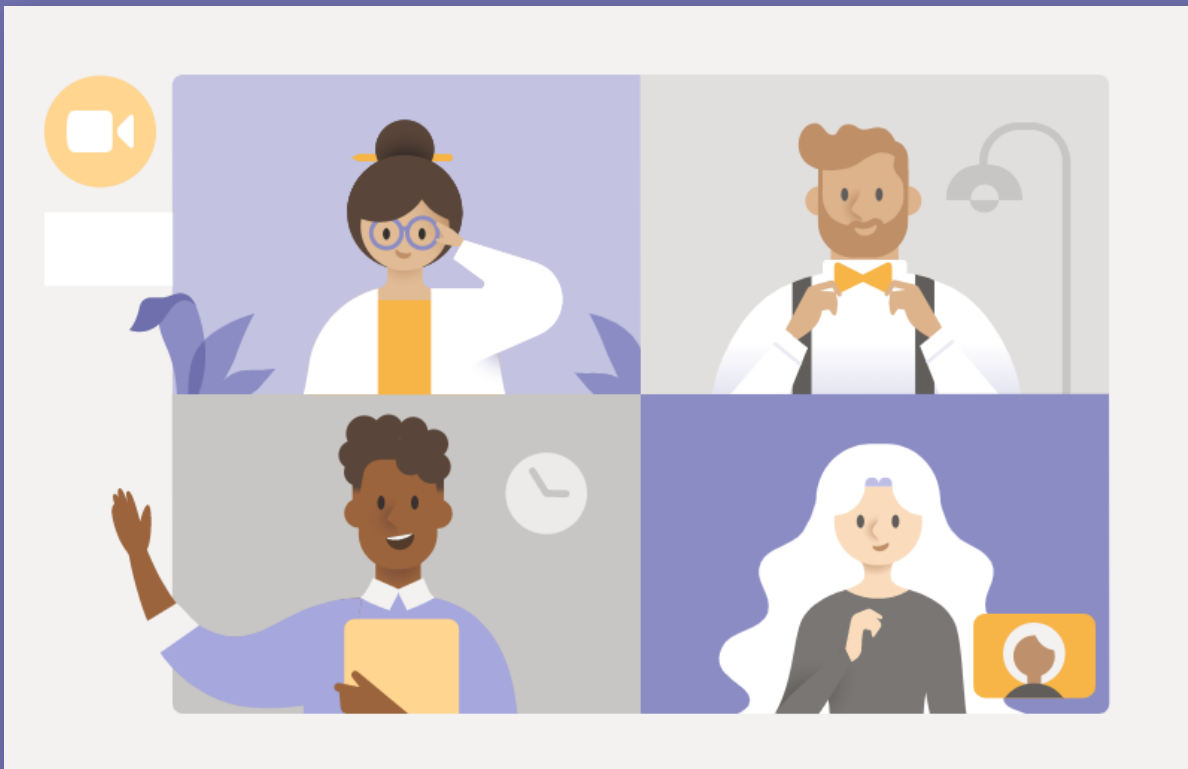# Microsoft Teams Live Events best practices

by **Marjolein Hoekstra**
for the **Microsoft Education Engineering Engagement Team**

Microsoft

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What are Teams Live Events?

In contrast to regular Microsoft Teams meetings, Teams Live Events are meant to be used for one-to-many presentations attended by large audiences of up to 20,000 people. Live Events need to be orchestrated by an event production team. Depending on the Live Event creation parameters, they can be attended by specific people, by all people in your organization, or by everyone.
To run Teams Live Events successfully, we recommend that you prepare and practice them well in advance.

Normally, a Live Event organizer is required to have a paid Microsoft Office 365 EDU A3 or A5 subscription. Until October 1, 2020, Microsoft allows the creation of Live Events by EDU A1 subscribers as well.

With this document, we aim to provide you with practical tips on when, why and how to use Teams Live Events.
This document reflects the features and capabilities of Teams Live Events per July 2020.
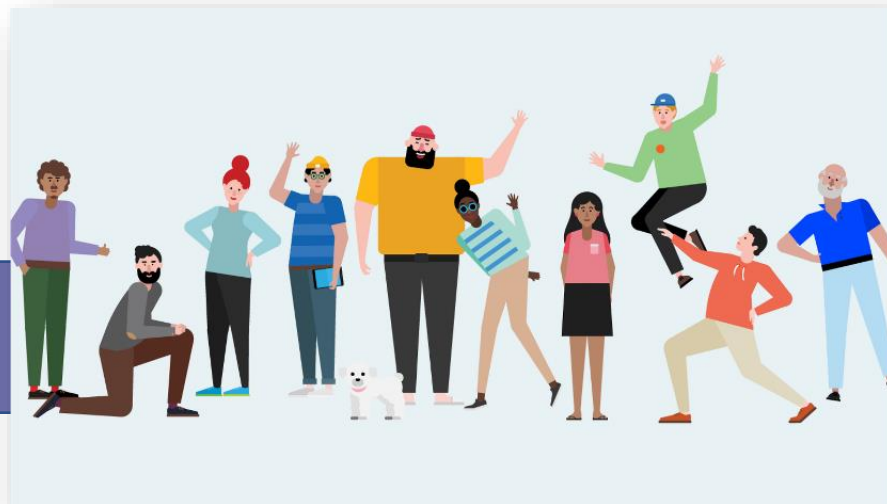
Use cases for Teams Live Events

Large events	Educating large groups	Other scenarios
Back-to-school opening sessions for various audiences (educators only, parents only, students)	Meetings or lectures with an expected audience of more than 300 participants	Virtual field trips
		Esports, cultural and musical events
Announcements, conferences, conventions, summits, symposia	Webinars, workshops	Any meeting where it's important to hard-mute video and/or audio of participants
	Virtual Q&A sessions	
	Presentations, demonstrations, experimentations	Sessions that need to be live-streamed via other platforms, e.g. YouTube Live, Facebook Live or Twitch TV.
Virtual graduations, commencement speeches, celebrations and other ceremonies		This type requires an external hardware / software encoder

Requirements for Live Events

Live Event licensing
Normally, Live Event organizers require a paid Microsoft 365 EDU A3 or A5 subscription. **Temporarily**, Microsoft is continuing to allow institutions using a free Microsoft 365 EDU A1 subscription to create Live Events as well.

🎯 [Get started with Microsoft Teams live events](#)

Live Event current extension of feature limitations
Until Oct 1, every tenant can live-stream 50 concurrent Teams Live Events at any given time. The maximum number of attendees is 20,000 per event. Maximum event duration: 16 hours.

🎯 [Limitations and specifications for Microsoft Teams Live Events](#)

Live Event IT admin policy
Availability of the Live Event feature is governed by the global Live Event policy in the IT Admin interface for Microsoft Teams, under **Meetings > Live events policies**. The policy is on by default.

🎯 [Set up for live events in Microsoft Teams](#)
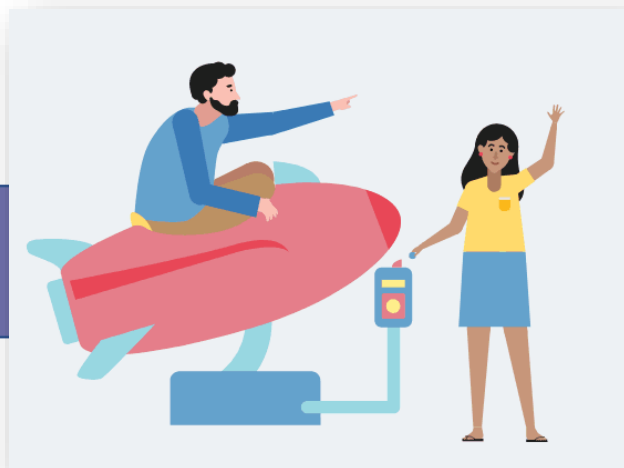
Roles in a Live Event

Organizer	Producer	Presenter	Attendee

Organizer

Prepares and schedules the live event

Invites producers and presenters

Selects production method and permissions

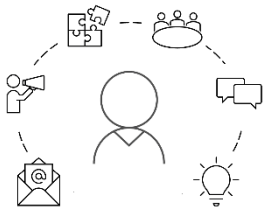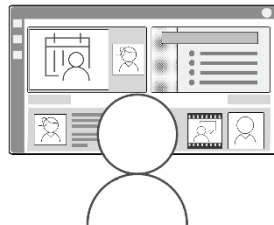Configures event options such as recording, live captions and Q&A

Invites attendees, promotes event

May manage recordings and reports generated after the event is over

Producer

Guides presenters in their role pre-event, incl tech check

Starts and stops the live event

Welcomes audience

Queues and live-streams presenter's video or screen in various layouts

May chat with presenter

May moderate Q&A

May manage recordings and reports generated after the event is over

Presenter
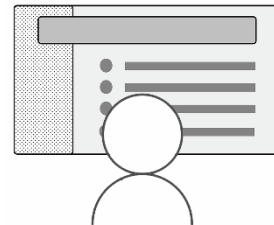
Presents their own webcam video, shares their desktop or window to the live event

May chat with producer

May moderate Q&A

May manage recordings and reports generated after the event is over

Attendee
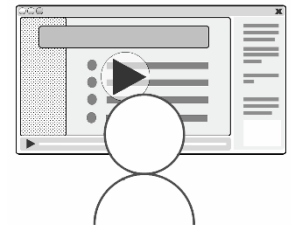
Joins either anonymously or authenticated through a desktop browser, or joins authenticated through the Teams app (mobile and desktop)

Watches the event live or on-demand, using *digital video recorder* (DVR) controls

Can enable live captions in multiple languages

Can participate in Q&A

Organizers
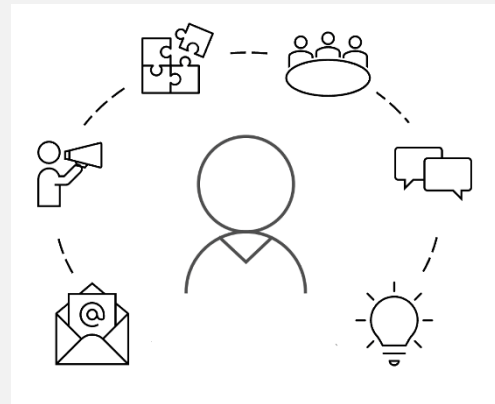
It is the responsibility of the Live Event organizer to schedule the event and to configure the event options.

This chapter discusses how to create a Live Event.

Instructions

1 In the Teams Calendar app, open the **+ New Meeting** drop-down menu in the top-right corner. Select **Live Event** and follow the prompts.

New live event

You are setting up a live event
To invite attendees, copy the link once you schedule the live event, and publish it or send it in a calendar invite. Learn more

Title *
Live event

Location

Start   End
12:30 PM   1:00 PM

Details
B *I* U̲ S̶ | ▽ **A** A͞A | Paragraph ∨ | Iₓ | ⇐ ⇒ ⋯
Provide info about the live event
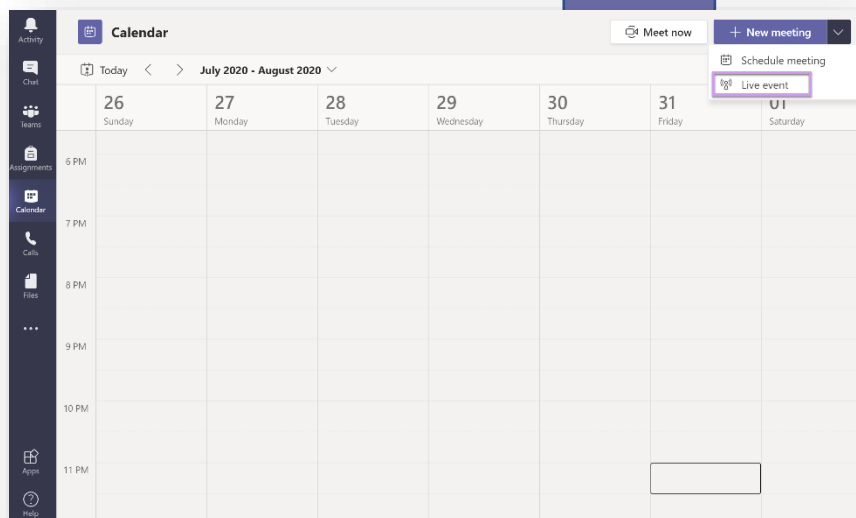
Invite people to your event group
Invite presenters

Organizer
Producer ∨

Close   Next

2 For the event Start and End time, make sure you add 30 mins of buffer time. This ensures that ample time is scheduled on your presenters' and producers' calendar to arrive well ahead before the event and to make up for accidental delays.

3 Invite producers and presenters by typing their names in the search box.

Members of your organization will appear with their initials or profile picture. If you see a + symbol, then it means they are not a member of your organization and that they need to be added to a Microsoft Teams team first.

Invite people to your event group
Invite presenters

Organizer
Producer ∨

4 Decide who can attend the event: specific users or groups, everyone in the organization, or everyone.

The default Teams Live Event policy only allows to organize events for viewing within one's own organization. IT admins can change this Live Events policy setting in the Microsoft Teams admin center.

5 For accessibility purposes, provide your attendees with live captions translated in up to six languages. Before you can use this setting, your IT admin needs to enable this setting by turning on "Allow transcription for attendees" in the Teams admin center > Live Event policies.

If you want to offer Q&A during the Live Event, enable it here.

Presentation deck

The Live Event organizer can set up one single, editable PowerPoint presentation deck and share this in advance with all presenters / producers. Each presenter is responsible for their own slides in that deck.

To allow each presenter to take control of the presentation, they each need have that same presentation ready for screen-sharing.

In PowerPoint, make sure that the slide deck is in presentation view (on Windows, use keyboard shortcut F5; on macOS, use keyboard shortcut ⌘ Cmd+Shift+Return).

After the event, the presentation deck can be made available to the audience.
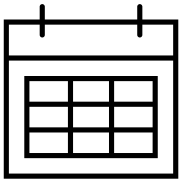
Attendee invites

The Live Event scheduling option in Teams Calendar only offers to invite producers and presenters. Attendees need to be invited separately, by providing them with the join hyperlink that appears under **Invite attendees** in the final stage of scheduling the Live Event.

You can share this link in an email, on a website, in a Teams conversation or anywhere you like.

Test

Invite attendees
To invite attendees, copy the link and share it or send it in a calendar invite.

⊘ Get attendee link   ⑦ Learn more

Friday,
11:30 PM - 1:00 AM (1 hours 30 minutes)

Organizer

Producer, Organizer

Join   Chat

✕ Cancel meeting

Live event resources   Refresh
Available after event

Close   Edit

Creating and sharing an *.ics calendar event file

*.ics files are calendar event files that recipients can insert into their own Outlook or Google Calendar, allowing them to be reminded about the event.

To generate an *.ics file, create a regular meeting invite and insert the Live Event attendee link in the invite message body. Then export the meeting invite as an *.ics calendar file. This *.ics file can then be uploaded to OneDrive or another cloud service, from where you can share it. Be aware that not everyone is familiar with ics files.

Your event may be attended be attendees from other locations in the world. For that purpose, you can use this service: 🗓 Time and Date time zone announcer.

🎯 **Specific resources about inviting attendees**

Invite attendees to a Teams live event
Create a registration process for Microsoft Teams Live Events with Power Automate
by John Moore (Jun 30, 2020)

🎯 **Key resources for Live Event organizers**

Plan and schedule a live event
Schedule a Teams live event
Teams live event organizer checklist

Producers
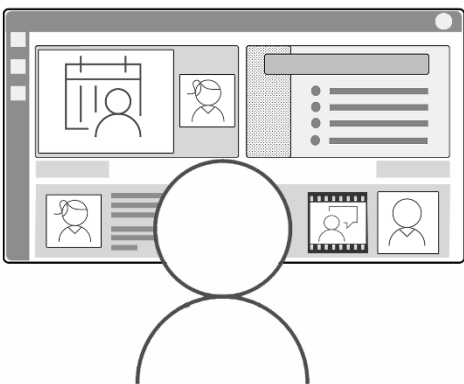
It's a producer's responsibility to offer attendees a great viewing experience. They do so by controlling the live stream and switching scenes.

The producer informs and coaches the presenters so that they are aware of their role and capabilities. The producer also runs a pre-event tech check with the presenters. This chapter explains all of these in more detail.

Producer responsibilities and capabilities

The Live Event producer is the only person who can start and stop the event. They're responsible for queuing each presenter and their presentation using one of three presenting modes.

🎯 Best practices for producing a Teams Live Event

Live Event producer production view

The user interface for a Live Event producer differs substantially from the user interface for a presenter. A producer sees a Queue Preview pane to the left and a Live Program pane on the right.

For a presenter, the user interface resembles the one for a regular Teams Meeting.

Producers should be fully aware of what their own capabilities are. They should also practice what it's like to be a presenter. Run multiple tests so that they can assist presenters if they run into issues.
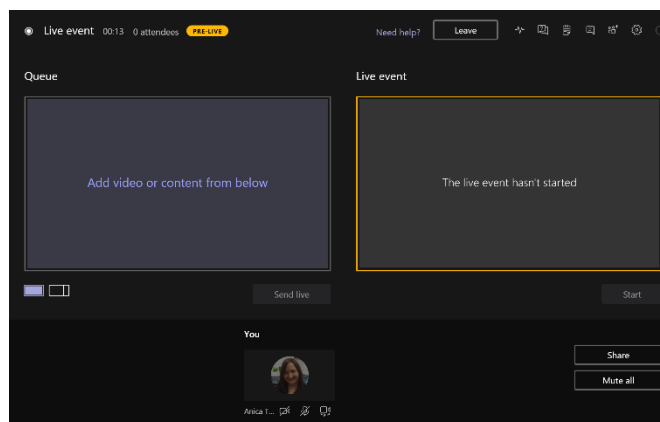
User interface for a Live Event Producer

Three presenting modes
Producers can switch between these three presenting modes:
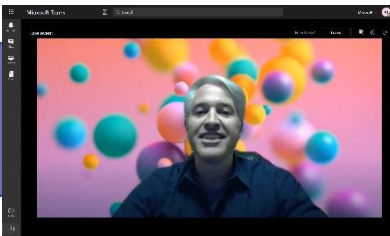
a single presenter, full screen
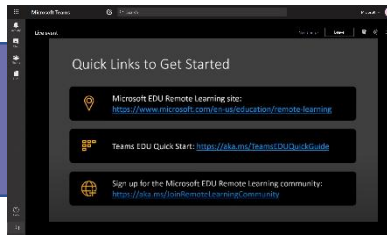
screen-sharing content, full screen
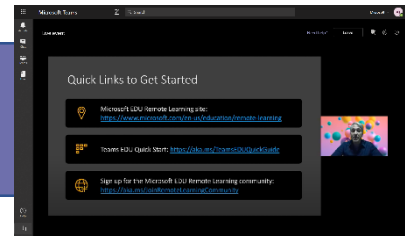
combined: content at 80% and presenter at 20%, in split-screen mode

Producers are responsible for switching between scenes. Each switch takes a second. To make this smoother, have the presenters gently cue the producers by announcing at least a second in advance when they hand over the microphone to another speaker.

Scene playbooks
For high-stake events, have the presenters create a scene playbook for you. This is a simple table that lists exactly at which time each presenter will take over, and at which slide. In addition, the table could list whether focus should be on the presenter, on their presentation, or both.

> 🎯 **Key resources for Producers**
> Produce a live event using Teams
> Manage a live event recording and reports in Teams

Dry runs
Offer presenters to do one or more dry runs using the actual Live Event invite, so that you can see if they can sign in and have access to the presenter toolbar. This allows you to fix any technical issues. In case of any issues, see the **Troubleshooting** chapter at the end of this document.

Tech check right before event time
All event team production members are advised to set their Teams status to **Do not Disturb** (DND) and disable all desktop notifications and taskbar notifications. On Windows 10, enable the **Focus Assist** feature.

Close all unnecessary apps and browser windows to prevent accidental exposure of private or confidential information.

Keep presenters' microphones unmuted, to prevent that they accidentally forget to unmute themselves. Once the Live Event has started, everything that presenters and producers say will be part of the recording.

Chat

Presenters and producers can communicate with each other through the Chat pane. For producers, the button to open Chat is in the top-right corner. For presenters, the button is on the presenter toolbar.

Q&A

If the Q&A feature has been enabled by the Live Event organizer during set-up, then a Q&A pane is available at event time through which attendees can submit a question or a comment.

Again, the button location is different depending on your role: for producers, the button appears as a **question ? chat** icon in the top-right corner. For presenters, the same button appears integrated on the presenter toolbar.
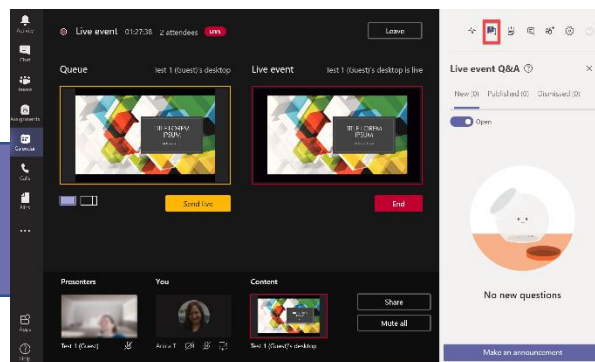
Q&A pane for Producers
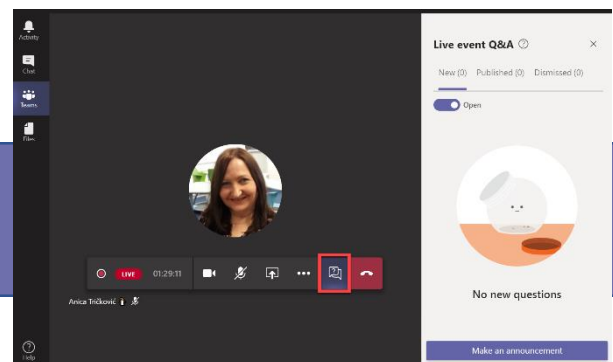
Q&A pane for Presenters

The Q&A pane has three tabs: *New, Published* and *Dismissed.* All event team members can see the messages in the *New* tab and need to decide up front who will moderate those messages.

Questions from the audience need to first be pushed to the *Published* or *Dismissed* tab before you answer them, otherwise your answer will not be glued to the original question.

Messages from the moderators are prefixed with the word **Moderator**. The attendees cannot see the name of the moderator. If you want to make yourself known to the attendees, prefix your messages with your name.

🎯 [Moderating a Live Event Q&A](#)

Pre-event announcement to the audience

In the Q&A pane, send an announcement to the audience, reminding them of the event topic, the speaker names, details and Twitter handles, key resources, whether or not the session will be recorded and whether it will be made available afterwards.

Note that any hard returns and formatting are lost in Q&A announcements.

Presenters
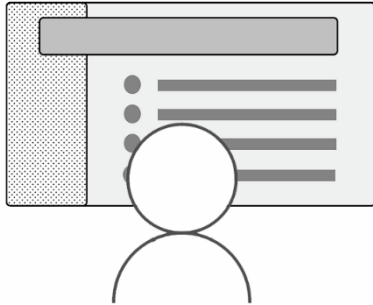
A presenter is responsible for the content shared during the Live Event. They can either show their webcam video or share their screen.

This chapter explains the presenter's role in more detail.

Presenter responsibilities and capabilities

Of course, every Live Event presenter rehearses their presentation well. They show up for the Live Event dry-runs, practice what it takes to share their screen and show their presentation. On the day of the event, they make sure they join well ahead of time for the final tech check.

When it's their time to present, the presenter makes sure their presentation is shared into the meeting by using the **Share** button on the presenter toolbar. This way, the producer can push the presentation live at the right moment.

Presenters will know that their video is live from the red border around their video in presenter mode. Once the presenter starts sharing their screen, it will fill up the presenter's own screen, so at that stage they cannot really tell if their webcam video is presented in the scene as well.

Live event production limitations

It's important to realize that by default, a Live Event producer can only show the webcam video and presentation of a single presenter at a time. This means that a producer cannot show multiple presenters simultaneously in a conversation with each other.

As soon as a presenter is done presenting, they should stop sharing their screen.

Presenter tech check and best practices

Presenters need to make sure their webcam and audio are configured optimally. They'll look their best when their face is in the top half of the screen and when they sit up straight. Have them position their webcam at eye level. Try to show as little of the ceiling in the room as possible. The main light sources should come from the front or from the sides.

Do a sound check to make sure your microphone doesn't hiss or cause an echo. If available, presenters can use a USB microphone. Bulky, on-ear headsets don't look so well on camera.
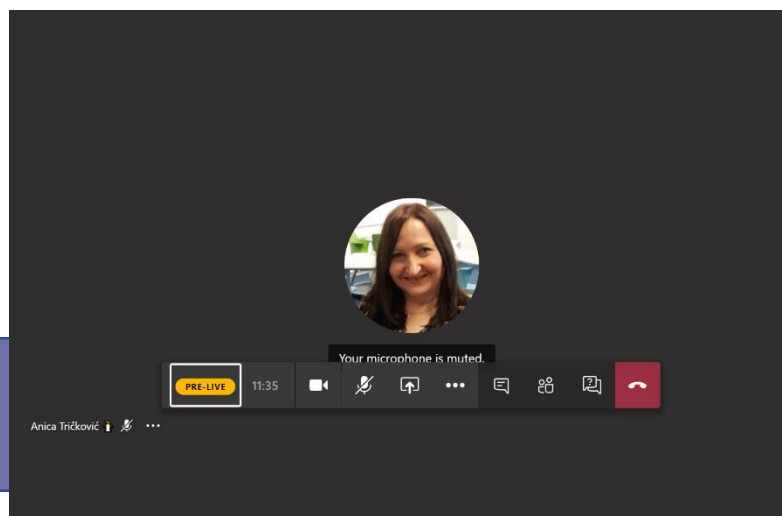
Presenter's view before Live Event has started

During the actual event, presenters best keep their microphones **unmuted** all the time, so that they're ready to start speaking instantaneously. If they need to mute/unmute themselves, they can do so with the keyboard shortcut Ctrl+Shift+M on Windows. On a macOS device, they can use ⌘ Cmd+Shift+M.

Presenters are advised to close down apps and browsers as much as possible, clean up their computer desktop, disable notifications, hide their taskbar and anything else that may distract the audience's attention from their presentation. Presenters should also mute their mobile phones and other devices that may interrupt their presentation.

Ideally, presenters have a dual monitor set up: one to stay in touch with the producer and fellow presenters, and one to present their content from.

Presenters and fellow producers cannot tell what presenter or content is queued up next.

🎯 **Key resources for Presenters**
[Present in a Teams Live Event in Teams](#)
[Test your internet connection speed](#)

Attendees

To get access to a Live Event, attendees need the *Attendee Link* generated when the event was created.

The event organizer forwards this link to attendees through an email message, a web site or through Microsoft Teams.

On a Windows or Mac desktop computer, attendees can use either a web browser or the Teams app. When attendees join from a web browser, they can do so anonymously.

On an Android or iOS mobile device, attendees can only use the Teams app.
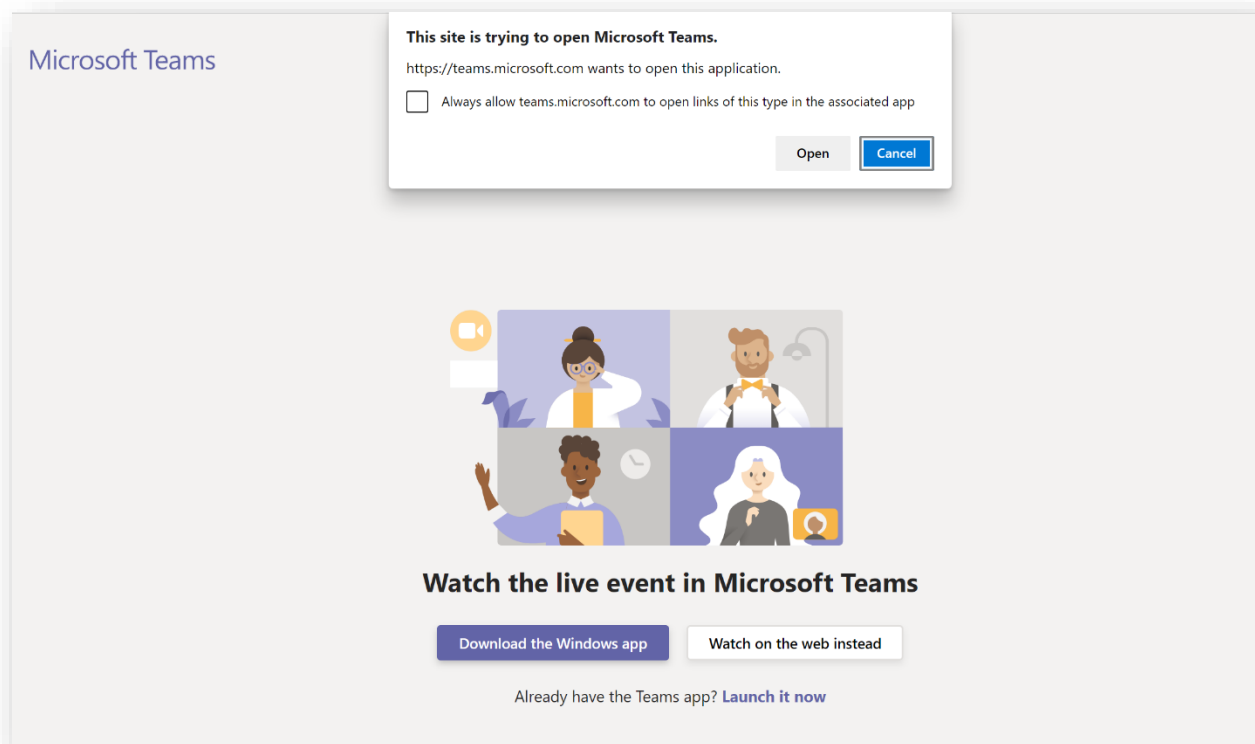
After clicking the Join link, browser will open, where attendee can choose options

The capabilities of a Live Event attendee include:

- Watching the Live Event *live* as it takes place
- Stopping and rewinding through the Digital Video Recorder (DVR) controls
- Returning to the live stream
- Turning on Live Captions, if enabled by the Live Event organizer
- Participating in the Q&A

🎯 **Key resources for attendees**
    Attend a live event in Teams
    Attend a live event
   Participate in a Q&A in a live event in Teams
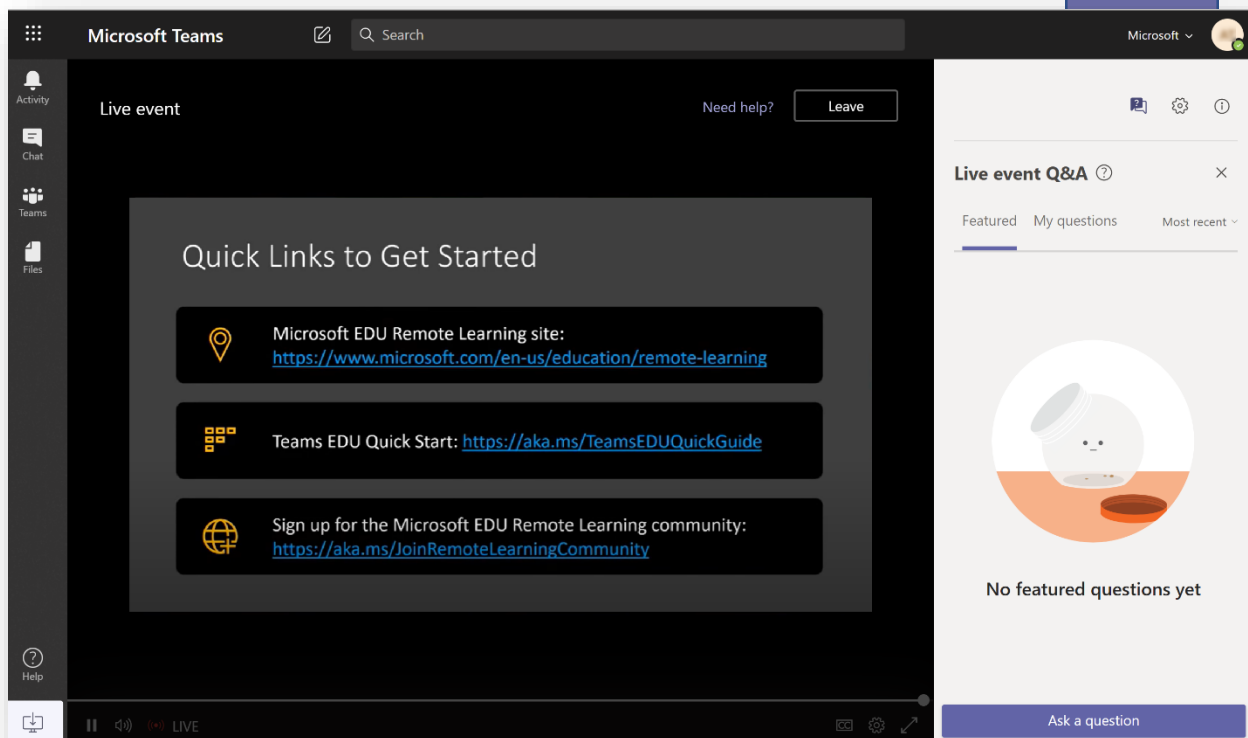
Attendee view on a Live Event with the Q&A pane

Tips and best practices

Requirements for presenters and producers to join a Live Event
Before presenters and producers can join a Live Event, they need to have a Microsoft Teams license assigned to them. This Teams license can be assigned by their own organization, or they can be invited as a guest to a team on the same organization from which the event is being set up.
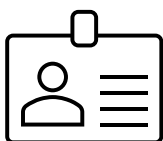
Get presenters' contact details
In case of presenters / producers having issues joining the Live Event, make sure you have their contact details ready at hand, including their phone numbers, so that you can arrange a test session with them and talk them through the process.

Set up a Team team or a private Teams channel to communicate with presenters
Presenters with guest Microsoft 365 credentials won't have a Teams calendar to look up their Live Event meeting invite. That's why it's best to set up a Teams channel where you can share the link to the Live Event.
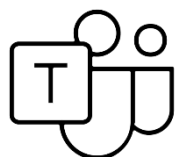
The importance of using the Teams app
Presenters and producers need to install the Microsoft Teams app on their computer. It's important that they use the app to sign in, and that they do that with the account at which they have been invited by the Live Event organizer.

Why you need to check if your presenter is a guest member on your organization
If a presenter or producer happens to already be a guest member of a Microsoft Teams team belonging to the organization hosting the event, they will need to switch to that organization from within the Teams app.
At event set-up time, a Live Event organizer can tell if a person is already a guest member of the hosting organization if their details pop up when adding them as a presenter or producer.

Adding additional presenters
To add additional presenters or producers to a Teams Live Event after it has been created, the organizer can edit the Live Event settings, or invite them by first opening the Show Participants pane inside the Live Event user interface, and then typing their name in the Invite box, or by copying the event Join Link from that same pane and sending that to the prospect presenter.
If the presenter or producer already appears listed in the Participants pane, then click on the ... **More options** button next to their name, and invite them in.
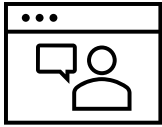
Video format specifications

Live Events are always output at 720p. It cannot output at HD resolution. 30 fps should be sufficient. If you want to use a separate device to play back a video in a Live Event, then consider these specs: 1280x720p H.264 video compression codec @ 30 frames p/sec.

🎯 [Manually configure encoders for live streaming in Microsoft Stream](#)

Live Event expiration

As long as the event producer hasn't started the event yet, presenters and producers can join the event as often as they want. The maximum length of a Live Event is 16 hours.
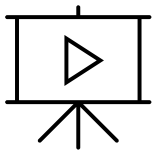
After the event

Teams Live Event recordings are stored on the Azure Content platform. Event organizers, producers and presenters can download the Live Event recording from the event properties and upload it to Microsoft Stream or a social-media platform. Other valuable assets are the list of attendees and the Q&A report.

🎯 [Manage a Live Event recording and reports in Teams](#)

Troubleshooting

| Problem	Solution
Presenter or producer isn't appearing in the Live Event producer user interface.	This is likely caused because they're accidentally signed in as a Live Event attendee. Contact the presenter / producer and make sure they use the Teams app. If they're already a guest member of a team belonging to the organization hosting the event, they should switch to that organization
Presenter or producer doesn't see the Live Event on their own calendar, or they don't have a calendar app inside Teams.	Grab the **Join Live Event** link from your own invitation as the event organizer and send that to the presenter, or invite them directly from the Live Event user interface by opening the Show Participants pane and typing their name or number. Make sure they're either a Microsoft 365 user within their own organization, or have been invited as a member of a Microsoft Teams team on your own organization and have switched to your organization. If they are correctly signed in to your organization, they will appear with a green bullet on their account name in the Show Participants pane.
Presenter or producer can't sign in to Live Event, sees "The live event hasn't started". This is a sign that the presenter or producer has joined as an attendee.	- install Teams app on computer - sign out from Teams app, sign back in using the same account they were invited with - incognito route: - run an incognito browser, - sign in to 🌐 teams.microsoft.com with the same address they were invited with - copy the Live Event presenter invite link from the email - paste it into the address bar of the incognito browser - follow the prompt to switch to the app - if the presenter has a guest account on the hosting organization's tenant, then they need to switch to that organization by opening the drop-down menu to the left of the user's profile picture

Presenter or producer can't sign in to Live Event, sees "You need permission to join this live event. Please contact the organizer".	This user probably has been added as a member of a Microsoft Teams team belonging to the organization hosting the event, but that organization isn't showing in the guest user's app yet. Have the presenter sign out from the Teams app and sign back in. They should now see the organization drop-down menu to the left of their Teams profile picture. Have them switch to the organization hosting the event.
Presenter or producer can't sign in to Live Event, sees "This event is in <hosting organization name>. To join, you'll need to be in that org, too".	Have the presenter open the drop-down menu to the left of their Teams profile picture to switch to the organization hosting the event.
Presenter or producer has poor or no sound / video	o have them check their Device settings from the ... More options button on the presenter toolbar o have them check if they have audio / video in other programs o have them quit the Teams app or restart their device
Poor audio quality?	See 🎯 Share system audio in a Teams meeting or live event

Published July 29, 2020

Got questions? Please reach out:

Marjolein Hoekstra
Community Strategist
Microsoft EDU Engineering Engagement
Ways to connect: ✉ 👥 in 🐦 🐦