

The Personal Connection

Company

Relais & Chateaux

Industry

Travel

Location

Paris France

Event Type

Virtual

3,613

Total number
of meetings

351

Total number
of attendees

98%

Activation
Rate

Challenges

- > The Covid-19 pandemic and closed borders prevented participants from attending an in-person event.
- > A limited implementation timeline of four weeks

Solutions

- > Create an opportunity for their members to connect with each other and move business forward, despite the pandemic and travel restrictions.

The Grip platform links the far reaches of the earth

Established in 1954, Relais & Châteaux is an association of more than 580 landmark hotels, properties and restaurants across 67 countries. Operated by independent innkeepers, chefs, and owners, its ethos is a shared passion, and a desire for personal and authentic connections. Whether it's a snow-covered mountain chalet, a country house or a gourmet restaurant, the same shared values of Relais & Châteaux will be there. Although the pandemic hit the travel industry particularly hard, there was still a real need to continue the personal connections Relais & Châteaux members cherish.

Grip's proven track record

Knowing the importance of face-to-face member events, Relais & Châteaux looked for alternatives that could replicate those personal experiences at their virtual trade show in May 2021. Being their first fully-virtual event, selecting the right technology partner was imperative.



Relais & Châteaux first heard of Grip at the virtual Brownell Travel conference, an event hosted on the Grip platform in November 2020. Impressed by the capabilities of Grip's technology and having experienced it first-hand, the team felt confident they were getting a polished and professional offering for their guests.

A very receptive audience

The event was a success. With borders still closed, Grip's platform facilitated the creation of personal and authentic connections between Relais & Châteaux members and 351 travel agents and buyers from all over the world.

The platform's networking and matchmaking capabilities enabled successful meetings and connections at the Relais & Châteaux first virtual trade show. The participant activation rate reached 98% and attendees were very receptive to the new virtual event experience. Meanwhile, exhibitors were highly engaged throughout the event, reaching an astounding 100% activation rate. The virtual event format generated 3,472 connections between participants, an average of 13.5 connections per attendee, and a total of 3,613 meetings were initiated with an acceptance rate of 63%. All positive signs for future virtual events.

Grip's white label capabilities provided a highly branded virtual experience fully aligned with Relais & Châteaux identity. "The members liked how the Grip platform was completely customized to reflect our brand", said David.

A post event survey conducted by Relais & Châteaux found that attendees appreciated the level of professionalism achieved with the new event format and 96% of sellers rated the event four out of five or higher.

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 **RELAIS & CHATEAUX**

David Woodward
Director of global sales at Relais & Châteaux

Future trade shows

Pre-pandemic, the costs associated with attending face-to-face events typically resulted in fewer attendees. This year, however, eliminating travel was perfectly in line with the event's sustainability theme. "We had already decided on a sustainability theme before bringing Grip onboard, so it was a natural fit," said David.

The inaugural virtual trade show provided the Relais & Chateaux team with the unique opportunity to meet with sellers from all over the world, which was always a limitation of previous face-to-face events.

Nonetheless, having gone through the experience of delivering a fully virtual event in partnership with Grip has made the team at Relais & Châteaux a lot more confident about the future of its events. The world is still in a state of flux with the pandemic. It's likely we'll continue to have a virtual element at our events for the next couple of years, added David.

Case Study Overview

Results

- › Number of attendees: 351
- › Activation rate: 98%
- › Total number of meetings: 3,613
- › Acceptance rate: 63,33% (avg per benchmarks 62%)
- › Chat usage per user: 93% (this was helpful with connections)
- › Teams activation rate: 100% (all exhibitors were active and engaged)
- › Number of connections: 3472 (13,5 connections per user (avg per benchmarks 2.1))
- › Number of sessions views: 155 unique viewers for 2 sessions



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