

No Trade Shows, No Problem: Sim Tech Powers Virtual Job



Pamela Nabors, CareerSource Central Florida CEO

A New Job Search

The NAVC isn't the only one to embrace virtual job fairs. CareerSource Central Florida plans to hold one centered around hospitality and tourism sector jobs on July 8, CEO Pamela Nabors told OBJ.

"The whole job search process in the last four months has totally changed," she said.

Demand has exploded during the pandemic for CareerSource Central Florida across the five counties it serves, jumping from 45,000 people served to 80,000 people, Nabors said. The organization has relied more and more on virtual programs in that time, and the job fair is just the latest step in that direction.

And Nabors sees more opportunity for simulation technology to become part of the hiring and recruiting process, whether it's by powering digital trade shows or by supplementing interviews with simulated on-the-job scenarios.

These types of technology likely will become more popular as companies seek new ways to continue conducting business. The pandemic has forced many industries to adapt to working from home or in limited time at an office, which will provide a need for technology that can help them do business in virtual settings.

Of course, the modeling, simulation and training industry is big business in the region. Central Florida Research Park adjacent the University of Central Florida is home to the nation's Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines simulation operations, as well as dozens of private simulation firms.

The VMX platform was developed by Oviedo-based Simulocity LLC, with NAVC becoming the first to license the product.



The North American Veterinary Community (NAVC) hosted a virtual conference alongside its in-person Veterinary Meeting & Expo in Orlando from Jan. 18-22.

The day after it ended was the first time leaders at the Orlando-based association heard about Covid-19, Manolita Moore, the NAVC's vice president of exhibit sales and operations, told Orlando Business Journal. The virtual portion of the event used a specially-designed platform called "VMX Virtual" that utilized simulation technology to provide attendees with more valuable experiences.

And that virtual technology is changing the game for the association.

For example, that same platform enabled the NAVC to hold a job fair on June 24, despite the pandemic. That's because the job fair, which featured 10 companies and nearly 300 attendees, was completely virtual.

It's an example of the shifts in the way businesses and potential employees interact during the pandemic, as well as the ways the region's \$6 billion

simulation sector can facilitate those changes.



Gene O'Neill, North American Veterinary Community CEO

"The virtual component is now going to be the new business model, not just of NAVC, for everyone," NAVC CEO Gene O'Neill told OBJ. "If you're not doing something at a virtual level then you're being left behind, and you'll be a Blockbuster in the association world."

Unlimited Potential

In the online VMX platform, users can "walk through" virtual booths of hiring companies. Booths are equipped with

videos, job application portals and information materials about the companies. Plus, they provide access to company recruiters through phone or video call — a new feature in VMX's newly-launched version 2.0.

The job fair featured employers such as Petco Animal Supplies Inc. and VCA Animal Hospitals with more than 2,500 combined open positions.

The platform was developed by Oviedo-based Simulocity LLC, with NAVC being the first to license the product. VMX has "unlimited potential," Moore said, and the association plans to make the virtual job fair a quarterly event with double or triple the participation.

At the same time, NAVC will always want live events to play a role because in-person networking is crucial and can't be substituted with virtual interaction, O'Neill added.