VIRTUAL AGM GUIDE

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ORGANISING YOUR OWN VIRTUAL AGM

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INTRODUCTION

Is your organization looking to conduct your Annual General Meeting (AGM) soon? Are you also facing hardships to do so due to the COVID-19 crisis? Don't worry, as thousands of other organizations are confronting the same issue.

With the travel and meeting restrictions put in place due to the virus, many have opted to hold their AGMs virtually instead. The technology for conducting virtual AGMs has been around for several years, but the current global situation has vastly accelerated its implementation. Now, more organizations than ever are holding **fully virtual or hybrid (both online and offline) AGMs**.

Organising and conducting your first virtual AGM is an exciting but tricky challenge. Besides handling the technical aspects of the event, you must also consider the management, flow, and logistics behind having a company-wide online meeting.

If your organization is considering a virtual AGM, we are here to help guide you through your options. We will be going through a comprehensive list of applications you can use, as well as the equipment you need and how to prepare. If you need help implementing your organization's virtual AGM, we are happy to help! Simply contact us at **hello@thunderquote.com** to learn more.

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PHYSICAL, VIRTUAL, OR HYBRID?

> *Fully virtual AGMs are as yet uncommon, especially in Asia. However, physical AGMs with elements of virtual technology are on the rise- also known as hybrid AGMs.*

Hybrid AGMs are increasingly popular due to how inclusive and accessible it is for members. A physical meeting will still take place, but members who are unable to attend can either join the meeting remotely or place their votes online. This usually vastly improves attendance, saves cost and time for participants, and increases engagement among attendees.

Many people are hesitant to move their AGMs online, insisting to stick with the traditional physical method. Some have raised concerns on security, accuracy, and the restrictiveness of being in an online meeting. Others are just generally hesitant on adopting change and the technology that comes with it.

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Let's break down the myths.

Current technology developments have allowed for secure meetings to take place online. Using encrypted networks, organizations are able to host fully secure online AGMs, with identity verification and instant auditing.

In terms of accuracy, holding votes online would minimise human error significantly. The voting process would be completely transparent and trackable, with instant results and certainty that your vote has been counted.

With that being said, the current global pandemic is forcing most people to be confined to their homes.

Many companies would have no choice but to host fully virtual or hybrid AGMs (if allowed by local legislations).

If you are still on the fence about going virtual, why not go hybrid? By implementing a virtual meeting to go alongside your physical one, you are ensuring that stakeholders would be able to participate, regardless of where they are located. This is especially important now, when travelling and large gatherings are not recommended for safety purposes.

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ADVANTAGES OF ONLINE AGMS

1- It makes meetings accessible and inclusive

Having an online meeting means that members from anywhere in the world will be able to join in. This inclusivity would translate to higher attendance numbers compared to physical AGMs.

2- It saves cost and time

On the one hand, virtual AGMs would save transportation costs and time for attendees. They would be able to participate from the comfort of their own homes, no travel required.

For organizations, costs can be saved by minimizing the need to rent a venue, hire catering, and all the other expenses that come with organizing an event. In terms of time saved, electronic votes mean instant results- no manual calculations needed.

3- It increases engagement

By conducting an online AGM, it eliminates barriers for people who are not as comfortable with speaking up in a large group of people. It allows anyone to speak up and raise points.

Online AGMs will also increase engagement for the younger demographic of members. By evolving your meetings and adopting current technologies, you can ensure that your future meetings will see higher engagement and attendance.

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4- It ensures voting accuracy

During online AGMs, votes and polls can be submitted and calculated electronically. This would rule out human error in counting votes, as online voting systems can instantly show poll results. It also ensures full transparency, as organizers will be able to view all voting activity for auditing purposes.

5- It boosts transparency and accountability

Online meetings can be fully recorded from the moment it begins until it ends. This ensures that the AGM can be fully audited and transparent, with every question and issue raised being accounted for.

Questions submitted to the board are also available for everyone to see, depending on whether you choose to moderate questions or not. This can promote further discussion among participants, and builds trust between the board and other members by being able to hold them to account.

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PART 1 - PROCESS & PLANNING

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ROLES REQUIRED

In order to ensure a smooth experience, you should assign different roles to your team to handle different areas of the AGM. We have provided a list of common roles for virtual AGMs below. Make sure that everyone is comfortable in their roles and have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. If your team does not have the capacity to fit each role, you can combine roles according to your needs.

⬜ Attendee Supervisor

The Attendee Supervisor will be in charge of participant registrations, sending reminders to registrants, and tracking attendance on the day of the meeting.

⬜ Slide Manager

The Slide Manager should be in charge of the presentation slides, from ensuring the slide deck is prepared beforehand to advancing the slides during the AGM. You should keep this role separate from other roles, since the Slide Manager will be occupied throughout the entire meeting.

⬜ Tech Support

Having a separate technical support staff is important to ensure that your meeting stays interruption-free. The tech support staff will be the one point of contact for any technical issues before and during the AGM.

⬜ Presenter / Emcee

One person should be appointed to be the speaker for the meeting. He/she should introduce the AGM, give acknowledgements, present motions, etc. This would usually be the Chair of the Board.

⬜ Vote Manager

Your team should also have a Vote Manager, who will set up polls before the meeting, launch them, and keep track of the results.

⬜ Chat Moderator

You will need someone to keep an eye on the chat for any questions, issues, or technical difficulties that your attendees might be encountering. The moderator can then present the issues to the presenter / tech support team for assistance. They can also be in charge of sharing documents in the chat.

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SUGGESTED VIRTUAL AGM PROCESS

1 Appoint a date and time for the AGM.

2 Choose a meeting application that works best for you, then schedule your AGM in the app. Generate a link to the meeting for you to share with members.

3 Set up a registration page to track the expected turnout, then notify members on the details of the AGM.

4 Assign roles to your team members and brief them on their respective job scopes.

5 Prepare the AGM agenda and briefing package (any documents to be discussed during the AGM) and share with registrants.

6 Prepare the presentation slides and set up any polls needed.

7 Conduct a mock AGM to ensure a smooth flow of events.

8 After registration has closed, compile the list of registrants for attendance tracking.

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Start the meeting at least 30 minutes before the appointed time.

Start recording the meeting as it begins.

During the AGM, the moderator should be keeping track of the chat and any questions raised by attendees. He/she should then present the questions to the speaker, or any technical issues to the tech support team.

9 Conduct technical tests on presenter and moderator devices at least one hour before the meeting.

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11 Track participant attendance and confirm meeting quorum.

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13 Brief participants on the basic functions and features that they might need to use. Also inform them of who to contact in the case of any technical difficulties.

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15 After the AGM, save the meeting recording to your computer. Edit and trim if necessary, then archive where necessary.

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BEST PRACTICES

Before AGM

- **Practice makes perfect!** Make sure to run through a mock AGM at least once before the day of the meeting. This can ensure you iron out any issues that might not be apparent on paper.
- **Prepare backup plans** in case of emergencies- backup applications, backup documents, backup audio and video devices, and everything else that could go wrong during the session.
- Set up a **separate channel of communication** with the AGM team members in case of any important issues (e.g. WhatsApp). This will keep from interrupting the speaker during the meeting, but ensuring that they are in the loop of any problems that might come up.
- If possible, use a **dual monitor setup**. One monitor can be running the meeting while the other can display the presentation slides.
- **Test** your presenter and moderator's devices, video, and audio at least an hour before the AGM. This gives ample time to rectify any problems before the meeting starts.

During AGM

- Make sure that you are using a **stable network connection**, preferably broadband, especially if you are hosting the meeting.
- Keep your meeting and content as **short and concise** as possible.
- Make sure your environment is **well-lit**, with any windows or light sources facing you if possible.
- To identify attendees and track attendance, **set up a waiting room/lobby** before they can join the meeting. This also adds an extra layer of security to ensure that you are letting the right people into the call.
- To avoid interruptions and unnecessary background noise, make sure to **mute all participants**.
- Make sure to start your meeting with a quick **run-through of the features** and functions that your attendees might have to use (e.g. mute, sending chat messages, voting, raise hand, etc.)

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PART 2 - TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

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REQUIRED FEATURES

Before choosing your AGM software, you will first need to decide which features are needed in your AGM. Only then can you match up your required features with the app that you will be using. We have provided a list of the most common functions that most organizations need in their chosen software:

- ☐ Attendance tracking & quorum
- ☐ Document sharing
- ☐ Document validation & signing
- ☐ Q&A
- ☐ Recording
- ☐ Registration
- ☐ Scheduling & invitations
- ☐ Video conferencing
- ☐ Voting & polling
- ☐ Waiting room

We will also be indicating whether the applications analyzed in the next section provide the above features.

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FEATURE COMPARISONS

We will be going through each recommended app in the next section. However for a quick glance at their features and how they compare, check out this comparison graphic for details:

Feature	GoTo Meeting	GoTo Webinar	Microsoft Teams Live Events	Microsoft Teams Meetings	Zoom Meeting	Zoom Webinar
Free version	●	○	○	●	●	○
PC, browser, and mobile compatible	●	●	●	●	●	●
Attendance tracking	●	●	●	●	●	●
Document sharing	○	●	●	●	●	○
Dial-in audio conferencing	●	●	●	●	●	●
Q&A	○	●	●	○	○	●
Recording	●	●	●	●	●	●
Registration	○	●	○	○	●	●
Scheduling & invitations	●	●	●	●	●	●
Video conferencing	●	●	●	●	●	●
Voting & polling	○	●	○	●	●	●
Waiting room	●	●	○	●	●	○

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RECOMMENDED SETUPS

There are several applications you can use to hold your virtual AGM, from free-to-use video conferencing apps to specialized programs for AGMs. In this guide, we will be focusing on popular video conferencing and webinar apps. They are easy to set up, have familiar interfaces, are inexpensive, and generally do not require any high-end equipment or advanced setups.

We have also divided the setups into three categories: **basic, intermediate, and advanced**.

The basic setups are for AGMs with a small group of people, whereas intermediate setups are for larger groups. Advanced setups provide professional quality output, using more complex setups and equipment for the best video and audio quality possible.

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BASIC SETUPS

MICROSOFT TEAMS

Microsoft Teams is a popular team collaboration app that combines chatting, file sharing, video and audio calling, scheduling, and several other features into one app. We have even written guides on using Teams for **video conferencing** and for **team collaboration**. Its all-rounder capabilities make it a top choice for many organizations' virtual AGMs.

Their Meetings feature is suitable for **groups of up to 250 people**. It provides video and audio conferencing features, allowing panelists to share their screen, record the meeting, chat with fellow presenters, check attendance, draw on a whiteboard, and access shared documents.

Meetings on Teams **do not have a time limit**, so you are free to conduct your meeting for as long as you'd like. Asking questions in Teams is reserved to submitting them through the chat only, as they do not have a dedicated Q&A feature.

Teams **allows for polling** by integrating with Microsoft Forms. This is especially helpful during AGMs. Teams also has a Raise Hand feature that allows participants to indicate to the panelists that they would like to speak without interrupting the conversation.

Teams also has a **waiting room**, which puts participants into a lobby upon first joining the meeting. The administrator can then manually approve them to join the meeting. This ensures that only authorized participants are allowed into the meeting, and adds an extra layer of security to keep privacy threats at bay.

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MICROSOFT TEAMS

PLATFORMS SUPPORTED:

PRICING:

Teams is available as a standalone app, or included with a Microsoft 365 plan, starting at **US$5 per month**. Free trials are available. Non-profit organizations can access Teams for free. Find out more here:
https://www.microsoft.com/en-my/microsoft-365/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software

FEATURES:

- ☑ Attendance tracking & quorum
- ☑ Document sharing (with Microsoft SharePoint)
- ☑ Document validation & signing (third-party integrations)
- ☑ Q&A (via chat)
- ☑ Recording
- ☒ Registration
- ☑ Scheduling & invitations
- ☑ Video conferencing
- ☑ Voting & polling (with Microsoft Forms)
- ☑ Waiting room

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ZOOM

Zoom is used by millions of people globally for video meetings and conferences, especially during the current period of crisis. It is an enterprise grade video conferencing solution, which allows **up to 100 pax for 40 mins for free**.

They support video webinars, meetings and video-linked conference rooms. Premium plans are more expensive but they are the **most reliable** in terms of video, audio, connection quality and stability.

Zoom meetings can support **up to 1000 participants with a 24-hour time limit on a paid plan**. They provide video and audio dial-in conferencing, where participants can share their audio, video, and screen to the audience. Zoom also allows attendance checks, annotating and drawing on whiteboard, meeting recording, etc.

For AGMs, voting is an important procedure that Zoom can support. Zoom's polling feature allows you to create a **maximum of 25 polls per meeting**. You can create them before or during your session, and you will be able to view the results live as the votes come in. You can choose to share the results of the poll with the audience, as well as download a report of the polls after the meeting is completed.

Participants in a Zoom meeting can be divided into **breakout rooms** to facilitate group activities and discussions. Meetings can be split into up to 50 separate breakout rooms, and the host will be able to switch between any room at any time.

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ZOOM

PLATFORMS SUPPORTED:

PRICING:

Zoom is available for **free with limited features**. Their paid plans for meetings **start at US$14.99/host/month**. Non-profit organisations are eligible for discounts when purchasing through Techsoup. You can find out more about Zoom and access it here:
 https://www.zoom.us/

FEATURES:

☑ Attendance tracking & quorum

☑ Document sharing

☒ Document validation & signing

☑ Q&A (via chat)

☑ Recording

☑ Registration

☑ Scheduling & invitations

☑ Video conferencing

☑ Voting & polling

☑ Waiting room

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CISCO WEBEX MEETINGS

Cisco Webex Meetings is a tried-and-true video conferencing app that provides secure, encrypted video conferencing, without the high price tag. The free version of the app allows for **up to 100 users** to participate in HD video meetings, with screen sharing, recording, and private chat room features. It also allows for you to call in to meetings using your phone.

The paid version of Webex Meetings allows **up to 1000 participants** in your meeting, with **no time limits** to worry about. Webex Meetings also allows audience voting, drawing and annotations, meeting recordings, note-taking, and chat.

As a meeting host, you will be able to download records of your attendees, as well as schedule meetings and invite participants through email. Webex can integrate with several third-party apps to allow for features such as **document signing and validation**. It can also integrate with **Webex Teams**, their own team collaboration application which allows file sharing and document storage.

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CISCO WEBEX MEETINGS

PLATFORMS SUPPORTED:

PRICING:

Webex Meetings is available for free with limited features. Their paid plans start at **US$13.50/host/month**. Non-profit organisations are eligible for free trial licenses. For more information, click here: https://www.webex.com/

FEATURES:

☑ Attendance tracking & quorum

☑ Document sharing (with Webex Teams)

☑ Document validation & signing (third-party integrations)

☑ Q&A (via chat)

☑ Recording

☑ Registration

☑ Scheduling & invitations

☑ Video conferencing

☑ Voting & polling

☑ Waiting room

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GOTOMEETING

GoToMeeting is another video conferencing software popular for use during virtual AGMs. GoToMeeting supports **up to 250 participants** in one session with **no time limits on a paid plan.** Their free plan is limited to 40 minute meetings with 3 participants.

The app features both video and dial-in audio conferencing for you to share audio, video, and your screen with the audience. You can schedule meetings, record attendance, sketch and annotate on a whiteboard, and record your meetings.

GoToMeeting allows for **controlled guest access**. This means that the presenter can give controls over to a participant to conduct a presentation themselves. Unfortunately, GoToMeeting does not have an in-built voting feature. This means you will need to find an external application to do so if you opt for GoToMeeting.

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GOTOMEETING

PLATFORMS SUPPORTED:

PRICING:

GoToMeeting starts at **US$12/organiser/month**. Non-profit organisations are eligible for discounts when purchasing through Techsoup. You can sign up for a free trial and find out more here:
https://www.gotomeeting.com/

FEATURES:

☑ Attendance tracking & quorum
☒ Document sharing
☒ Document validation & signing
☑ Q&A (via chat)
☑ Recording
☒ Registration
☑ Scheduling & invitations
☑ Video conferencing
☒ Voting & polling
☑ Waiting room

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INTERMEDIATE SETUPS

ZOOM WEBINAR

Zoom webinars are very similar to their meetings, except that **up to 10,000 people** can join in a webinar. They are ideal for larger audiences with only a few people presenting to the audience. Its features include video and audio dial-in conferencing, ability to screen share, attendance reporting, annotating and drawing on a whiteboard, recording the meeting, etc.

Zoom webinars allow participants to join in **listen-only mode**. This means they will automatically be muted when they join the meeting to avoid distractions and interruptions. Only hosts and panellists will be allowed to share their video and audio feeds in a webinar.

The webinars also include a **moderated Q&A feature**, where audience members can submit questions that will be curated by the presenters. Participants can ask questions anonymously, upvote audience questions, and can even answer each others' questions if the setting is enabled.

Similar to their meetings, Zoom webinars also support **polling** among audience members. Up to 25 polls can be setup before or during a meeting. The polling results can be downloaded after the session has ended.

Along with polling results, you can also download reports on attendee registration details, participant information, webinar performance, and Q&A results for further analysis.

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ZOOM WEBINAR

PLATFORMS SUPPORTED:

PRICING:

Zoom webinars **start at $40/host/month**. Non-profit organisations are eligible for discounts when purchasing through Techsoup. You can find out more about Zoom and access it here: https://www.zoom.us/

FEATURES:

☑ Attendance tracking & quorum
☒ Document sharing
☒ Document validation & signing
☑ Q&A
☑ Recording
☑ Registration
☑ Scheduling & invitations
☑ Video conferencing
☑ Voting & polling
☒ Waiting room

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GOTOWEBINAR

GoToWebinar, the sister application to GoToMeeting, is a webinar software that can support **up to 3000 participants at once**. There are **no time limits** on sessions, so you are free to conduct your meeting as long as necessary.

GoToWebinar features both video and dial-in audio conferencing, so participants can call in to listen to your meeting through the phone. You can also save past event templates to reuse the same settings for new events, and **add custom branding and registration pages** for registrants. This is in addition to the basic features such as attendance records, scheduling, whiteboard canvas for sketching and annotations, and meeting recordings.

The app also allows you to send out **automated email reminders** and invitations. You can even integrate your existing CRM software with the app to sync your contacts and calendar.

GoToWebinar allows for **voting** among audience members, a key feature needed during AGMs. The results can then be displayed to the participants or kept private. GoToWebinar also allows a **limited file sharing** of 5 files per session, referred to as handouts. You can simply upload your files and all of your participants will be able to download them during the session.

After the meeting is completed, you can **download reports** on attendees, performance, source tracking, poll results, and more for further analysis.

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GOTOWEBINAR

PLATFORMS SUPPORTED:

PRICING:

GoToWebinar **starts at US$49 /organiser/month**. Non-profit organisations are eligible for discounts when purchasing through Techsoup. You can sign up for a free trial and find out more here:
https://www.gotomeeting.com/webinar

FEATURES:

☑ Attendance tracking & quorum
☑ Document sharing
☒ Document validation & signing
☑ Q&A
☑ Recording
☑ Registration
☑ Scheduling & invitations
☑ Video conferencing
☑ Voting & polling
☑ Waiting room

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SECUREMEET

SecureMeet by ThunderQuote is a specialised browser app that provides authorised verification for attendance, polling, and many other features necessary in an AGM. It is perfect as an add-on app to any of the other video conferencing programs on this list.

Many organisations have all the boxes ticked when it comes to online AGMs, except for one thing: **identity verification and authorisation**. Apps like Zoom and GoToMeeting, as useful as they are for video conferencing and chats, do not have the ability to verify participants' identities while also keeping their votes and nominations anonymous. That's where SecureMeet can fill the gap.

Working alongside any meeting app of your preference, SecureMeet is **enabled by SingPass Mobile** to ensure that your participants are really who they say they are. Attendees can log in securely using their SingPass, then use the app to **participate in the meeting anonymously**.

As the AGM host, you can create meetings within the app, manage attendees to ensure that only authorised participants are allowed to join, create polls and nominations, as well as answer in-app questions raised by attendees. For participants, they can submit nominations, vote in polls, and ask questions to the board, all while keeping their identities private.

The app **does not require any integrations**, and is easy to implement. Simply access it through your mobile phone! With its advanced level of authentication and anonymity, SecureMeet ensures that your organization undertakes good governance, even in your AGM.

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SECUREMEET

PLATFORMS SUPPORTED:

Any mobile /
desktop browser

FEATURES:

Identity verification
& authentication

Polling, voting &
nominations

In-built Q&A

Attendee & meeting
management

Secure, encrypted blockchain-based
centralised ledger database

To find out more about SecureMeet, click here:
https://securemeet.io

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ADVANCED SETUPS

MICROSOFT TEAMS LIVE EVENTS

Live Events on Microsoft Teams are similar to their Meetings feature, with the difference that it can support **up to 10,000 attendees**.

In addition to the standard features such as video and audio conferencing, screen share, recording, and chatting, Live Events has an **in-built Q&A feature** that allows participants to submit questions, which are then moderated by panelists.

Unlike Meetings, Live Events have a **limit of 4 hours**. Do ensure to time your meeting punctually to avoid being cut off after the time limit.

Live Events also have a **view-only feature**, where participants are not allowed to switch on their audio and video as they enter the session. This will ensure distraction-free meetings with no background noises and interruptions. Live Events also allows for **multiple presenters** to share their screens and present at the same time.

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MICROSOFT TEAMS LIVE EVENTS

PLATFORMS SUPPORTED:

PRICING:

Teams is available as a standalone app, or included with a Microsoft 365 plan, starting at **US$5 per month**. Free trials are available. Non-profit organizations can access Teams for free. Find out more here: https://www.microsoft.com/en-my/microsoft-365/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software

FEATURES:

☑ Attendance tracking & quorum
☑ Document sharing (with Microsoft SharePoint)
☑ Document validation & signing (third-party integrations)
☑ Q&A
☒ Recording
☑ Registration
☑ Scheduling & invitations
☑ Video conferencing
☒ Voting & polling
☒ Waiting room

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ALTERNATIVE METHODS & APPS

As much as we wish that the above meeting apps will have all the functions and features necessary to carry out an AGM, this isn't usually the case.

More often than not, you will need to **look at external apps to fulfil some functions** that these meeting apps do not offer, such as voting, attendance tracking, etc.

We will be going through some alternative apps and methods that you can use in your virtual AGM if the above-mentioned apps don't fit the bill. Feel free to use this in combination with the meeting apps above, or even **in your physical AGMs** moving forward.

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REGISTRATION & ATTENDANCE

Although most meeting apps offer registration and attendance tracking features, some apps would require you to do so manually. The easiest way to do so is by creating a registration form, then manually marking participant attendance yourself before the meeting.

Suggested app:
Google Forms + Google Sheets

How to:

1. Create an online form on [Google Forms](#).
2. Share the link to the form with your members. It is recommended for you to only provide them the AGM details + meeting link after they have registered online.
3. Once registrations are closed, transfer the responses to your form into a Google Sheet. You can do so by going to your form page > Responses > Create Spreadsheet.
4. On the day of the AGM, create a waiting room for your participants before they can enter the meeting. This way, you can check their names off the attendance list before allowing them into the call.
5. For a more secure method, read the following section on **'Identity Verification'**.

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IDENTITY VERIFICATION

Verifying your attendee's identities is one of the trickiest parts of conducting an online AGM. Since physical AGMs would require attendees to register with their identification cards, we have come up with alternative methods that would work online.

Method #1:
Using SecureMeet

SecureMeet by ThunderQuote is a specialised app that helps you securely verify the identities of your team.

Working alongside any meeting app of your choice, SecureMeet is enabled by SingPass Mobile to ensure that your participants are really who they say they are.

How it works:

As a host, you will first have to upload your attendee details onto the app. You can do so by uploading an Excel or CSV sheet, or copying and pasting their information.

Attendees can then log in securely using their SingPass. Only authorised personnel will be allowed to participate. They can then use the app to vote in polls, submit nominations, and raise questions anonymously.

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**Method #2:
Using your preferred
meeting app**

Do note that this method will work for smaller groups, but it might get quite time-consuming to do with a larger group of people.

How to:

1. When initially providing AGM details to your members, do not publicise the link to your actual AGM call. Instead, schedule a separate meeting taking place one hour before your AGM (or however long you think is necessary). This will serve as your verification check. Share the link to that call instead.
2. On the day of the AGM, participants will start to join the verification link. Set up a waiting room and let them into the call individually.
3. Request for them to turn on their video and audio feeds for you to verify their identity.
4. After you have verified that they are authorised to participate in the AGM, you can then forward them a link to the actual meeting.

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DOCUMENT SHARING

Sharing documents among the participants of your AGM is one of the most important functions needed. Meeting minutes, financial statements, and annual reports all need to be shared with the participants beforehand. If you are looking for a way to share documents with your team, we have written an entire guide on file sharing apps [here](#)! Read on below for a quick summary.

Suggested app:
Dropbox / Google Drive

How to:

1. Log on to your [Google Drive](#) or [Dropbox](#) account.
2. Create a folder for your AGM documents, then upload all the necessary files into that folder.
3. Copy the link to the folder to share with your meeting registrants.

On Dropbox: Hover your mouse over the folder, then click Share > Create link.

On Google Drive: Right-click on the folder, then click 'Get sharable link'.

4. Share the link with your meeting registrants as part of their briefing package. They will be able to view and download the files into their devices.

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VOTING & POLLING

Voting is an essential part of an AGM, which is why most meeting apps have their own in-built voting feature. However, if the app you are using does not, you can use the methods below to do so.

Method #1:
Voting through external app

Suggested app:
eBallot / ElectionBuddy / Election Runner

How to:

Sign up for the suggested apps above and follow the instructions to create your own secure polls.

Most online voting apps are free for a certain number of voters only (e.g. 20 voters). If your AGM requires more votes, you will need to pay for an upgraded poll.

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Method #2:
Voting through meeting chat
(for large groups)

Suggested app:
Your preferred meeting app

How to:

For a free voting method, you can do so by initiating votes during your meeting. Participants will then type 'Yay' or 'Nay' in the chat.

The disadvantage of this method is that you will need to manually calculate votes and keep track of who has and hasn't voted. This may be tricky to do during a meeting, so it is best if you have extra hands on deck to help.

To make it easier for you to keep track, only ask the people who are voting 'Nay' to vote in the chat. This means that whoever has not sent a message is considered as a positive vote.

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Method #3:

Voting through video
(for small groups)

Suggested app:
Your preferred meeting app

How to:

Another method you can use is to vote through video during the meeting itself. This will only work if you are a small group, seeing as most meeting apps will only display around 25 video feeds at a time.

To vote through video, keep your participants on mute. Whenever they need to vote, ask your participants to raise their hands for agreement or disagreement. To make it easier for you to keep track, only ask the people who are voting 'Nay' to raise their hands. This means that anyone without their hands raised is considered as a positive vote.

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EQUIPMENT & SETUP GUIDE

There are several ways to setup your virtual AGM, based on the equipment you and your participants have on-hand.

SETUP #1 (BASIC): MOBILE PHONE

Equipment required:
- A smartphone
- Headphones (recommended)
- A stable network connection

Recommended software: Zoom, Cisco Webex Meetings, GoToMeeting

This setup uses a mobile phone to connect to your chosen meeting app (provided that it has a mobile version). Using headphones is recommended to improve audio quality and minimise background noise.

This setup is only recommended if you are on the go / do not have access to a PC, otherwise using Setup #2 is usually a better option.

Pros	Cons
• Very easy to setup, esp. for beginners	• Video and audio are mid- to low-quality
• Requires equipment that most people already own	• Without headphones, the phone might capture a lot of background noises and cause echoing

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SETUP #2 (INTERMEDIATE): PC / LAPTOP

Equipment required:
- A laptop or desktop computer
- Webcam and microphone (either built-in or externally plugged in)
- Speakers / headphones
- A stable network connection

Recommended software: Microsoft Teams, Zoom Webinar, GoToWebinar

This setup uses a PC with an in-built or external webcam & microphone. Headphones are recommended to improve audio quality and minimise background noise.

Pros

- Easy to setup, esp. for beginners
- Requires equipment that most people already own

Cons

- Many laptop webcams and microphones are low quality
- Requires investing in higher quality equipment for the best meeting experience
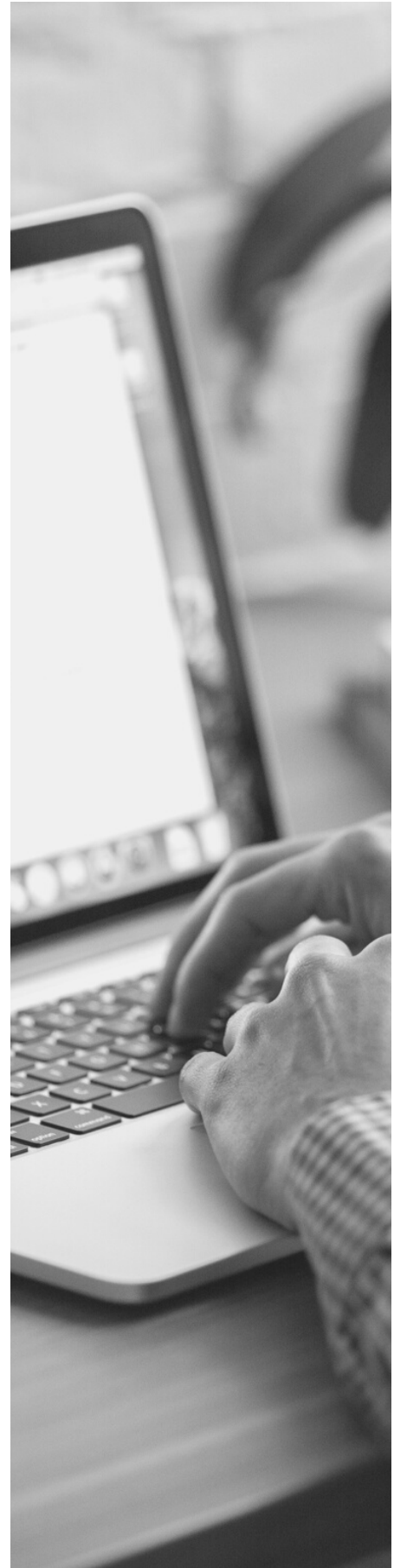
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SETUP #3 (ADVANCED): LIVE-STREAMING WITH EXTERNAL CAMERA

Equipment required:
- DSLR camera / camcorder
- Microphones
- Hardware- or software-based encoder that supports RTMP
- Converter to ingest video into your computer
- A tripod
- Lighting (optional)
- Dual monitors (recommended, esp. if only one person is producing the event)
- A stable network connection

Recommended software: Microsoft Teams Live Events (via Microsoft Stream)

This setup requires streaming video and audio through an external camera & microphone, running it through an encoder that will convert the raw input into a digital format, then broadcasting the video online through a PC.

This setup is recommended for those with experience in online live-streaming or those who have access to high-end equipment.

Pros	Cons
• High quality, professional output	• Much more complex setup
	• Requires investing in expensive equipment

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RECOMMENDED PERFORMANCE & REQUIREMENTS

Some meeting programs (e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams) have performance measurement features for you to check your computer and network performances during a call. Below are the recommended requirements for you to conduct a smooth, lag-free video meeting.

Computer requirements:

Processor	Dual-core (minimum) Quad-core (recommended)
RAM	2GB (minimum) 4GB (recommended)

Network bandwidth:

Output	Recommended download / upload speeds
1080p HD video	2.5 / 3.0 Mbps
720p HD video	1.0 / 1.5 Mbps
Standard video	0.5 / 0.5 Mbps

Actual bandwidth will differ depending on device, settings and network.

Audio frequency: 16 to 48kHz (higher frequencies = better audio quality)

Latency: 150ms or less (lower latency = less delay)

Packet loss: 2% or less (small packet loss = less data lost)

Frames per second: ~ 30fps

PART 3 - HYBRID AGMS

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Certain organisations are required by legislation to have a partially physical AGM (in other words, a hybrid AGM).

In this case, some members will be present at a physical meeting, while whoever is unable to attend can participate by voting or watching online.

There are many technologies out there focusing solely on hybrid AGMs, such as voting devices, conference calling gadgets, etc. However for this guide, we will be going through the more accessible programs and methods that you can use for your own hybrid AGM.

There are several things to consider before planning your hybrid meeting:

- Who will be attending in person?
- What are the steps you will be taking to ensure proper social distancing and safety measures are being taken?
- How will voting be conducted?
- How will Q&A be conducted?
- How will presentations be conducted?
- How will you handle any technical issues, both in the physical meeting or by remote participants?

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Think technical

First, you will have to choose how to move your meeting online. Read through Part 2 of this guide for a full rundown of recommended apps to use and what you will need to consider in your choice.

Another important thing to consider is the network connectivity of your venue. It is vital that you have a stable Internet connection, because nothing is worse than a lagging, pixelated online meeting. You also want to take precautions and prepare a back-up plan in case of connectivity issues on the day of the AGM.

Team roles and preparation

After confirming a platform, you will then need to organize your team. Decide on who your speakers will be, and whether they will be on location or attending remotely. You must also ensure that your team and participants are sufficiently trained on using the software.

You should conduct a mock AGM leading up to the date, so that everyone involved will be clear on their roles and responsibilities. By rehearsing beforehand, you can iron out the event flow, ensure smooth interactions during voting and Q&As, and get to know how to use your meeting software thoroughly.

The last thing to take note of in a hybrid AGM is the safety precautions you should take. Since there will still be a physical meeting, you must ensure that adequate social distancing and hygiene measures are in place to avoid any unwanted accidents.

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PART 4 - GRANTS & FUNDING

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VCF IPG PRE-SCOPED GRANT - NCSS

As a Social Service Agency (SSA), you are entitled to the VCF IPG Pre-Scoped Consultancy Grant by the National Council of Social Services (NCSS).

This grant is aimed to assist SSAs in investing in video conferencing technologies, in order to ensure business continuity during the current period of crisis. This also includes virtual AGM arrangements, which might require purchase of hardware devices or software subscriptions.

Criteria & Eligibility:

- All NCSS Member SSAs or MSF-Funded SSAs are eligible to apply
- The grant only applies to purchases made from 7 February 2020, and is valid until Singapore's risk assessment level has declined to DORSCON Yellow.
- The grant covers up to 80% of the approved project cost or actual expenditure (whichever is lower), with a maximum of $8,000.
- All SSAs can only apply once, with grants given on a first come, first served basis
- Funding will not be awarded to projects that are already underway OR that have received other forms of government funding (unless specifically allowed)

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HOW TO APPLY

If you are eligible, follow the steps below to apply for the VCF IPG Pre-Scoped Grant:

1. Login to the Funds Application System (FAS) on NCSS' e-services website.
2. Click on 'Funding Application' > 'New Application' > 'IPG – Pre-Scoped Consultancy Projects' as Funding Application Type
3. Fill up all the fields necessary.
4. Submit!

Want to know more about your $8,000 funding or need assistance to claim it? Click here!

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VIRTUAL AGM CHECKLIST

Equipment:

- A laptop, PC, or smartphone
- Webcam
- Microphone
- Speakers / headphones
- A stable network connection
  (broadband recommended)

Materials:

- Registration list
- Presentation slides
- Meeting materials & documents
- Host & presenter script

Meeting preparation:

- **Schedule**: Create the meeting on your preferred video conferencing application and schedule it for the appointed date and time.
- **Share**: Circulate the link to your meeting to all your members.
  - Include a guide on how to use the meeting app, along with all the necessary documents. Encourage attendees to download the desktop versions of the app for stability.
  - Optional: Create a registration page to gather registrant information.
- **Roles**: Assign roles for the meeting (facilitator, presenters, moderators).
- **Prepare**: Prepare and review the required materials (e.g. slides, documents, etc.)
- **Polls**: Add poll questions to your meeting (if applicable).
- **Settings**: Review the meeting's settings, including permissions, privacy, and scheduling.
- **Tech support**: Prepare a tech support team to sustain any technical issues before and during the meeting. Make sure your attendees are also aware that they can contact tech support in light of any issues.
- **Practice**! It is important to run through a few practice sessions with your presenters beforehand to ensure a smooth AGM.
- **Backups**: Prepare backup plans in case of emergencies- backup applications, documents, audio and video devices, and everything else that could go wrong during the session.

NEED SUPPORT WITH YOUR VIRTUAL AGM? WE CAN HELP!

✉ *hello@thunderquote.com*

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For more free IT Resources, visit
ncssithelp.thunderquote.com