchers that can be exchanged for tickets at comedy venues around the country, an invitation to attend a virtual comedy writing workshop, a subscription to an online improv class, and a gift card to redeem HaHapalooza merchandise. 24 hours after the event begins, all attendees will receive a feedback survey in their email. 72 hours later, they will receive an email with a “Best of HaHapalooza” montage.

