



Let's Talk about the Virtual Elephant in the Zoom Room

Just like so many people, I am ready to move on from virtual meetings and staring at little squares on screens. We have all asked ourselves, “Why would I want to attend yet another virtual event?” I even chatted with a member who said he would

almost rather die than sit through another virtual gathering. After that conversation, I made up my mind that I should address the proverbial elephant in the room. Of course, hosting another virtual event is not our first choice, but for now, it’s our only choice.

Here are five reasons why you and your team should join your NIA colleagues for NIA’s members-only Virtual Spring Summit, taking place online March 16–18.

1. You normally attend NIA events, and attending it virtually is cheaper with no travel expenses.
2. A virtual event takes up less of your time. Not only do you not have travel time, you can work on your projects right until the moment you login to your sessions. Plus, there are breaks between events to check on your people and your projects.
3. Speaking of your people, now is the time to offer a virtual meeting to colleagues who typically do not get to attend one of NIA’s meetings. With no travel time or expenses, it could not be easier. Plus, we have multiregistrant discounts when you register more than one person.
4. You do want to connect with your customers and your suppliers, and networking online is better than not networking at all.
5. Knowledge is vital in these ever-changing times. You need to make time to keep up. NIA is thrilled to feature three keynote sessions on important topics:
 - **Anirban Basu and the Chamber of Data** with Economist Anirban Basu, Chairman and CEO of Sage Policy Group, Inc.,
 - **The Business Impact of the COVID-19 Vaccine** with Martha Roherty, Executive Director, ADvancing States, and

- **What’s Up in Washington? An Insider’s Legislative Outlook** with Jade C. West, Chief Government Relations Officer, National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors (NAW).

As the topics and the virtual format indicate, this is not our normal spring meeting. I, too, would rather be in a warm and sunny location, but instead, I offer some thoughts on pushing through to make the most of your Virtual Spring Summit experience.

A few what-ifs to consider:

1. If you are not joining the summit, what if your competitors are?
2. If you are not joining the industry sessions, what information will you miss?
3. If you are not joining the networking events, what relationships will you be missing out on?

A few tips to help keep you focused and engaged:

1. Clear your workspace of other work.
2. Turn off the volume on your phone.
3. Make sure your space is quiet.
4. Make sure anyone else sharing your space knows not to distract you.
5. Take care of pets in advance.
6. Have a glass of water handy.
7. Use the facilities before the meeting begins.
8. Turn on your webcam video, position camera to show your face clearly, and adjust your lighting.
9. Take notes to keep you in the moment.
10. Use the chat feature to ask questions.

I cannot wait to see our members online this month—let’s push through until we can actually see each other again! For more information, please visit www.insulation.org/springsummit or email events@insulation.org.

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