

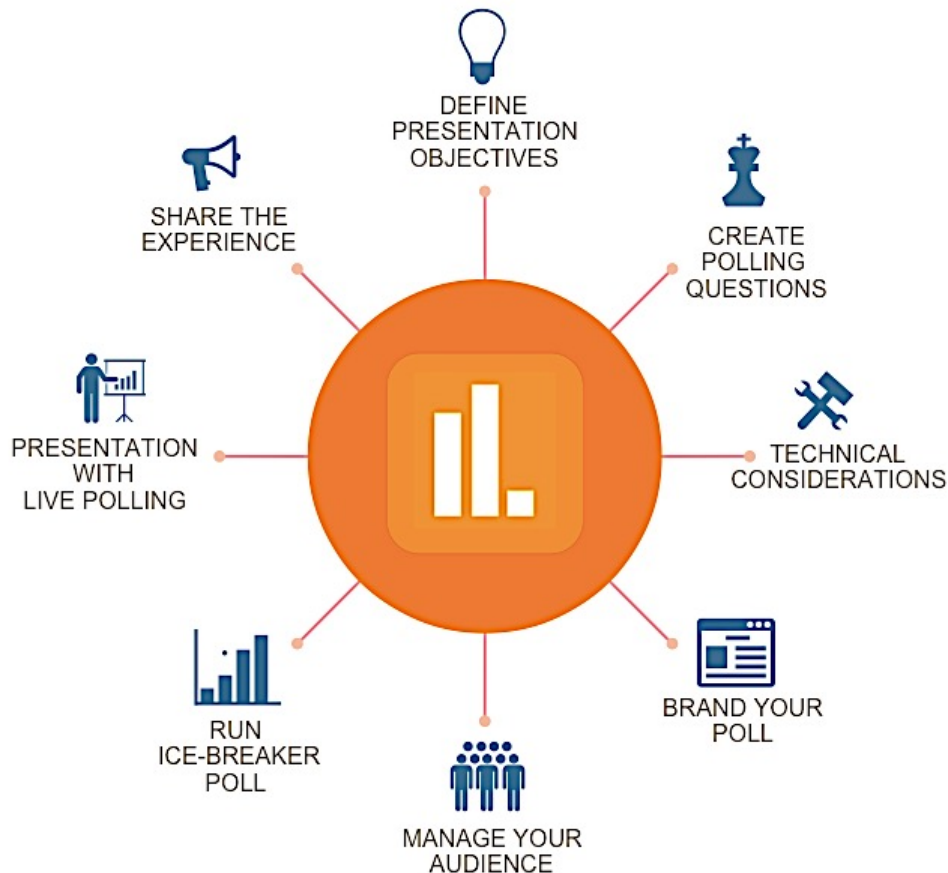
AUDIENCE POLLING AT CONFERENCES A Guide For Conference Organisers

Audience polling is a great way to drive effective audience engagement at conferences, and enhances the opportunity for information exchange between a speaker and the audience. Running a poll with an audience for the first time can be a daunting experience, for both you as the conference organiser and your speaker - especially if your audience size is large.

Preparation is essential to implementing a successful audience poll.

This guide will help you understand how to work in partnership your speakers to get the maximum engagement from your audience and avoid common pitfalls, making your conference a memorable event that stands out from the crowd.

Figure 1: Steps To Successful Audience Polling At Conferences



1. DEFINE PRESENTATION OBJECTIVES

Organise a briefing with the speaker whose session will involve the use of audience polling. Take the time to understand and be aligned on what the speaker's objectives are. What are they aiming to achieve? What do they want the audience to do following their session/presentation?

Work together to identify opportunities to use polling to achieve the set objectives within the content/slides. Your objective is to have the speaker finalise their presentation and polling questions prior to the conference.

Hence this meeting should take place several weeks/months before the conference to kick-start the process. If you have a conference moderator or chairperson, involving them in this stage is also beneficial.

2. CREATE YOUR POLLING QUESTIONS

If your speaker is using audience polling for the first time, consider these points when creating the polling questions that will be used:

- Take into consideration the time allocated for the session and the content being covered. Audience polling should be an enhancement to your presentation, hence do not overload the presentation with polls so it becomes a distraction.
- Keep the questions simple and relevant.
- Consider language proficiency if your audience is international.
- Use simple language. It should be very clear to the audience what they need to do to vote.

3. TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to the conference, check the hardware and software set up available at the venue, and ensure you have met the requirements in Figure 2. If there is a conference APP being used, make the poll accessible via the APP.

ParticiPoll polling operates from a low bandwidth website, and is able to cope with up to 2000 concurrent connections. Plan to run a "test poll" at the venue to check everything is working.

Figure 2: Software And Hardware Requirements For Audience Polling With ParticiPoll



Software requirements

- Microsoft PowerPoint for PC Office versions 2010, 2013, 2016 and Office 365
- Microsoft PowerPoint for Mac versions 2016 and Office 365
- ParticiPoll Add-In Installed and Tested
- If you need to re-install the App on a new machine follow this link <http://www.participoll.com/downloads/>
- Load your poll presentations onto the presentation computer
- If there is a conference APP, make the poll accessible via the APP



Hardware requirements

- Check with your venue that the local Wi-Fi can support your audience size
- If you are using a presentation computer belonging to the venue, check that you will be allowed to install the ParticiPoll Add-In and that it will not be blocked by local anti-virus or firewalls
- For international use ensure you have adaptors for power leads and for connecting to the projector screen at your venue

4. BRAND YOUR POLL

With ParticiPoll, you can upload your unique conference/organisation logo, and change your voting URL to reflect the event. Login to My Account > Customise at www.ParticiPoll.com to add customisations.

5. MANAGE YOUR AUDIENCE

The more audience members that participate at your conference, the more likely the message/learning objectives will be met, the more likely the session will be a success and the more memorable the experience will be.

To increase audience participation levels, tell them to bring their mobile devices so that they can take part in the polling session (have this information in the conference

programme and communications prior to the event). Make it something they look forward to!

At the conference, have a placeholder slide on the screen notifying the audience that an interactive session will be taking place (Figure 3). Provide them with your branded URL and QR Code. If the audience is accessing the poll through a conference APP – ensure they have downloaded the latest conference APP.


Emphasising the poll is anonymous can also help drive participation. If you have a conference moderator or chairperson, involving them in this stage is also beneficial.

Figure 3: A Placeholder Slide To Help Drive Audience Participation

Prepare for Audience Polling

During the upcoming presentation you will be participating in an interactive polling session requiring use of your mobile device

Using your device please access the poll via this URL <http://conf2017.participoll.com>
Or scan the QR Code



All voting is anonymous and none of your personal data is visible to anyone including the speaker
Be ready to participate, and enjoy your session!
[If required: Wi-Fi name: XXXXX Password: XXXXX]

6. RUN AN ICE-BREAKER POLL

To ensure you have the audience ready and online to participate, have the speaker run an icebreaker poll, to familiarize audience with the polling software. This can be based on anything of interest and appropriate to build up the anticipation for an effective session.

From this poll, the speaker can establish how many audience members are participating and nudge them further to drive up the numbers to the maximum.

7. PRESENTATION WITH LIVE POLLING

With everything in place your speaker can start the session and invite the audience to participate. If your audience is participating in a live polling session for the first time, they naturally are curious to see how it works.

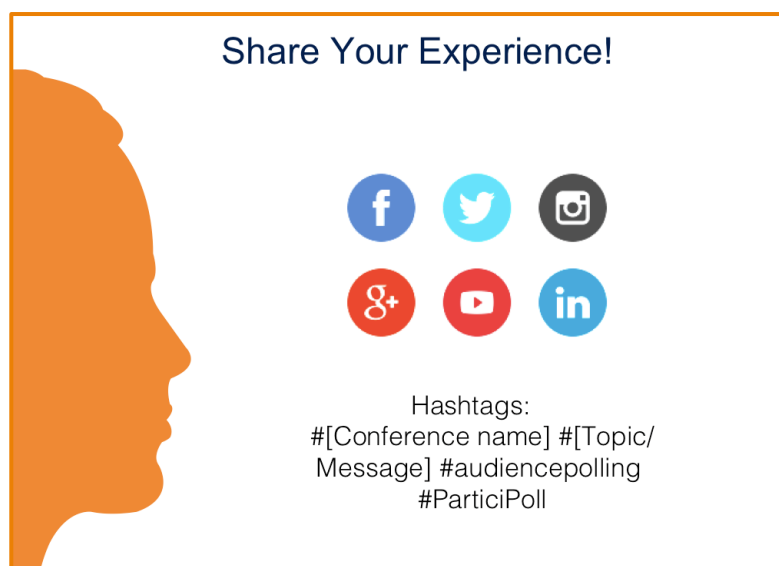
When voting starts and the answers begin recording on the screen, the audience excitement begins as they watch the evolving pattern of responses on the screen. Your audience is now engaged!

8. SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE

Discuss with your speaker ways in which you can share the outcome of your polling session. Remember your audience can become ambassadors for your conference and the content being shared. Sharing results or their experience of the session on social media for instance can earn your conference important earned media.

Ending the presentation and session with a slide reminding the audience to tweet or post their experiences, and provide relevant hashtags (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Example Slide At The End Of The Session Can Help Drive Earned Media For Your Content/Conference



You can also take photos/videos of your audience polling sessions and share this interactive element of your conference with others. At ParticiPoll we are always excited to hear about your experiences with audience polling, so keep us posted! #ParticiPoll

If you require any assistance with your polling please contact us at:

www.ParticiPoll.com

THE CHECKLIST AUDIENCE POLLING AT CONFERENCES		
Month, Weeks before the conference	On the Day	30 minutes prior to/during the poll
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Read the Audience Polling Guide <input type="checkbox"/> Arrange a Speaker and Chairperson Briefing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Create Polling Questions <input type="checkbox"/> Customise the polling URL <input type="checkbox"/> Decide how you plan to manage expectations of audience during polling <input type="checkbox"/> Have ice-breaker poll ready <input type="checkbox"/> Have your placeholder slide and your "share your experience" slide ready <input type="checkbox"/> Share hardware and software requirements with the Audiovisual/tech Support team <input type="checkbox"/> Share hardware and software requirements with the venue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure all hardware and software requirements are in place <input type="checkbox"/> Test Wi-Fi <input type="checkbox"/> Lectern PC/speakers Laptop ready with ParticiPoll Installed <input type="checkbox"/> Speaker Slides ready with Polling Questions <input type="checkbox"/> Brief the speaker, chairperson and AV Staff, familiarize them with the 'running order' <input type="checkbox"/> Rehearse with a test poll 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Have slide deck ready, with audience participation slide on the screen <input type="checkbox"/> Introduce audience polling to the audience <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct ice-breaker poll with the audience <input type="checkbox"/> Take photographs and share your experience! #ParticiPoll