



# 2021 Event Sentiment Survey

**RFID**  
JOURNAL  
**LIVE!**





Travel — the beating heart of events and soul of human interaction. The current coronavirus pandemic has brought the industry to a screeching halt and wreaked havoc on its livelihood and within the lives of the communities that rely on it. With 2020 firmly behind us, and one event following another outright canceled or “re-imagined” digitally, the question for 2021 is simple: Will the world return to in-person events? Answering this looming question is especially important for the various industries, as COVID-19 has also presented each with a host of unforeseen changes and challenges.

To fully understand how the community is faring and what future events look like for those that rely on radio frequency identification (RFID) and other related technologies, we consulted with industry experts, spoke with influencers and conducted the 2021 Event Attendance Sentiment Survey:



Retail & Apparel



Internet of Things  
(IoT)



Healthcare/  
Pharmaceuticals



Manufacturing

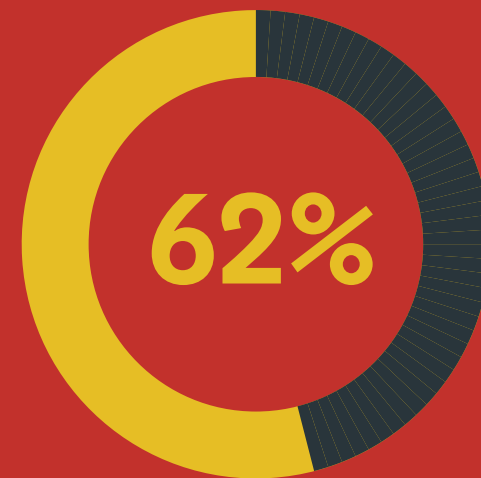


Inventory and  
Warehouse Management



Supply Chain/  
Logistics

Of all businesses and professionals surveyed, **62% are eager to return to in-person events once vaccines are widely available.** The world of gathering may soon begin to reincite joy and anticipation — here’s what your peers require to have an enjoyable experience.



Retailers and brands are eager to return to in-person events once vaccines are widely available

## How would you describe your interest in/plans for participating in in-person industry events during the second half of 2021?





# Time Frame for In-Person Events

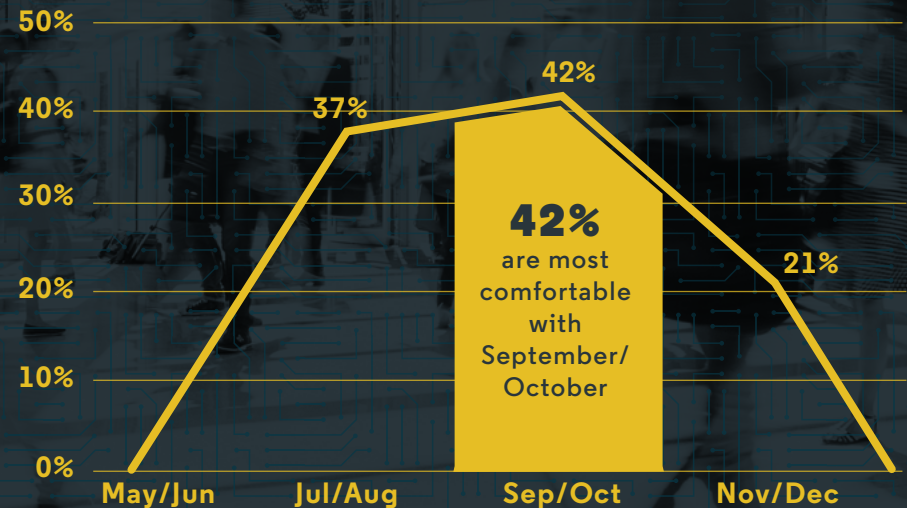
Of all the phrases coined during the pandemic, “new normal” — albeit overused — truly encompasses the learned shift we’ve all had to make. Is this new normal here to stay? When can we go back to regular normal, including the tradeshows, exhibitions and conferences we’ve attended in the past — the way they were done before? While there’s no magic wand or secret formula to help us predict the how, what and why of normality, respondents offered a good indication of the timeline for returning to live events. At **42%**, a majority of respondents are most comfortable with attending an event in **September/October**. Nearly **37%** hope to attend an event in **July/August**, and **21%** are leaning toward **November/December**.

We are really excited to be able to host a live event this year. There is tremendous value in being able to meet potential suppliers and integrators face to face, and attendees often benefit from serendipitous moments, when they happen to sit next to someone at lunch who solved a problem similar to theirs or they stumble upon an exhibitor with a solution to a problem they didn’t realize RFID could solve.



– **Mark Roberti**  
Founder and Editor, *RFID Journal*

If you were to attend an industry event this year, what timing would be most suitable for you to be comfortable attending?



# An Urgent Need for Knowledge Exchange

The best way professionals actively developing and/or preparing to implement RFID technology within their organization can arm themselves with the latest insights and best practices is by attending educational events and/or conferences. By now, we've grown accustomed to virtual experiences as safe alternatives. Unsurprisingly, as time passed, interest in virtual events waned and "Zoom fatigue" set in for many. In fact, only 21% of respondents are interested in future, robust virtual happenings. Most respondents are interested in attending large events with exhibitions and vast educational programming, at 55%. Of all respondents, key factors of influence in their decision to attend future in-person events are the detailed content agenda and large expo hall, at 48% and 36%, respectively. Overall, brands yearn to come together, find effective and efficient solutions, and work through common issues together.

***As the director of an automatic identification education and research lab, [I feel that] RFID Journal LIVE! is a mission-critical component to both our dissemination of research results and the solicitation of new projects. Without RFID Journal LIVE!, our ability to report on our work would be significantly more difficult, expensive, and less efficient. We are looking forward to being able to once again physically connect with the broader RFID industry when we return to Phoenix.***



– Kevin Berisso, Ph.D., Director, AutoID Lab, University of Memphis

## What type of industry events are you most interested in attending, or would most likely consider attending, during the second half of the year?

Large events with trade show exhibits and extensive educational programming

55%

Local events that require minimal travel risk

26%

Shorter events with highly curated agendas

26%

Executive-level events with a lot of networking time

23%

Events with one-to-one meetings and matchmaking

20%

Smaller, intimate events

16%

Content-based virtual events

14%

More interactive educational workshops

13%

Networking-based virtual events

7%

75%



# Conditions for In-Person Events to Happen

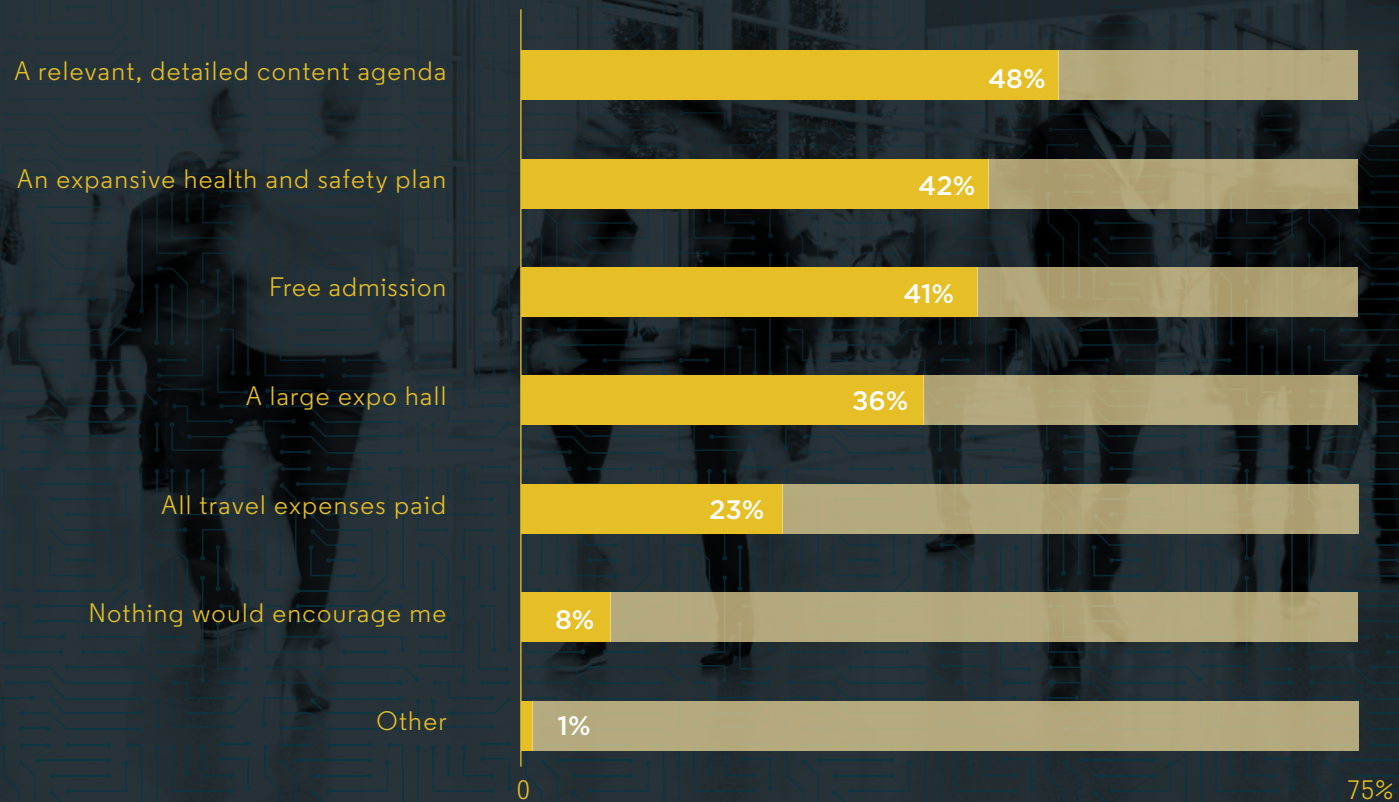
As with most things that require face-to-face interactions, such as grocery store trips, hospital and doctor visits, errands, etc., hygiene standards have become second to none. As expected, an expansive health and safety plan ranked high as an influential factor for respondents to attend future in-person events, at 41%. Coming in second is a **relevant, detailed content agenda**. In preparation of reopening our doors, we've developed a plan that allows us to welcome our community back safely. To promote healthy behavior that reduces the spread of COVID-19, we have implemented several COVID-19 safety measures, including:

- Social distancing and face masks will be required at all times
- Health and safety protocols enforced by McCormick Place
- Safe food and beverage handling
- Sanitation stations with hand sanitizer and wet wipes dispensers
- Enhanced sanitation and disinfection of common and high-traffic areas
- Physical distancing measures between attendees and exhibitors
- Reconfigured show floor layout
- Social distancing room and seating configurations
- Non-contact thermal temperature scanning
- One-way entrance and exits to control traffic flow

For some, vaccines bring hope that in-person events will happen again this year, **with 16% of respondents planning to attend in-person events once they're widely available.**



## What other factors would influence your decision on whether or not to attend an in-person event?



# What Will RFID Journal LIVE! 2021 Have to Offer?

Following the uncertainty of 2020 and today's continued unknowns, businesses agree that safety comes first, and future events must be wow-worthy. At RFID Journal LIVE!, we've taken the time to gather feedback, experiment, learn, adapt and develop a better experience for our upcoming live event.

In addition to adhering to our own safety measures, we are in constant contact with our venue. Phoenix Convention Center works closely with public health officials to ensure they exceed the meetings and events requirements. Explore their coronavirus protocols for more details on their reopening plan and additional resources that explain the steps being taken to apply practical solutions and provide personalized care.

Our commitment to safety matches our dedication to offering the best, most relevant content. RFID Journal LIVE! will offer high-quality content specifically designed to help professionals plan strategies, network, buy and sell, improve and share ideas. To provide more insight into successful rollouts of RFID and IoT technologies, we offer unique industry-specific and foundational tracks.

RFID Journal LIVE! is not just about discovering new trends in RFID technology or tuning in to industry speakers with real insights and tangible takeaways — it's also about catching up with your peers, celebrating diversity, making new connections and building lasting relationships.

Overall, there'll be no shortage of the exchanging of ideas and timely perspectives or networking during RFID Journal LIVE!. With safety at the forefront, the industry is hoping to come together; consumers are eager, and we are, too. In September, we plan to present a personalized experience to our community of industry professionals.

Stay safe. We hope to see you soon!

Launch  
Interactive  
Portal

1



## Retail and Apparel

Retail and apparel companies are employing RFID/IoT to achieve major benefits in stock accuracy, customer satisfaction and efficiency.

2



## Internet of Things

The Internet of Things (IoT) is a broad term used to cover technologies that give network connectivity to everyday objects, from wearable computers to common products. supply chain.

3



## Health Care/ Pharmaceutical

In the health-care field, hospitals and other medical facilities are employing RFID and IoT technologies to improve patient safety, increase asset utilization with real-time tracking using track-and-match applications.

4



## Manufacturing

Manufacturing companies are employing RFID/IoT to achieve major benefits, both in their supply chains and in their factory operations.

5



## Inventory and Warehouse Management

In this track, learn how to benefit from deploying radio frequency identification within your warehouse by managing your inventory and coordinating your supply chain

Click Track  
Title to Learn  
More



6



## Supply Chain/ Logistics

Learn how companies are improving pick accuracy and auditing all outbound shipments to ensure the right items are delivered.

7



## The Fundamentals of RFID

If you are just getting up to speed on RFID, this introduction to the fundamentals of the technology will give you the foundation you need to understand the various types of RFID technologies.

8



## RFID Strategies and Best Practices

This track is designed for senior executives of companies that have already deployed—or currently seek to deploy—RFID systems.





### About Emerald:

Emerald is a leader in building dynamic, market-driven business-to-business platforms that integrate live events with a broad array of industry insights, digital tools, and data-focused solutions to create uniquely rich experiences. As true partners, we at Emerald strive to build our customers' businesses by creating opportunities that inspire, amaze, and deliver breakthrough results. With more than 140 events each year, our teams are creators and connectors who are thoroughly immersed in the industries we serve and committed to supporting the communities in which we operate.



### About RFID Journal LIVE!:

RFID Journal is the world's leading source of RFID news and information. Our mission is to help companies use RFID and other Internet of Things (IoT) technologies to improve the way they do business through premium content and events.



For any questions or concerns about RFID Journal LIVE! and our safety measures, please contact **Yolanda Mays**, Audience Experience Manager.

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### Methodology:

The 2021 Event Attendance Sentiment Survey is based on responses from 420 brands. The online survey was conducted in February 2021.

### About the author:

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