

# What do you miss the most about in-person meetings? Let's socialize online

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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES/INFORMATION SERVICES

# The CEAL Annual Meeting went virtual three years in a row...

- ▶ The CEAL EB was well aware that the Annual Meeting is not only about attending sessions and workshops when discussing the CEAL Annual Meeting format
- ▶ CKM hosted a Happy Hour during the CEAL 2021

# Attending Zoom meetings and events, I started to notice that...

- ▶ Less and less participants keep their camera on
- ▶ Not everybody uses their profile photo
- ▶ Not everybody is wearing a proper name tag (Full name, affiliation, etc.)
- ▶ Some events do not allow us to send direct chat messages
- ▶ Some participants leave the events after the talk/presentation and may not stay for the Breakout Room discussion session

# Hosting and joining private Zoom get-togethers, I realized that...

- ▶ Only one person can talk at a time: You may not get to talk in a large group
- ▶ Breakrooms are managed by hosts: Participants cannot interact with a specific person or group freely or privately  
Note: Self-selection of breakout rooms is now available
- ▶ Confined to a square box in gallery view: “Excessive amounts of close-up eye contact is highly intense” on Zoom and it causes Zoom fatigue
- ▶ We cannot stop asking/talking about what’s going on at your and my library (or office)

# Proximity/Spatial Chat

- ▶ **Gather** <https://www.gather.town/>

Use cases: Remote work, Conferences, Education, Socials

- ▶ **SpatialChat** <https://spatial.chat/>

Use cases: Online events (official party and coffee break, networking, afterparty), Use as a Team

- ▶ **Wonder** <https://wonder.me/>

Use cases: Networking, Exhibitions, Workshops, Social events

“Virtual events are great. They’re easy to organize, fast to set up, and no one needs to leave the house (or bed, if we’re being honest). But they’ve always been missing that special something. **There’s no serendipity, no flow, no chance to meet someone new.**

With Wonder, we want to help people share real experiences. Creating spaces that always feel personal, no matter how many people are joining. Where it’s completely effortless to **connect and interact.**”

# SpatialChat was selected for CJM & CEAL Socials because...

- ▶ It is equipped with basic functions that Zoom offers like sharing documents, chat, setting suitable for webinar type event, etc.
- ▶ It doesn't require participants to create an account
- ▶ One CJM member had a prior experience attending a SpatialChat event
- ▶ These tools were still in work-in-progress stage, but SpatialChat looked stable enough
- ▶ Had a generous free plan for a medium size group (25-50) event and a monthly subscription plan economical enough (\$49.99) for one or two events

Note: SpatialChat fee models have been changing quite frequently (at least three times since last May). Therefore, you need to check the most recent fee model when planning your own event and double check just before that

# SpatialChat may not work well if you want the following:

- ▶ Recording the session: Recording feature is now available for “Stage” setting. But for other settings, recording requires the use of a third party service
- ▶ Getting participant information after the event: Zoom provides you meeting participants list for your report, etc. SpatialChat doesn't have the function
- ▶ Planning the event without registration: Your space can be protected by setting a password. However, it doesn't have a waiting room function. Although the event itself can be a casual one, registration step seems to be inevitable.

# CJM Social in May 2021 and CEAL Socials in August 2021

## CJM Social on May 17, 2021

- ▶ 31 registrations: 27 online registrations and 4 registrations by email
- ▶ The registration list was quite diverse including Japanese Studies Librarians, East Asian Librarians, Catalogers, Korean Studies Librarian, East Asian Library Director, Electronic & Continuing Resources Librarian, Early-career librarian, etc.
- ▶ 23+ colleagues joined the Event
- ▶ One colleague contacted and ask if she could use the event to gather information among colleagues for a future project
- ▶ Interest in “Tadoku (extensive reading)” was expressed on registration form. CJM Chair contacted two colleagues who hadn’t registred, but would be great to have for the conversation.

## CEAL Socials on August 11 and 12, 2021

- ▶ 48 registrations: 45 online registrations and 3 registrations by email contact
- ▶ 19+ colleagues joined on August 11 and 13+ joined on August 12



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# Challenges to plan and host a social event

## Virtual Social Gathering

### Zoom fatigue

- ▶ 2021 Post Conference Survey included a question to measure the interest in a virtual social gathering
- ▶ Not used to the idea of online “social” event?

### Registration/Outreach/Promotion

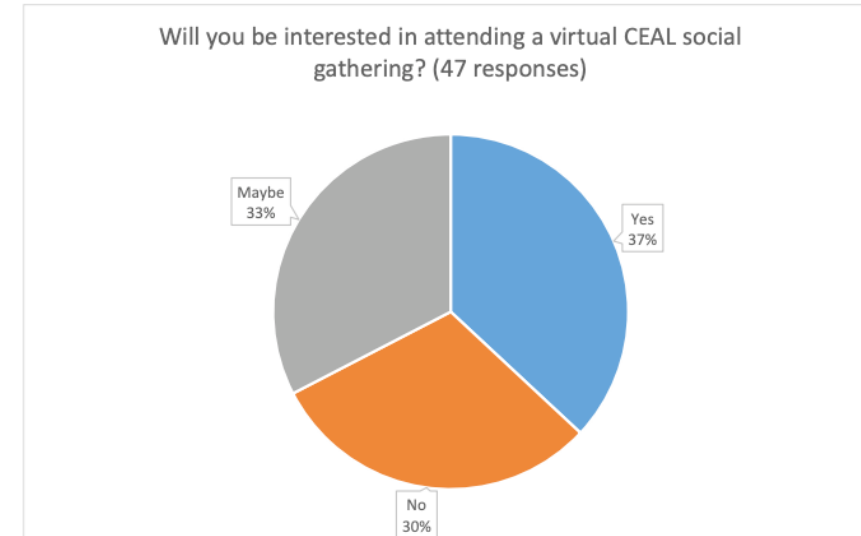
- ▶ For security reason, registration seems to be inevitable
- ▶ Personal and direct invitation to diversify the group

### Technical Support

- ▶ Librarians are relatively tech-savvy. However, it is important to encourage individual participants to familiarize themselves with the software in advance.

### During the event

- ▶ Need everybody’s help and enthusiasm to welcome new colleagues and colleagues from other fields, to meet new people, to talk to different colleagues, etc.



Participants also mentioned “ Hope people could freely choose groups to join and people to mingle with” (1); “maybe use this opportunity to discuss next year’s format” (1)

Are we interested in meeting  
virtually for socialization before  
the CEAL 2023?

Thank you!