

# FIVE ADVANTAGES of New Virtual Propane Expo

WITH THE CORONAVIRUS LOCKDOWN AND ENSUING CONCERNS, WE EITHER COULD NOT GO TO (OR DID NOT FEEL COMFORTABLE GOING TO) ASSOCIATION MEETINGS, EXPOS, TRADE SHOWS, OR TRAINING EVENTS. OUR PROPANE INDUSTRY RELIES ON THESE EVENTS TO EDUCATE, INFORM, CONNECT, AND TRANSACT. THESE “LIVE,” “IN PERSON” EVENTS ARE THE LIFEBLOOD OF OUR INDUSTRY FOR PROPANE MARKETERS AND FOR PROPANE SUPPLIERS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS.

So, is there an alternative? Surprisingly, there is in the form of the VirtualPropaneExpo.com, but what is it and how can it help our industry?

A virtual trade show (aka virtual expo) is a cross between an online webcast meeting and Amazon’s marketplace. It’s the next big trend in trade shows. With the coronavirus, it has just received a big shot in the arm. Prior to 2020, a mere 20 per

cent of all trade shows were online. Due to the recent pandemic ALL trade shows had a choice to close or go to a virtual platform. In 2020 and beyond, it is projected that over 60 per cent of all trade shows will become virtual or blend a hybrid of virtual and physical. Fortunately, this is great news for you if you understand how to make the most of them.

Like online meetings, a virtual expo can be a simple and easy way to view a series of vendor booths and presentations, quickly and easily. In them you can check out company brochures, videos, and connect directly with the vendors of your choosing — without feeling any high-pressure sales or the rushed feeling due to limited time to visit all the booths and hear the speakers.

Why bother with these virtual expos when face-to-face meetings are so much more satisfying and real? In addition to the fact that there are not many good alternative choices since many expos have closed for this year, it’s also because virtual expos offer some solid advantages.

1. Stretch tighter budgets — Imagine a trade show with no costs for transportation, shipping, hotels, hospitality, booths, brochures, booth backdrops, parking, taxi’s, and just minimal cost for exhibit space. That’s a huge savings for what a virtual expo offers.

- For propane delivery companies sending just one person to a national expo can cost roughly \$2000 per person, if you include all associated costs. For a vendor it can cost them between \$5000 and \$45,000. This same online expo could cost a marketer nothing and a vendor between \$500 and \$3000 — between 90 per cent to 93 per cent cost savings; and

- With costs rising and travel budgets falling, exhibitors and expo attendees are turning to virtual trade shows as a less expensive way to connect, learn, exhibit, and transact.

2. Spread your wings — For propane companies, the online virtual expo is an incredible opportunity for them to get more people involved in an expo than ever before. Now they can listen to all the presenters and then have their team listen to the online recorded version at a later more convenient time.

- Propane suppliers and vendors with super busy schedules sometimes find it hard to break out of the rut of “use what worked last year.” The online expo medium will free them up to experiment with innovative exhibit ideas and rapidly change the ones that do not work. At a virtual show they do not need to worry about the flow of foot traffic or many other design constraints.



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- Moreover, you will have help designing your display. Set-up on virtual trade show sites takes less than one to two hours, as compared to days of travel and booth setup. It is a fantastic change for the better. You will be able to use exciting multimedia tools, like sales funnels and video, in ways that are often minimalized in live expos.

3. The future is green — Compared to traditional trade shows, virtual expos shows are “greener.” Lowering environmental impact is an increasingly important goal for many companies. An online expo can now be bigger, accommodate more attendees and vendors than ever before, yet do so with almost Zero Travel emissions. Our propane fuel is impressively green and now our expos can be too!

4. Follow the lead — Traditional trade shows often generate exciting leads. Unfortunately, 80 per cent of those leads are never followed up — a statistic bound to discourage the most enthusiastic marketing professional. The reasons are myriad: disconnects between marketing and sales, the difficulties of reading hand-scribbled names and addresses, the tedium of entering contact info by hand into databases, or the overwhelming time and work associated with traveling to and from, plus setting up, managing, and closing down an expo, in the midst of an already frantic schedule.

- Virtual expos however require much less time, energy, and allow for much more follow up time. Additionally, the prospect data is more dynamic because it’s auto gathered and organized. Often the prospects leave their contact info for you directly into a lead capture tool which sends that info directly to you for faster follow up.

- Virtual expos save incredible amounts of time for exhibitors and attendees.

5. Great for the next gen customer or the digitally aware — Most important of all, virtual expos help you reach out what we have all become — the “digital generation.” Over the last 20 years, Amazon and others have trained us to navigate purchasing anything and get it delivered to our doorstep. More recently, the pandemic has forced many of us to become confident and comfortable with digital online shipping and learning.

- These days, everyone from company presidents down are accustomed to the digital world and use it for banking, ordering movies, and purchasing almost anything online. Now with more than two months of lockdown, the virtual trade show experience is seeming more normal and natural than ever before.

The Virtual expo may never completely replace the great exhibit halls. Face-to-face contact is just too essential for many people. However, as budgets tighten and show attendance continues to decrease, a wise business will use this exciting new technology to reach out to customers. It’s one more tool in your arsenal, and you can use it effectively to improve your company’s bottom-line.

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**Safe, Easy & FREE**  
 (COVID-19 Alternative)

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 Visit Them 24x7!

NEXT EXPO IS ON June 24th & 25th  
 LIVE Presentations 10am - 5pm EST  
 (There were 2900 visitors on the May 28th show)

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Let's help the Propane Industry together. Join us for a first ever nationwide free expo to for new insights into the propane industry, connect with vendors and get special trade show only special offers and discounts. Register for FREE.

- This trend is bound to continue. Gaining experience now in the virtual (online) world will give you an edge in marketing to the vast and growing demographic that prefers it.

If you have not already done so, you should check out the new monthly online VirtualPropaneExpo.com today. And now you know why you will benefit from this trend toward a virtual expo.

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