SXSW will attempt to hold its popular festival online in 2021… somehow

SXSW, the annual tech, music, and film meetup held in downtown Austin was canceled earlier this year due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The festival's organizers announced today that it will host an online-only version of the weeklong event next year.

SXSW Online will take place from March 16th through March 20th, 2021. Throughout the week, organizers say attendees will be able to check out film and music screenings and take part in other activities such as exhibitions and networking opportunities, but they'll all be online.

SXSW isn't just a conference where you can substitute a digital stage
I'm curious to see how it all goes. Unlike other events, SXSW isn't just a convention. Sure, people go to the keynotes, but SXSW is a *festival*. Most years, it's packed with opportunities for people to network within the tech, music, and film industries, and I'm interested to see if SXSW can recreate the feeling of in-person networking events when the event is entirely online. I suppose Burning Man managed to do an online event, though.

And I'm also wondering how the SXSW organizers will handle film screenings, though we have one idea how they could work already. SXSW could strike a similar deal like the one made with Amazon to stream movies from this year's festival, free of charge, for a limited time on Prime Video.

However, there may also be in-person event of some kind next year, as well. Organizers said that “SXSW is working with the City of Austin and public health authorities on plans for a physical event in 2021.” They didn’t elaborate further than that, so we’ll have to see if there’s an in-person aspect of some kind alongside the online event, or maybe later in the year.

https://www.theverge.com/2020/9/22/21451654/sxsw-online-digital-festival-2021