

The Road Ahead Event Industry Landscape in 2021

By Howard Givner

State of COVID

‘Hygiene Theater’

- 1/3 of carriers are asymptomatic
- Surface spread is low
- *Aerosol spread is high

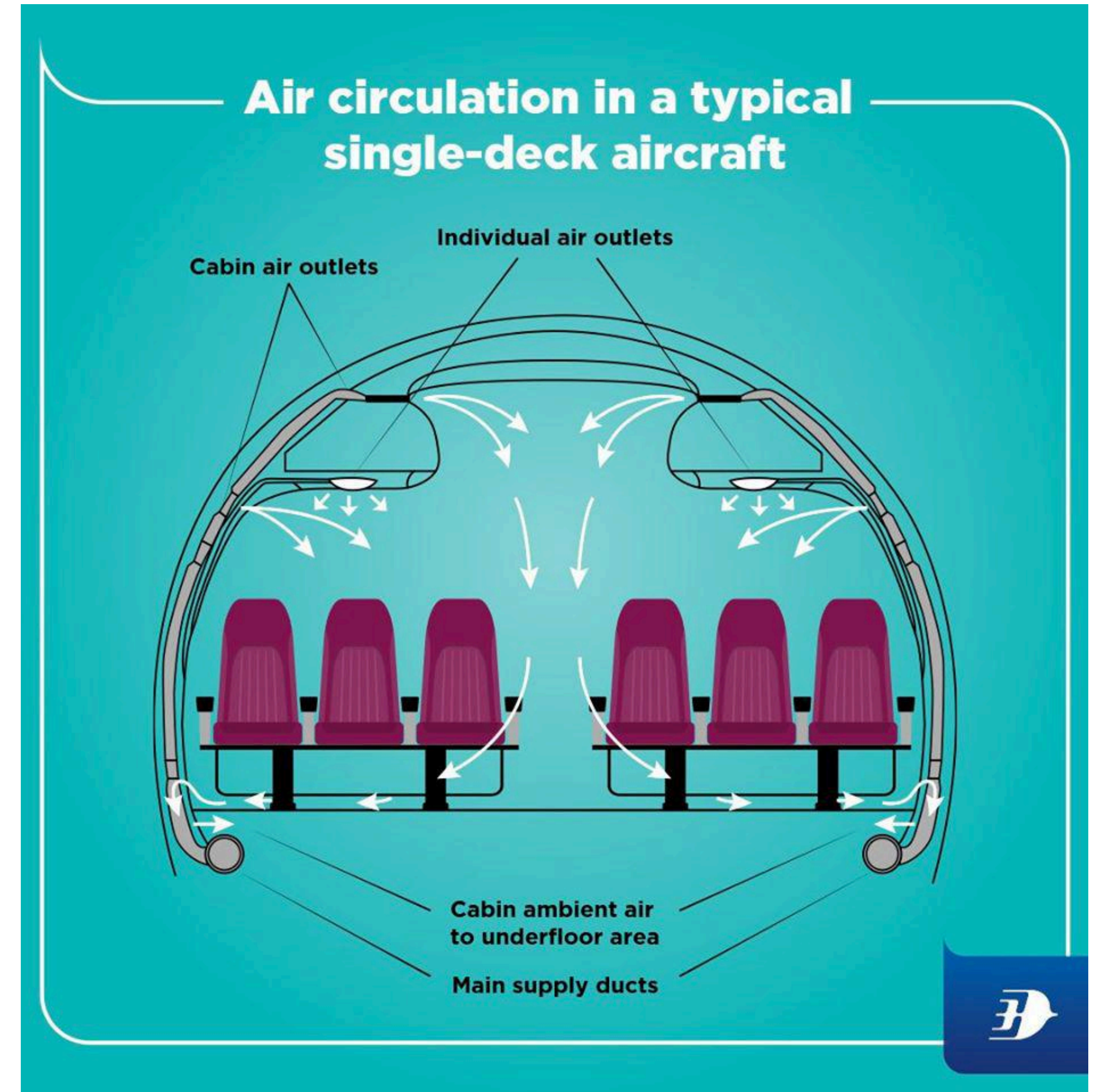
“A temperature check is a very dubious tool for ID’ing those who have the virus; (it) is hygiene theater, if you will. It’s communicating to folks . . . that you’re now entering a place in which we’ve got protocols to protect you.”

Arne Sorenson | CEO, Marriott
Source: Skift Global Forum



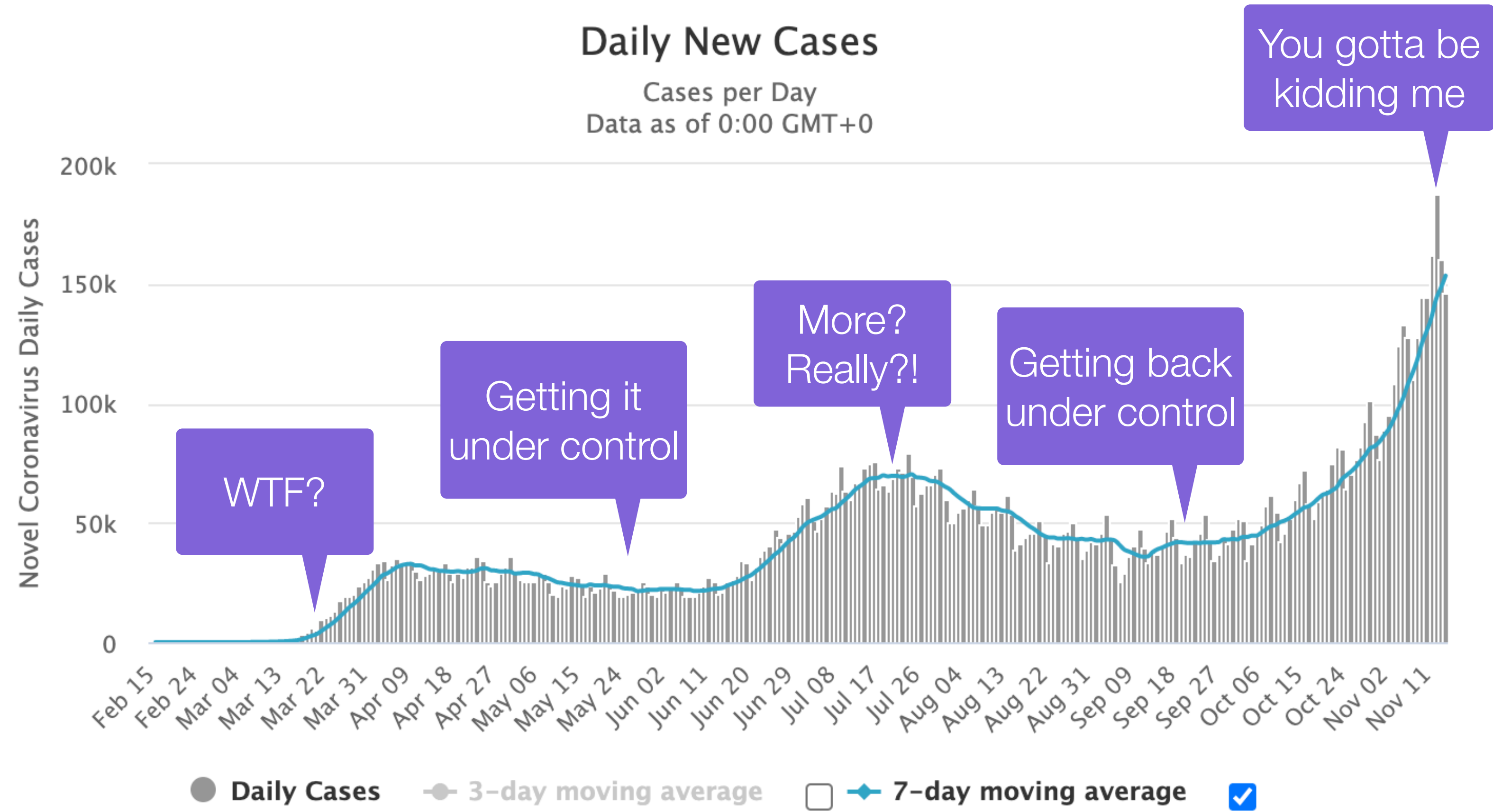
Venue Ventilation

LOCATION	# AIR CHANGES / HOUR
Airplane cabin	12-15
Hospital Surgical Room	20
Hospital Emergency Room	12
Hospital Patient Room	6
Business Conference Room	8-12
Public Auditorium	12-14



Unpredictability of Spread

- Hot zones can crop up suddenly
- Gathering limits can change quickly



Vaccine Update

- Pfizer 90% Moderna 95% !!!!!!!
- 1/3 of people may not take it.
 - Mistrust of gov't/medical guidance (legit & wackadoo)
 - Wait-and-see approach on side effects
- Widespread distribution: mid-2021
- People have to come back for 2nd dose
- Event impact will take time



What's In Store for: In-Person Events

Challenges - Unpredictability

- Attendees waiting until last minute to register, book travel
- Last minute no-shows
- Short-notice shut downs (colleges)



Challenges - Room Set Ups

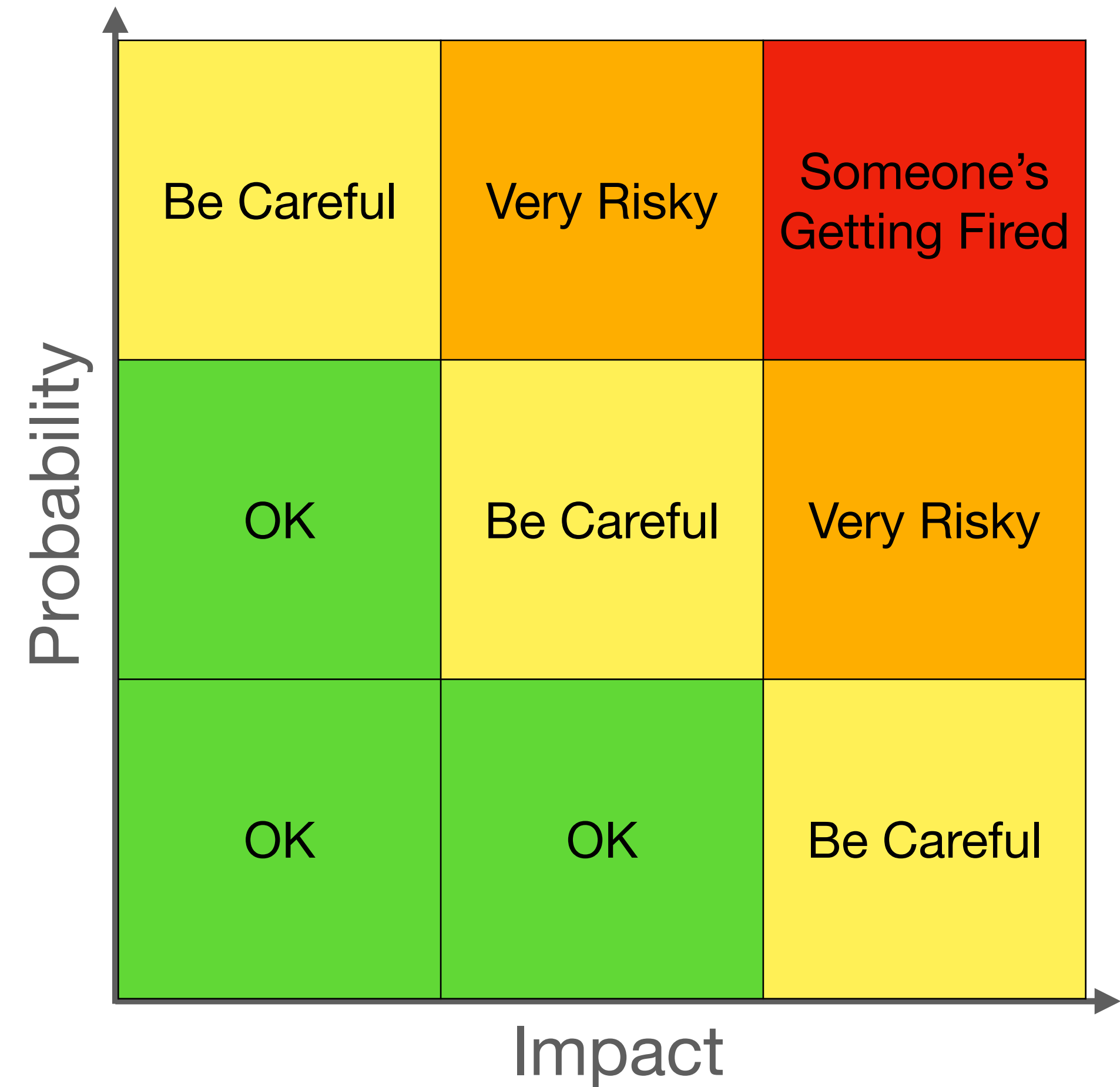
- Just because you 'can' doesn't mean you 'should'
- Can you achieve your goals with socially-distanced room set ups
- What will the economics be for venues?



Photo: Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police
Source: BizBash

Challenges - Risk Calculus

- Attendees: psychological comfort level
- Hosts: liability concerns



'Reverse Hybrid Planning'



'We Met Safely'. How Do You Know?

- Risk of becoming a super spreader event:
 - PR
 - Economic
 - Health
- Importance of good comms plan



GLOBAL EVENTS PLANNING > RISK MANAGEMENT

A Cautionary Tale: Industry Event Reports Covid-Positive Attendees

“We are writing today because we have received information indicating that three Connect Marketplace attendees tested positive for Covid-19 three or more days after returning from the event.”

When Will In-Person Events Return to Pre-Pandemic Levels?

- Pre-pandemic levels: 3-5 years
- Recovery will start Q4, 2020, improve gradually
- Look at:
 - Rise in leisure travel
 - Rise in business travel
 - Rise in return to offices

When Will In-Person Events Return to Pre-Pandemic Levels?

- Pre-pandemic meant:
 - No virus
 - Booming economy
- One virus is under control, economy will take time to recover
- Don't confuse reopening with recovery

2020	2021				2022			
Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
COVID cases exploding	Vaccine distribution							
Confidence for booking & attending events is low		Event booking confidence increases						
Economy a mess			Economy steadily improves					

Source: Howard's Magic 8 Ball

Laser Focus on R.O.I.

- Clients/Bosses have seen what they can do/save on virtual now
- Will be laser-focused on ROI of in-person spend



What's In Store for: Virtual Events

2021: The Year of the Virtual UX

- 2020 was functionality
- 2021 will be UX:
 - Improved production values
 - Organic networking
 - Video-game caliber engagement
- A LOT of \$ being invested now

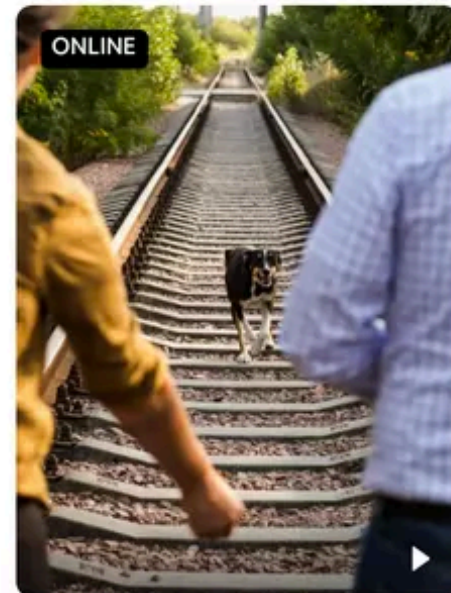


2021: The Elephants in the Room



Online Experiences around the world

Book and join one-of-a-kind activities from your home.



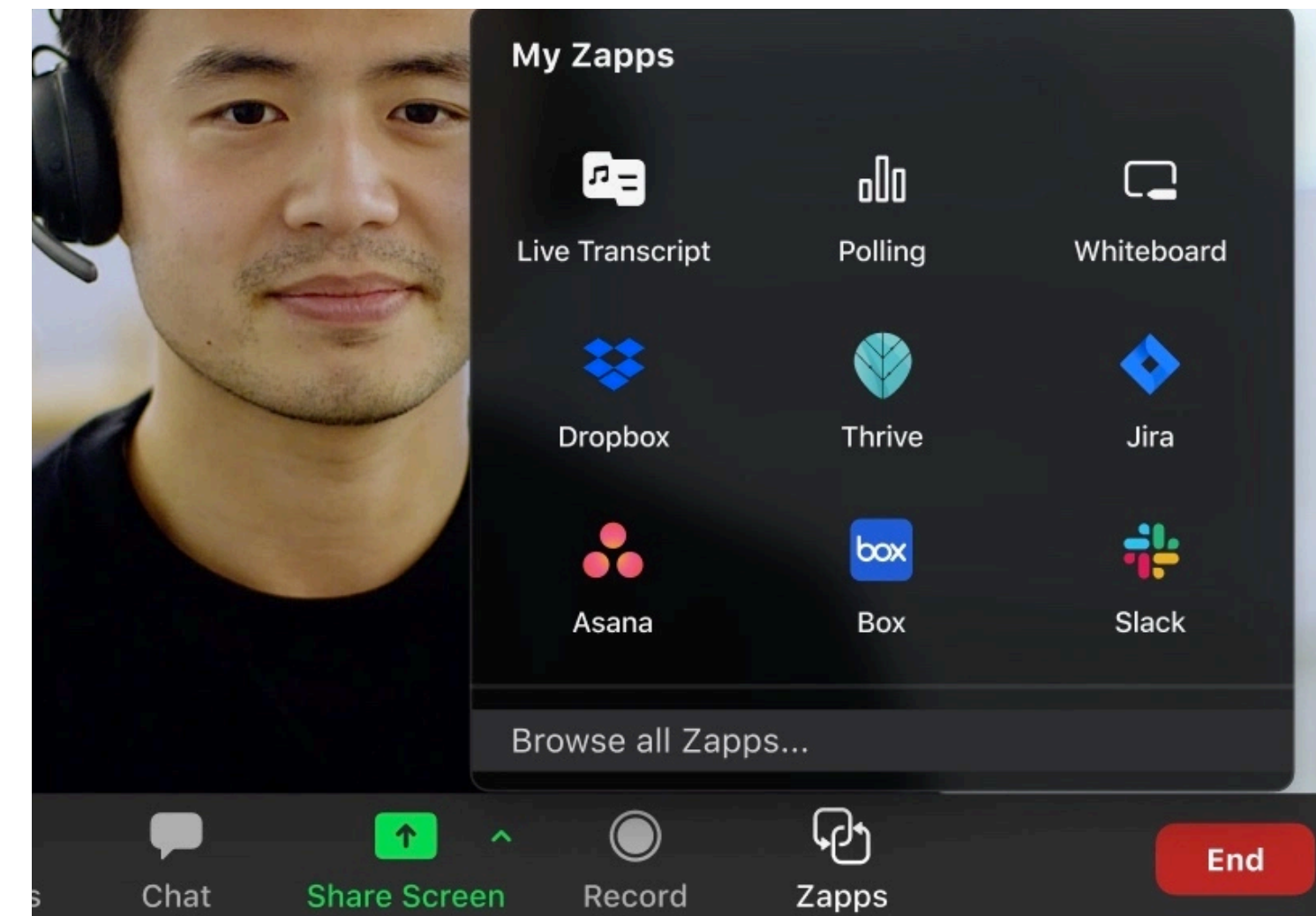
UKRAINE
Meet the Dogs of Chernobyl
From \$35/person · 1 hour



PORTUGAL
Wine Class with a Cool Wine Expert

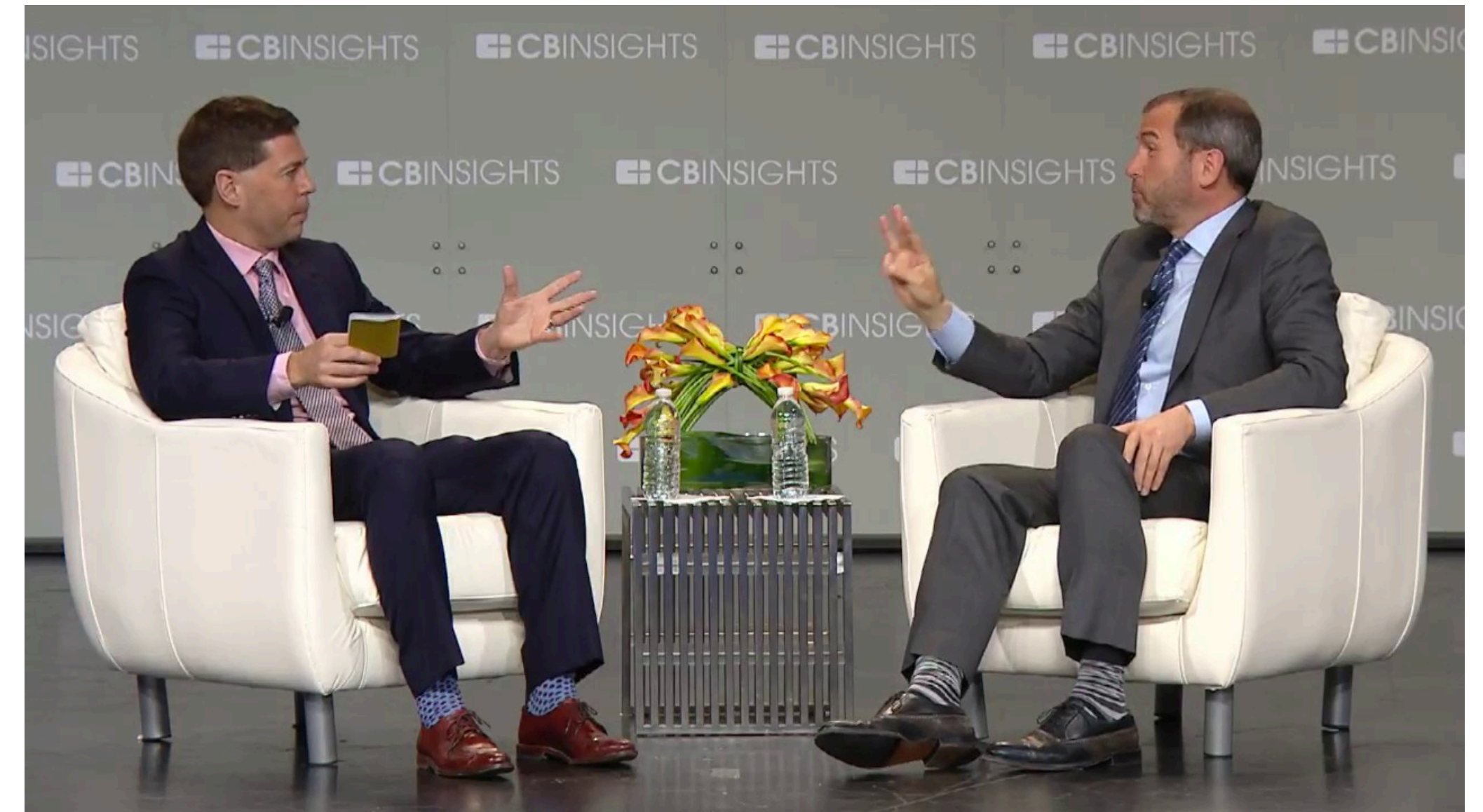


UNITED STATES
A Day in the Life, Olympic Bobsledder



2021: Improved Virtual Pricing Models & Economics

- Virtual event pricing will increase
- Greater value for exhibitors & sponsors
- Major exhibitors will break out & host their own industry events
- ELI Virtual Event Economics survey (next week) & report (January)



2021: Re-Skilling & Lifelong Learning Required

- 2020: ok to make mistakes
- 2021: need to know your shit
- Tech & virus continually changing
- Skills need to change quickly



2,315 Event Profs Certified in New Skill Areas This Year Alone

2021: Virtual Events As Stand-Alone Marketing Vehicles

- 2020: replacement events
- 2021: stand-alone events
- Easier to get quality speakers
- Reach broader audience
- Better attendee data
- *Lower costs, shorter lead time > ability to roll out new events faster to adapt to market changes



2021: Continued Industry Contraction

- Unless you're a virtual vendor, supply will shrink to meet reduced demand
 - Venues, businesses will close
 - M&A for agencies, caterers, & other vendors
- People will leave industry



Questions?

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