

# Live Event Virtualization During Uncertain Times

How the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) Virtualized Their Largest Annual Giving Event—and Exceeded All Fundraising Goals



**American  
Foundation  
for Suicide  
Prevention**



## ABOUT

- 30 Years of Service
- 50 State Chapters
- 600 Annual Events
- 360,000 Participants
- Largest Suicide Prevention Org in the United States

## GOALS

Community Outreach  
Community Engagement  
Hope and Advocacy  
Public Awareness

## USE CASES

Virtual Event Delivery  
Virtual Event Management  
Large-Scale Fundraising  
Community Engagement

## Problem: How to Pivot an In-Person Event to a Live Virtual Event in 8 Weeks

Across the US and internationally, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) and its community of advocates work with two primary goals in mind: saving lives, and bringing hope to those affected by suicide. The organization has worked for decades to build the largest suicide prevention program in the United States—one that both energizes its community and creates public awareness through 600 in-person events each year. At the center of the AFSP's fundraising efforts is the annual Overnight Walk, an event that brings together thousands of supporters to walk over 16 miles, from dusk until dawn, for their cause.

Like many physical events, the COVID-19 pandemic made an in-person 2020 Overnight Walk impossible. And with

“When we were looking for a virtual event solution, the number one thing was ease of use. We had a very short time to turn this event around. We also knew we wanted to have a combination of live streaming and pre-recorded content, and wanted participants to be able to interact with one another. All of these features were available from Qumu.”

*Nicole Dolan, Senior Director Out of the Darkness Walks*



1 Virtual  
Overnight Event



3300 Live Global  
Participants



\$1.5M Giving Goal  
Exceeded



8 Week Timeline to  
Go Live

just 8 weeks to pivot their program to video, the organization was tasked with developing and launching its first ever “Virtual Overnight Experience,” featuring a series of online interactions and challenges throughout the month of June, and culminating in special programming during the Event Weekend, June 20-21. The Event Weekend needed to include:

- A live panel discussion on mental health
- A virtual honor bead ceremony
- A live musical performance by American Idol artist Louis Knight
- An interactive mosaic of global participants
- A live a capella group performance.

## The Qumu Solution: Our User-Friendly Cloud-Based Video Platform

At the recommendation of a long-time Overnight Walk participant, AFSP evaluated and ultimately chose Qumu Cloud to manage and deliver a sophisticated, yet easy-to-use, cloud-based Enterprise Video platform for their virtual event. With a lean staff and no time to learn a complex system, the team was drawn to Qumu Cloud’s intuitive user experience, not only for participants and presenters, but also for the event director and producer.

Through a customized event portal, Qumu Cloud functioned as the central gathering space for the Event Weekend’s live, online experience—allowing viewers to participate from any device. Behind the

scenes, Qumu Cloud provided flawless delivery of live and on demand video streams, plus recording, storage and management of all content.

Going forward, Qumu Cloud will provide the AFSP with the flexibility and ease-of-use to cover a variety of use cases, including:

**Virtual Events:** ASFP is now equipped to quickly launch new virtual events or transform an in-person event to a virtual one, without losing the sense of community and connection. Support for multi-site speakers, musical performers, customized event portals, live Q&A, polling, chat, and panel discussions will all contribute to highly engaging events.

**Community Engagement:** Supporting those affected by suicide means creating a sense of community and showing individuals, families and others that they are not alone. With Qumu Cloud, AFSP discovered an unexpected benefit—allowing participants to be part of remote activities and make personal connection to all supporters everywhere.

**Fundraising:** An important part of AFSP’s effort is raising funds to support the fight with events, suicide research, advocacy for public policy and legislation, and educational programs. And video broadcasts, events and education play major roles in reaching and engaging potential donors.

**Education and Storytelling:** Now AFSP leaders, educators and advocates will be able to easily share

their motivational stories and knowledge with Qumu Cloud, enabling self-service live broadcasting, on demand video content creation, video editing and on demand content management.

## Summary

The virtual event was a huge success, raising \$1.6 million in donations with more than 3,300 participants from around the world logging 9,506 activities and walking 24,263 miles while staying connected virtually to AFSP's entire international community. Qumu helped The AFSP re-imagine and pivot its traditionally in-person event to a powerful virtual experience, ultimately sustaining its important mission—saving lives and bringing hope to those affected by suicide.

The Qumu Video Engagement Platform can provide flawless delivery to a hyper distributed audience, use advanced analytics to help measure success, increase engagement and expand your communication's reach. Speak to an expert, find more information and our Contact Us form at [www.qumu.com](http://www.qumu.com)

“With the virtual experience, I was able to be everywhere and see everything. It was really amazing to see all the engagement and how smooth and easy it was to go live and come back off of live and see everyone interacting.”

*Erin Kenny, Manager Out of the Darkness Walks*



Qumu empowers hyper-distributed organizations to leverage the full power of video to move forward faster. Only Qumu's Video Engagement platform helps businesses build connectedness and shape a culture that is more engaged, motivated, aligned – and human – to drive impact in a work from wherever, whenever world.