

Platform options comparison

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Web, Portal app and Standalone Native: What's the difference?

Overview

The CrowdComms platform can be accessed as both a web based platform via a custom URL or by downloading a native / traditional app from the Apple app store and Google Play store. Work is involved with making the platform available as a native app and there are approval processes which require extra lead time. You can read the full process [here](#)

Web

The CrowdComms platform is available as a web based solution as standard. On first setup, you will be able to open the platform in its current format using the web link available in the admin CMS. This url can be customised to ensure you have a branded link for users to access via.

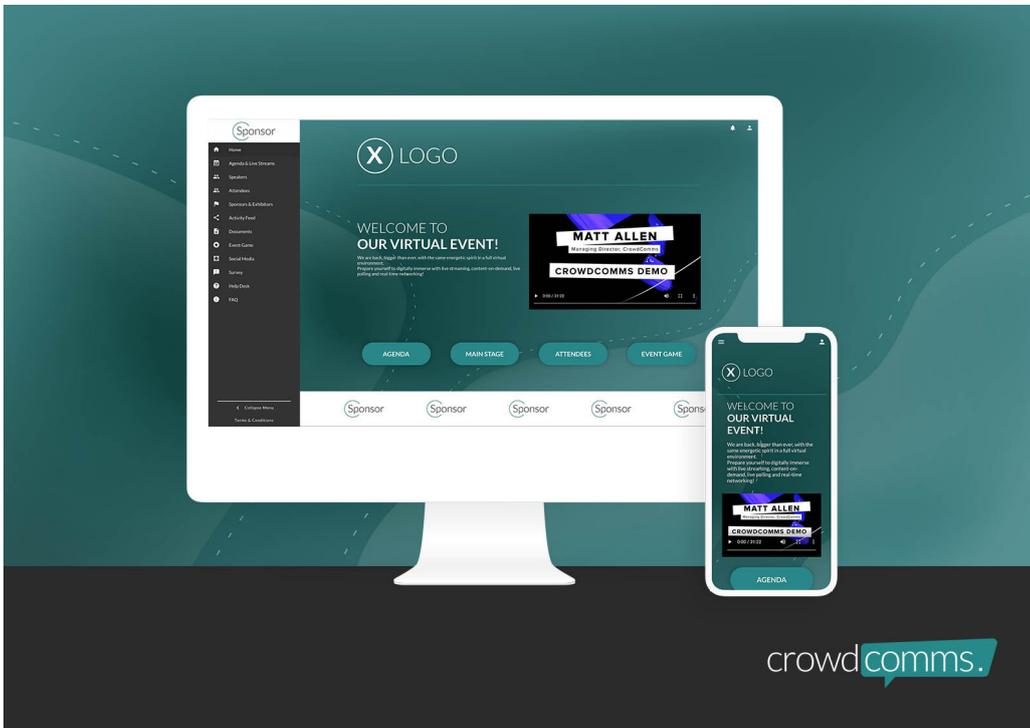
The web based solution is responsive and works across devices including desktop, tablets and mobiles ensuring your users have consistent experience and full access to functionality regardless of the way they choose to access the platform.

Benefits:

- No download, quick and easy to access.
- Included as standard and available from initial platform launch to approved users or only admins initially. Custom url can take up to 48hours to setup.
- Responsive platform ensuring users can access across range of devices and browsers without compromising experience - [Read more](#)
- Can be saved as icon on mobile phone home screens. Steps to do so differ device to device - [Read external guide](#)

Negatives:

- No app store presence.
- Push notifications aren't included. You can still send in platform notifications and email notifications to ensure users receive important information - [Read more](#)



Portal App

In the event technology world, this goes by a number of names: portal; container; housing app. At CrowdComms we call this a portal app.

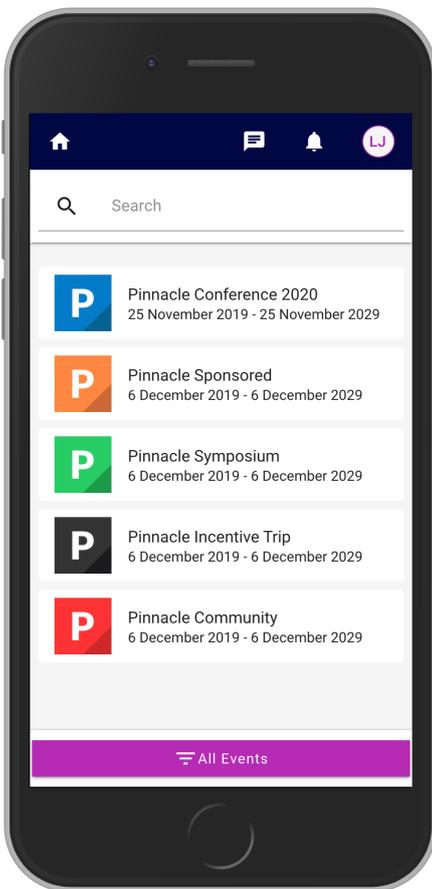
The portal app can "house" multiple events or platform projects over time, with new events being added to the existing portal. You have one generic branded portal app to house all of your events. The standard approach is to brand the portal in line with your overall company brand for example 'CrowdComms Events' would be branded in line with <https://www.crowdcomms.com/> and all the events housed within this portal organised by CrowdComms would have their own specific branding ensuring once users land on the specific event view, it's a branded event experience.

Benefits:

- One time submission to the app stores saving lead time for future events (Some critical updates require a resubmission which we manage for you).
- One app saved on users devices to access all future events. No need to download a new app for each event.
- Consistent user experience ensuring users get comfortable with accessing the platform for future events helping to achieve high adoption rates for all events.
- Personalised view of events. Users only see the events you give them access to.
- Users have quick access too upcoming, past and featured events.
- Send targeted push notifications to users assigned to specific events or groups.
- Each of the events or projects included within the portal can be branded differently.

Negatives:

- The portal app name, icon and splash screen will be the same for all users meaning this isn't specific to any one event. Events within the portal will be branded specific to the event(s).
- Initial submission typically takes up to three (3) weeks for Apple to approve. Google Play is usually quicker. [Read more](#)
- There is an additional cost to submit a portal app whereas the web version is included with all packages.
- Resubmissions to update the portal app name, app icon or splash screen require a resubmission which includes native submission cost.
- Resubmissions to add new features or make critical updates may result in short periods of there being a different feature set in the web platform and native portal app. This is rare and we manage this for you to limit any impact. Most new features and updates are automatically added to native apps without requiring a resubmission.



Standalone native app

This option provides you with a custom app name, app icon and splash screen that users can search and download from the Apple app store and Google Play store. For high profile events it may be a priority to ensure users can search for the event name in the app stores and download an app listed and branded with the events specific branding rather than the company branding as with the portal option. If this is the case the standalone native app is the way to go.

Benefits:

- Custom app name, app icon and splash screen image giving users an event specific branded journey from beginning to end.
- Send targeted push notifications to all users or specific groups.

Negatives:

- Initial submission typically takes up to three (3) weeks for Apple to approve. Google Play is usually quicker. [Read more](#)
- There is an additional cost to submit a standalone native app whereas the web version is included with all packages. Each event you opt for standalone native app will incur this cost again whereas portal app is a one-off annual cost to submit to the app stores.
- Resubmissions to update the app name, app icon or splash screen require a resubmission which includes native submission cost.
- Once the event finishes, users often delete the app from their phones making it difficult to promote future events or continue the event conversation.
- Resubmissions to add new features or make critical updates may result in short periods of there being a different feature set in the web platform and native portal app. This is rare and we manage this for you to limit any impact. Most new features and updates are automatically added to native apps without requiring a resubmission.

CrowdComms Container App

If you do not have time or budget to go with a custom branded native app, our CrowdComms container app is always available to use.

This provides the same benefits of a branded native app including push notifications, however instead of searching for your app name, attendees will download the CrowdComms container app and enter your event code to access.

The limitation is the app icon will be CrowdComms and there will be no branded splash screen on first load.

- [Download](#) from Apple
- [Download](#) from Google Play
- Searchable by "CrowdComms App"
- Example event code to see a live demo "virtual"



Our recommendation

Virtual Events and webinars: Web based platform is usually the best option. Simple to setup and easy for all users to access regardless of the device.

Hybrid and physical events: Web based platform promoted alongside a portal app. The portal app is by no means essential however if you have users on route to your venue or manoeuvring between sessions, exhibitors etc, a native app with information specific to the physical event and push notifications for on going communications is beneficial. The web based solution is widely used pre and post event and should always be communicated along side the native portal app to give users the option to choose their preferred method of access.

Web vs native comparison

The primary difference between the web based version and native app is how users access the platform. The web based version is accessible via a custom URL whereas the native app is downloaded from the Apple app store or Google Play Store.

A major benefit of the CrowdComms platform is that the interface is identical across the web and native version and there is one admin dashboard to upload and edit content. There is no duplication of work and the user experience is consistent regardless of users preferred method of access. This ensure users who access the platform on desktops pre event are comfortable with the user interface when they download the native app for access onsite at in person events. This is essential for hybrid events to allow your remote audience accessing the desktop version to have the same experience as the in person audience on mobile phones.

There are subtle differences in terms of the features available. A notable difference is push notifications which is a feature of native apps and therefore not available on the web based version. If you opt to stick with web which many clients do for ease and due to the consistent user experience, you still have the ability to send pop up alerts in platform and email alerts to ensure your attendees are up to speed with the latest information.

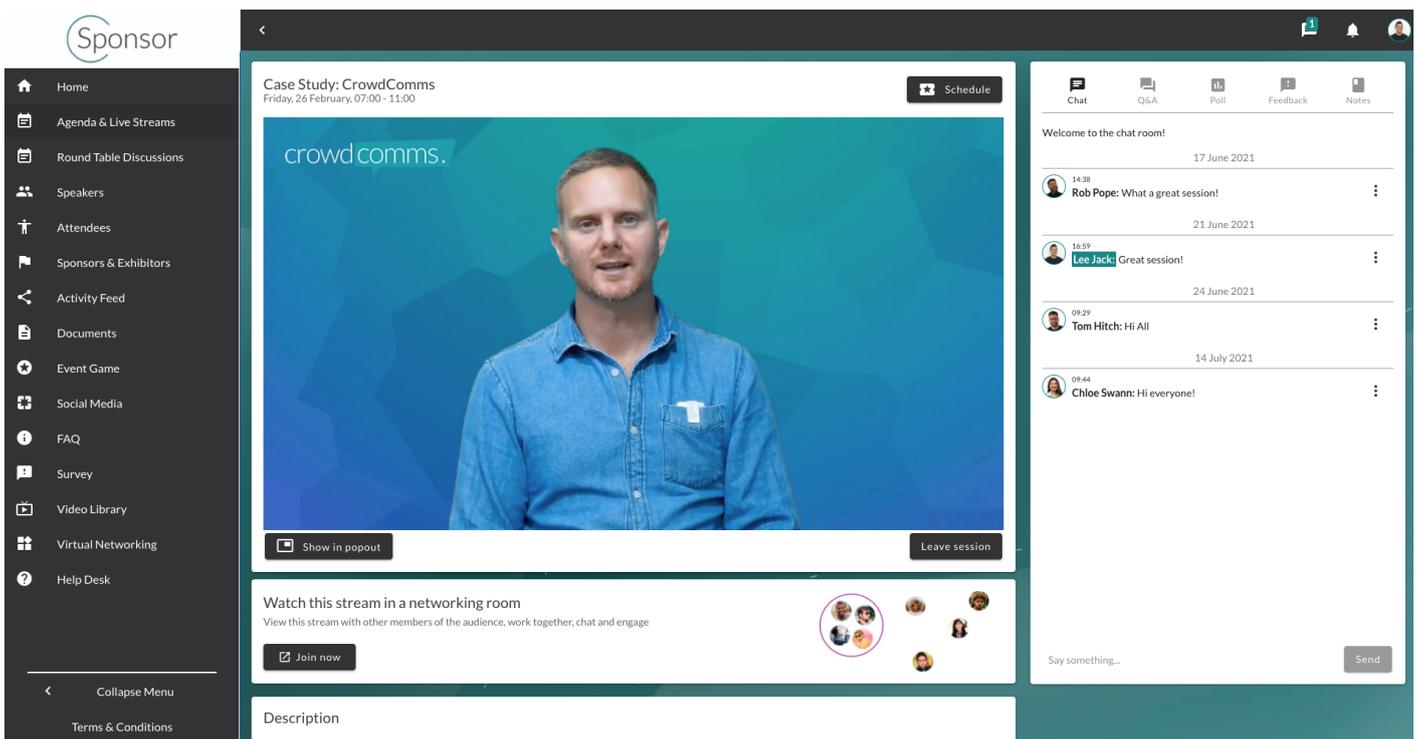
Feature(s)	Web based	Native add on (Same platform accessed via app stores)
Customisation	Yes	Yes
Custom URL	Yes	No
Security Settings	Yes	Yes
Push Notifications	No	Yes
In Platform email alerts and notifications	Yes	Yes
App store listing with custom app name and branding	No	Yes
Agenda	Yes	Yes
Session video player with engagement panel	Yes with Virtual / Hybrid platform. No with Event app for in person only event.	Yes with Virtual / Hybrid platform. No with Event app for in person only event.

Stream hosting	Yes with Virtual / Hybrid platform. No with Event app for in person only event.	Yes with Virtual / Hybrid platform. No with Event app for in person only event.
Video player	Yes	Yes
Personalised schedules	Yes	Yes
Round table discussion rooms	Yes	No
Zoom breakout integration	Yes	Yes
Speaker profiles	Yes	Yes
Attendee profiles	Yes	Yes
1-2-1 private chat messaging	Yes	Yes
1-2-1 private video calls	Yes	No
Company profiles	Yes	Yes
Sponsor opportunities	Yes	Yes
Event information	Yes	Yes
Floor plans	Yes	Yes
Google maps	Yes	Yes
Documents	Yes	Yes
Social media	Yes	Yes
Activity feed / social wall	Yes	Yes
Live polling	Yes	Yes
Q&A	Yes	Yes
Session feedback	Yes	Yes
Surveys	Yes	Yes
Gamification	Yes	Yes
Analytics and reporting	Yes	Yes

Hybrid or virtual platform vs Event app (in-person only) platform

The platform itself is the same and built using the same admin dashboard. The primary difference in feature set is that the hybrid / virtual platform comes with the session video player with engagement interface to allow remote audience to participate in real time with streamed sessions. Hosting for the live streams is also supported for this version of the platform.

Live stream engagement interface: Available on the virtual and hybrid platform



The in person platform comes at a lower price point due to the support and running costs being lower for an in person platform where data costs related to hosting a stream are removed.

Feature(s)	Hybrid / Virtual Platform (Web based)	Event App, In-Person Platform (Web based)
Customisation	Yes	Yes

Custom URL	Yes	Yes
Security Settings	Yes	Yes
Push Notifications	No, available if you include native submission in your package	No, available if you include native submission in your package
In Platform email alerts and notifications	Yes	Yes
App store listing with custom app name and branding	No, available if you include native submission in your package	No, available if you include native submission in your package
Agenda	Yes	Yes
Session video player with engagement panel	Yes	No, only included with the hybrid / virtual platform package
Stream hosting	Yes	No, only included with the hybrid / virtual platform package
Personalised schedules	Yes	Yes
Round table discussion rooms	Yes	No, only included with the hybrid / virtual platform package
Zoom breakout integration	Yes	Yes
Speaker profiles	Yes	Yes
Attendee profiles	Yes	Yes
1-2-1 private chat messaging	Yes	Yes
1-2-1 private video calls	Yes	No, only included with the hybrid / virtual platform package
Company profiles	Yes	Yes
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Event information	Yes	Yes
Floor plans	Yes	Yes
Google maps	Yes	Yes
Documents	Yes	Yes
Social media	Yes	Yes

Activity feed / social wall	Yes	Yes
Live polling	Yes	Yes
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Analytics and reporting	Yes	Yes