canarie

Pandemic-era Event Hosting

Kathryn Anthonisen | Ela Yazdani

October 1, 2021

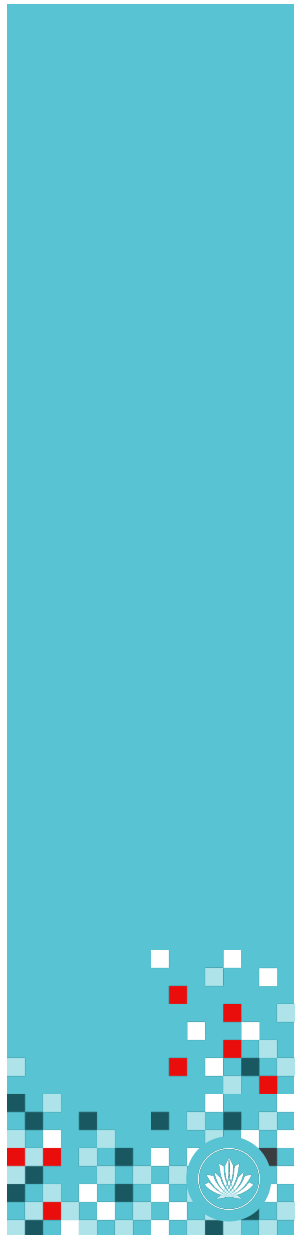
Global MarComms Meeting

What we did, what we learned, what we changed

Lifelong learning in action!

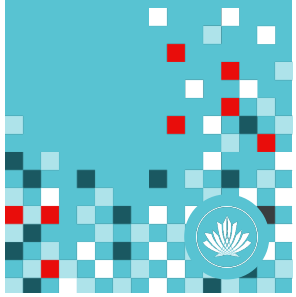
WHY we did what we did

NREN Summit	National Data Services Framework Summit	Canadian Research Software Conference
An opportunity to highlight and celebrate the work of NREN stakeholders in three areas: • cybersecurity • remote education • research	A forum where the Canadian research community can learn, collaborate, exchange ideas, and discuss common issues, with a goal of developing a shared understanding of the current data management landscape and recommendations for future initiatives.	An opportunity for research software developers to learn about new initiatives, exchange best practices, and continue to develop the research software developer community.



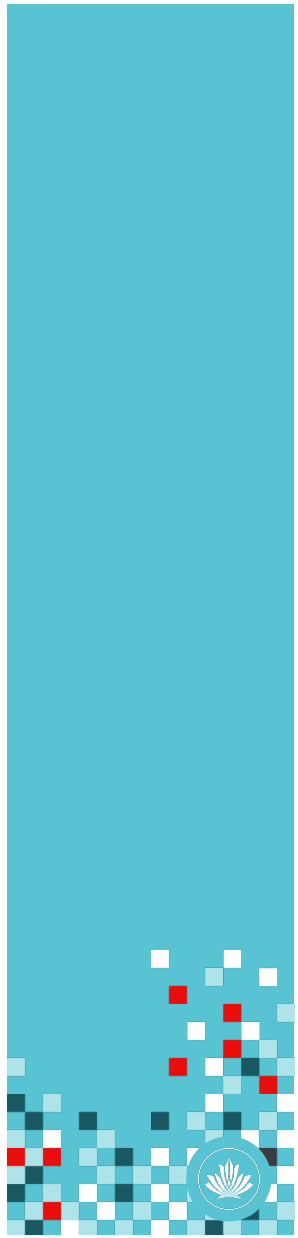
HOW we did what we did

NREN Summit	National Data Services Framework Summit	Canadian Research Software Developers' Conference
• December 2020 • Hosted on Zoom • 3 consecutive afternoons, 1 - 4 pm • New host for each day • Community leaders talking to other community leaders • Talks pre-recorded, live Q&A • External event planners • No sponsors	• March 2021 • Hosted on Zoom • 3 consecutive afternoons, 12 - 4 pm • Same host for plenary sessions • Attendees divided into cohorts, stayed in cohort throughout • Used Google Docs, upvoting/downvoting on breakout group statements • Incorporated a "pecha kucha" • External event planners • No sponsors	• July 2021 • Hosted on Pheedloop • 3 consecutive afternoons, 12 - 4 pm • Same host over 3 days • Keynotes + Q&A • External event planners • No sponsors



WHAT we learned post-event

NREN Summit	National Data Services Framework Summit	Canadian Research Software Developers' Conference
• Event planners rule! • Zoom makes participation easy • Pre-recording sessions lessened tech anxiety for all • Shorter talks/easy Q&A format on Zoom delivered greater engagement • Interview formats work well, speakers are more comfortable	• Event planners rule! • 4 hours/day is too long • Developing consensus on key issues in a virtual environment is tough! • Integrating too many platforms can lead to user fatigue • If running breakouts, think carefully through pre-prep and intended outcomes	• Event planners rule! • A lively moderator/MC is key to maintaining the spirit of the event • Summer not a good time to host an event • Pheedloop had loose integration with Zoom, problematic around questions • People still love conference swag



A few more recommendations…

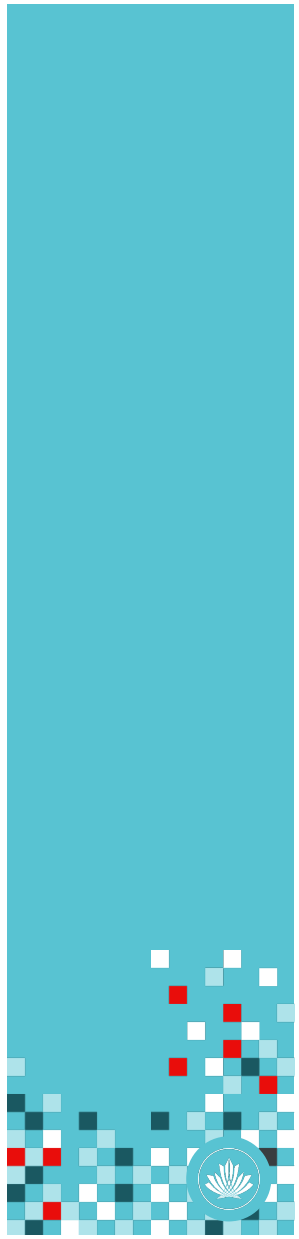
Imagine the experience you want guests to have, and work backwards from there.

Build in social time!

Content is still king, but effective scheduling is queen!

If you are using a virtual platform, engage their tech support!

Be very clear about if and how you want sponsors to engage.



CANARIE Summit 2021 - Learning our Lessons

- November 16, 17, 18, 1 - 4 pm
- Event planners engaged
- Each day has a theme:
  - Building the Team
  - Redefining the Playbook
  - Expanding the Toolkit
- 3 focussed speakers/day, shorter presentations, Q&A, breaks
- Finalizing virtual platform, hosting duties, swag, presenters

A
Q

canarie

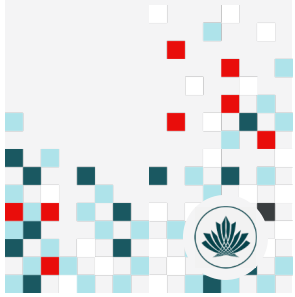
canarie.ca | @canarie_inc

Kathryn.anthonisen@canarie.ca

What we learned

- it may be a good idea to implement a more informal Q&A after presentations in individual breakout rooms if speakers are amenable and available.
- good option for events like the NREN Summit because it is accessible, familiar to the audience, and cost effective. Attendees can ‘pop-in’ for sessions they’re interested in without having to learn to navigate a virtual platform.
- The time / schedule for sessions was great and likely resulted in a more positive user experience. There was excellent engagement with the Q&A immediately after the recorded presentations
- Pre-recording and editing videos in advance was a success.
- Speakers were most comfortable when they were being interviewed – they were less comfortable when they were speaking at the camera without engagement or prompting.
- Simultaneous Interpretation was successful, although interpreters did have a hard time keeping up with the speed of some of the presentations. This is another reason to consider moving to an interview style presentation.
- Summer not a good time to host a conference!
- Build in social time
- Pheedloop had loose integration with Zoom, problematic around questions

- our simultaneous interpretation service through the Zoom stream never fully integrated, so attendees could still hear the English audio while listening to the French interpretation. This could not be resolved by Zoom or Pheedloop tech support.
- Minimize the number of applications that have to integrate to run the virtual event. In the case of Pheedloop, the Zoom integration was required in order for us to offer simultaneous interpretation

1. For virtual and hybrid events monitor guest activity (such as visits to coffee stations) to better understand shortcomings in the experience.
2. For virtual events, people will continue to put conference windows off to the side while doing something else so ensure that CANARIE staff are available to listen to talks and ask questions.
3. Too complicated to follow a chat, zoom, breakout and google docs.

- having Zoom wranglers in place made its use far better.
- 3 days 4 hours was too much