

Distributed events



and how to make one

About us



Aizhamal Nuarmamat kyzy

Program Manager at Google Open Source
Programs Office
Airflow Committer & PMC member
Twitter: @iamaijamal



Jarek Potiuk

Independent OSS Contributor
and Advisor
Airflow Committer & PMC member
Twitter: @jarekpotiuk



Pedro Galván

Head of Content and
Technology at Software Guru
Twitter: @pedrogk

May 23-27, 2022

AIRFLOW SUMMIT



[WATCH NOW!](#)



How do you start?

- Proposal to the community / project PMC
 - Name for the event
 - Goals of the event
 - Committees, roles and responsibilities
 - Ensure diverse representation in every aspect
 - Branding / event logo
 - Sponsors
- Sponsoring PMC member
- Approval from the ASF

Who organizes Airflow Summit ?

- PMC members as organizer's team
 - Content
 - Community management
 - Communications
 - CFP
- Stakeholders are heavily involved - wearing community hat only!
 - Astronomer
 - Google
 - Amazon
 - But also individuals
- Event Producers - Software Guru
 - Great cooperation (Event Producers who live and breathe Open Source)
- Broader community (local meetup organizers strongly involved)

History

Airflow Summit 2020/2021

Airflow Summit 2020

- Proposal approved in 2019
- First edition planned for Spring/Summer 2020
- Expected audience ~ 300 attendees
- Location: Mountain View, Computer History Museum
- **Global Pandemic!**
- Converted to fully online event
- 2 weeks on-line event with “global” content
- 6000 (!) attendees
- Attendees in all continents
- Talks available immediately online to watch
- Recorded content in Youtube

Airflow Summit 2021

- Incorporate “Lessons learned” from 2020 online events
- 2-weeks Online event from the start
- ~ 12 hours apart sessions in different timezones
- Collaboration with Local Meetups (10?)
 - Meetups in EU/Asia/America
- Central CFP content
- 10000 (!) attendees from all continents
- Talks available immediately to watch online
- Recorded content in Youtube

Challenges for 2022

To online or not to online ? Considerations

- Fear of losing our huge online audience
- People eager to meet
- Online not cool any more
- Accessibility of the event (travelling/cost/time) is important
- Scouting other events - Hybrid is not cool

To online or not to online ? Strengths

- Established strong, international local communities
- Strong Airflow Summit Brand
- Willingness to experiment
- Proven team of organizers bound with broad community
- Support from Software Guru to handle complexity

To online or not to online: Decision

- Distributed event: Online + Offline, same time
- Physical Local Meetups (13) - people on-site in friend-ish time-zone
- Intensive, week long event
- Local talks streamed online
- Pre-recorded talks played in between
- 430 local (13 location), 7000 online attendees
- 42 talks, 5 workshops, 5 watch parties
- Talks available immediately to watch online
- Recorded content in Youtube
- Airflow Summit “Wherever you are” - our tagline

Distributed event execution

Global event preparation

- Single CFP for all event
 - Organizers-led (Sessionize)
- Event logistics (producers)
 - Content coordination (speaker info, tech checks, publishing on website)
 - Streaming, recording, live captioning (human)
- Global marketing efforts
 - Prepared by marketing professionals (Stakeholders + Producers)
 - Coordinated brand awareness actions
 - Recorded teasers by organizers, speakers, local organizers
- Swag prepared (designed) centrally

Schedule structure

Drivers

- Adequate length?
- Parallel tracks or single track?
- Balance convenient times for audience (in different regions) and production team (centralized)

Result

- 1 week (Monday to Friday)
- Blocks of ~3 hours of content
- Schedule (8-11 am PST, 1-3 pm PST, 8-11 pm PST)

<https://airflowsummit.org/schedule/>

Local event preparation

- Leverage existing meetups (and nudge key community members)
 - 13 events across all continents
- Meetup organizers secured venues
- Content from CFP
- Tech checks done with event producers
- Swag
- Local marketing efforts reinforced by global communication
- After-parties (best part)



Challenges for logistics

- Different combinations of talk types
 - Local
 - Remote from home
 - Local + Remote
 - Remote from another event
- Providing a good experience for local and remote audience
- Managing Q&A (local and remote)
- Every local event had a different setup/infrastructure

Learnings for local part of the event

- Icebreakers and local activities / parties are important
- Local organisers are crucial
- Live captioning/accessibility is important
- Timing local events is important
- Local speakers are crucial
- Mixed online/offline status was confusing

Conclusions and plans for 2023

Current proposal for Distributed Airflow Summit 2023

- Single CFP/branding
- Split the event into:
 - 2-3 weeks of pure online content
 - Few days on-site event in central location
 - Follow up few months of distributed local events

Phase 1. Online content (teasers)

- Shorter talks (max 30 minutes)
- 3-4 weeks
- Use cases/teasers/intros
- Reinforcing brand awareness
- Distributed over several months
- Accessible for free to anyone
- Reach broader audience

Phase 2. Central event

- ~300/400 people
- Few days (3 or 4)
- Longer/more advanced talks
- Industry experts talking about Airflow future
- More Time for hands-on part (like brainstorming sessions)
- Culmination of the branded event
- Good for vested sponsors
- In-person networking and after parties!

Phase 3. Local events

- Mostly by local speakers
- Some prominent contributors should come to remote places
- Distributed
- Reinforcing brand awareness
- Distributed over several months
- Accessible for free to anyone
- Airflow Summit “Wherever you are”

Take away

Takeways

- Learn and adapt from event to event.
- Community bound, trusted team of organizers
- Partnership with great event producers