

Clip source: [Quiz contests buzzing online](#) | Deccan Herald

Quiz contests buzzing online

They are conducted either with software or video apps such as Skype and Zoom. But with no crowds and no team bonding, it's a strange new experience

[Krupa Joseph, DHNS](#), Bengaluru,

The pandemic has forced quiz tournaments to go online, and they are thriving amid the many challenges.

What quizzers and quizmasters miss is the excitement, camaraderie and cheering, but a big consolation is that the tradition of quizzing has survived the lockdown.

Many companies are working on ways to make quizzing work better online. Venkatesh Srinivasan, co-founder and CEO of Nexus Consulting, a quizzing company, says there are three ways to conduct contests online.

The first would be to rely on a third party platform like Kahoot. "This is a passive approach as there is no live quizmaster involved," he says.

The closest way to do a live contest is to use video calling applications such as Zoom and Skype. Here, the quiz takes place at a scheduled time and the quizmaster shares his screen with questions. However, the traditional prelims-and-final format gets replaced by a single round.

Quiz hosts can also integrate Facebook Live and Zoom which allows people to see questions and share answers as comments. This format does not work for competitive events, but is good for brand building and employee bonding.

Nexus recently conducted an online quiz on behalf of the Bihar State Biodiversity Board to mark International day for Biological Diversity 2020. "The quiz saw almost 3,000 participants from across the world. In such cases when you have to cater to a large crowd, Zoom calls won't cut it," Venkatesh says.

Instagram presence

Many platforms and college quiz teams have taken to Instagram to keep the culture alive. RV QuizCorp, the quizzing society of RV College of Engineering, for example, has hosted two contests over the course of 10 days on their page

@rvquizcorp. Each day saw a new theme, ranging from science, business and technology to comics and memes. The move online has allowed them to expand the reach of the club to include participation from followers and alumni as well. Berty Ashley, molecular biologist and quizmaster, has been a part of the circuit for 21 years. He says online quizzes are not entirely new. "It began with Orkut. I used to share questions, usually visual ones, to keep the curiosity alive. When users shifted to Facebook, I continued there," he says. He also points out that many websites also offer online quizzes.

Quizzing has been an activity enjoyed by a niche but the popularity of pub quizzes has helped take it to wider crowds. The shift online has had a similar effect. "There is an explosion in the number of people participating as well as the number of competitions that are being held," he says.

S Sripadha, artist and research associate at Hindustan Lever, began quizzing in her undergraduate days at St Joseph's College.

While she has not been able to attend many of the sessions of the SJC Quizzers on Zoom and Discord, she has been active in other groups. Along with a few friends, she has been conducting contests herself. "Online quizzing removes barriers of distance. We have about 30 people from different countries joining in," she says.

Preventing people from cheating is difficult both online and offline. While in the case of tournaments, rules might be strict, that is not the case with the more informal contests. Customers at a pub can't have their points docked for using their phone, says Berty.

Cheating problem

A skilled quizmaster, however, can make it difficult to cheat. "It is all about how you frame the question. We have to make it un-Google-able. In fact, you can often tell who relied on the Internet based on their answers," he says.

Conducting and participating in events that focus on specific areas of interest aids in this.

"I conducted a Lord of the Rings quiz because I am an avid fan. It saw about 30 contestants from across the world. It was a great experience because they were all fans themselves. A lot of time went in discussing the answers and sharing theories that the Zoom call lasted three hours instead of the regular 90 minutes," he says. Seeing its success he has decided to host a Tintin and Asterix quiz in two weeks.

Expanding reach

Thejaswi Udupa, quizmaster and member of the Karnataka Quiz Association, says the body's main intent has been to make quizzing accessible especially to those who aren't already part of the quizzing subculture.

"We didn't want to be one more entity doing online quizzes to the same set of people who already have access to a lot of online quizzing," he says, explaining their decision to suspend activities. However, if the clampdown on gathering of people lasts longer, the

association hopes to work out a way to take quizzing to schools, and to people in smaller towns and cities.

Sameness of crowd

While moving online has garnered more participants, he says that there is a certain sameness of participants in online quizzes.

“This could be because a lot of them have some sort of gate-keeping going on. You’re in only if someone added you, or if you got the link in time. It has the potential to be inclusive, yes, but as of now offline quizzes are exclusive,” he says.

Online quizzing is likely to continue after the lockdown as well. Berty says that the few drawbacks that the online mode poses can be worked out because ultimately, the system must evolve.

Missed camaraderie

Hari Raghav Herekar, final year electrical engineering student at MS Ramaiah Institute of Technology, has been quizzing since he was in high school. Through college, he has been attending up to three competitions a month. While he is glad quizzing is living on through the Internet, he misses the camaraderie that offline events bring. “You have to be self-reliant during these online quizzes. You don’t have teammates to bounce ideas off. Most of us have a regular partner and you become used to coming up with answers together,” he says.

Quizzing for families

Qshala, an offshoot of Walnut Knowledge Solutions, a Bengaluru-based education company, has been conducting quizzes for families. After working with children for five years, the company realised the lockdown gave it the opportunity to address a recurring problem among parents — the lack of quality family time.

These quizzes are not highly competitive, but rather aim at being an interactive experience. They have been able to reach about 7,000 families since they started conducting a quiz every Sunday since March, says Sarthak Khuntia, project manager.

Qshala relies on Kahoot, a learning platform, to create and score quizzes. “This removes the need for manual checking. It also helps when catering to a large audience,” he says.

How to attend

- Updates about upcoming events are updated on the social media pages of various quiz clubs.
- Reach out to Berty Ashley (@bertyashley) on any of his social media accounts to attend his upcoming Tintin and Astrix quiz.

- Visit @think2win on Twitter to join Simple Interest, a quiz league, which conducts online contests regularly. ^[1]_[5] Follow @QShalaWalnut on Walnut to join the weekly Family quiz.
- Contact Nexus Consulting, which uses quizzing to conceptualise and execute events for brands, on 4151 4985.
- Visit Karnataka Quiz Association on www.kqaquizzes.org for information on how to join their mailing list of updates on their future events. To join their Quiz Announcements WhatsApp group, send a WhatsApp message to 99024 44486.