



FAQ's for Attendees

MANTS 2021 Updated: October 1, 2020

Is MANTS 2021 going to happen?

YES, MANTS 2021 is going to happen. In late September we launched the **2021 MANTS Online Business Hub**; exhibiting companies are currently building their online presence in preparation for our January 6-8, 2021 show dates.

We are deeply disappointed not to meet in Baltimore this coming January, but we are fortunate to be amongst those who are in a unique position to provide our exhibiting and attendee/buying companies the opportunity to conduct business this coming January.

What is the MANTS 2021 Online Business Hub exactly?

The MANTS 2021 online Business Hub is a marketplace where attendees from buying companies can come to **SEARCH, SHOP, LEARN, CONNECT, and BUY**. Exhibiting companies create a profile that includes, amongst many other features, the products, services, and/or equipment they sell.

The **unique feature** (that sets the MANTS HUB apart from other online platforms) is its **intelligent matchmaking component** that will connect exhibitors and buyers with like product interests (*see details below*). Once matched, the profile has a scheduling system whereby attendees may request, or exhibitors may invite customers, to meet at a designated time during the MANTS show dates, January 6 – 8.

How does the Intelligent Matchmaking Component work?

The Business Hub has an intelligent product matching algorithm that allows exhibitors and attendee/buying companies to be matched based on 150 pre-determined product, service, and equipment categories. When completing their respective profiles, exhibiting companies and individually registered attendees will indicate which products or services they offer and are looking for.

The system uses this criteria and exhibitors and attendees are 'matched' based on areas of compatible product interest. Attending companies may research their "matched" companies ahead of time and use the **Connect Appointment** scheduling and **Connect Email** contact features to request information and/or set appointments to reach exhibitors directly.

Exhibitors who use a web-based meeting platform (Zoom, GoToMeeting, Skype, WebEx ...etc.), will have the added benefit of hosting customers one-on-one, in small groups or larger gatherings, or offering product demonstrations during the show dates.

What are Connect E-Mails and Connect Appointments?

Each individually registered attendee receives **50 Connect Emails** and **30 Connect Appointments** with their registration.

Attendees may use their **Connect Emails** to reach out to those exhibiting companies with whom they have been matched or may already know and have an interest in connecting. Both attendee and exhibitor email addresses are protected from view and not revealed until one or the other recipient replies to an email sent or received.

Similarly, you may use your **Connect Appointments** to schedule a time to speak with an exhibitor during the January 6 – 8, 2021 show dates. For those exhibitors with a web-based meeting platform attendees/buyers and exhibitors can meet face-to-face.

What can we expect from the MANTS.com Online Business Hub?

We understand that companies still have inventories to replenish, equipment and services to upgrade and buy, and shelves to restock. Likewise, our exhibitors still have products, services, and equipment to help fulfill those needs.

Everyone knows that MANTS means business and while there is no perfect substitution for an in-person show, we believe that providing the **2021 MANTS Online Business Hub** will help keep commerce within our industry accessible, alive, and healthy.

MANTS means business is not just a slogan ... it is the driving force behind the show. MANTS is exhibitor focused, attendee driven, and business centered. We look forward to continuing our long tradition of helping our attendees and exhibitors get business done.

How do attendee/buying companies learn about the MANTS.com Business Hub and how do they access?

MANTS has begun direct outreach to over 11,000 attendee/buying companies through direct mail and email communications. MANTS will broaden that reach by committing its print and online advertising resources to drive business to the 2021 online Business Hub. And we will continue to utilize our ever-expanding @mantsbaltimore social media network.

Attendee registration opens on October 20 and the Hub will be available before December 1, during our January 6-8, 2021 show dates, and 90 days post-show. The registration cost is \$10 per person. Once registered and the Hub opens for business, you will have access using your email and badge ID number.

Why did you decide to offer the 2021 MANTS Online Business Hub?

We considered many alternatives as to how we might hold an in-person show in January 2021. In the end, the health, safety, and wellbeing of our exhibitors, attendees, and allied business partners was the driving force behind our decision not to meet in-person. The unavailability of the Baltimore Convention Center cemented our decision.

MANTS focused our energy and efforts on launching the 2021 Online Business Hub because we wanted to do our best to preserve industry commerce. We know that nothing can fully replace an in-person show, so we have been focusing on how we can best help our attendee/buying and exhibiting companies through this uncertain time and enhance the in-person show experience when we meet again ... and we will meet again!

Why not just cancel the show and wait until January 2022?

Every association that sponsors a show must make the decision that is best for their respective memberships and constituencies. In our case, we thought about canceling the show for about 10 seconds and then turned our attention to how we can best serve the needs of our exhibitors and attendee buying companies.

The mission of MANTS is to foster commerce in the horticulture industry, while supporting our sponsors, the state nursery and landscape associations of Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Ours is not an industry that blinks when challenged, so we are using this as an opportunity to find alternative ways to sustain the meaningful connections between our exhibitors and attendees.

MANTS has meant business to the green industry for 50 years, and we plan to continue this tradition into 2021 and beyond.

And one more thing ...

At MANTS we recognize that you have choices as to where and how you can do business, and as always, we thank you for thinking of MANTS, where your business comes first.

Stay safe, stay well, and stay strong!