

## Web Summit to go ahead in December

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Web Summit, one of the world's leading tech conferences, is set to go ahead in Lisbon this year, the conference organisers have said.

From December 2-4, Web Summit will host up to 100,000 participants on an online platform the company developed, which is being used to host its Collision tech conference that is taking place this week.

The Collision conference usually takes place in Toronto, Canada, but due to the outbreak of Covid-19, the company rebranded 'Collision from Home' event attracted more than 30,000 attendees, Web Summit said.

Virtual events have proven to be very popular for businesses in recent weeks, with companies all over the world investing heavily into this space as big gatherings have been made impossible due to the health crisis.

"Business events alone is a \$1.5 trillion industry, approximately 100 times the size of the music industry," said Paddy Cosgrave, CEO of Web Summit.

"The serendipity that happens at events is the allure and magnetism that draws people back. We have been building software that enables connections at events for over half a decade so we could pivot quite naturally online.

"Our platform will hopefully enable people from all over the world to make the same meaningful and valuable connections that are somewhat similar to the real world," he added.

The Web Summit event is usually held in the Altice Arena in Lisbon, however, it is not yet known if the company will use a physical location to hold the event from.

Talks are due to take place between Mr Cosgrave and the Portuguese government to assess the

situation, with the conference organisers hoping to have a decision made by October as to how the event will be formatted.

Portugal has a relatively low coronavirus death toll of 1,540 and 39,737 confirmed cases, according to the latest figures, with the government receiving praise for how they have handled the crisis, compared to their neighbours Spain, which recorded 28,325 deaths and 246,752 cases.

Web Summit hosted more than 70,000 people at its 2019 event, with previous big name speakers including founder of the internet Tim Berners-Lee and Tesla CEO Elon Musk.

Tickets for the online event are now on sale on the Web Summit website, while tickets for the offline one will be sold in early October once a decision has been made on the format of the event.

*By Stephen Larkin*

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