FinovateFall
NEW YORK | SEPT 9-11, 2026

DEMO & TECH FAQ

Note: If you have not reviewed the Demo Workspace, please do so as soon as possible. It contains important information and deadlines.

DEMO PREP

Q: What is a demo?
A: **A demo is a live showcase of a company's technology in a live environment.** The demo-only format prohibits the following:

- **Pre-recorded representations** (including videos, animated simulations, GIFs, screen recordings, or screen captures made to appear interactive).
- **Use of slides** of any type (including slides hosted on a webpage), **videos** of any type (including pre-recorded videos of the product/solution/platform/service in operation, whether partial or full), **animations, or prototypes** (including but not limited to Figma, InVision, or equivalent tools).
- **Speaking-only presentations** without a demo.

A violation of any of the above may result in the MC stopping the demo, withholding the demo video from distribution, disqualifying the company from consideration for the Best of Show Award, and banning the company from participating in future Finovate events.

Why is this important?
For nearly 20 years, Finovate has built a dedicated community around live demos. They're the most effective way for attendees to evaluate your technology and assess its fit for their business. Live demos are what they come to see—and what they expect. Finovate depends on selected demo companies to deliver the experience attendees deserve and uphold the tradition that sets Finovate apart.

Note: Depending on the type of technology, certain exceptions may be authorized by Finovate and will be done so in writing. If you believe you cannot demo your technology without the use of one of these prohibited items, please contact Madeline (madeline@finovate.com) as soon as possible

Q: Who usually presents from the participating companies?
A: Usually a C-level employee, senior executive or founder. We recommend two presenters: One person to speak while the other person "drives" the demo/technology. That way, both presenters only have one thing to focus on. That said, we've certainly seen great one-person demos in the past.

Q: Can you explain the coaching process for presenters?
A: See Demo Workspace.

Q: What is on stage for the demo?
A: The stage has two podiums on the far sides and demos alternate between them. Each podium has a place to set your devices and all necessary connections (HDMI, power strip, internet, etc.). A small timer is sitting on the podium, as well as a large timer at the base of the stage. There is also a confidence monitor at the base of the stage mirroring what is shown on the main screen.

Q: Do we use our own devices for the demo? What kind of device(s) can we use?
A: Yes, you use your own devices. Devices can be laptops, mobiles, tablets, and/or other technology (e.g. card reader, POS system, ATM). We've seen a wide variety of different devices on stage and are happy to work with you if you have something out of the ordinary; that said, if you are **using a device that cannot plug into an HDMI connection (like a card reader, POS system, ATM, etc.), please email Madeline well in advance of the event so that we can properly prepare.**

Resolution for laptops is 16:9 aspect ratio (typically this is 1920 x 1080). That said, we can also accommodate 16:10, 4:3 and others as needed.

Connections on stage:

- HDMI: If your device does not have an HDMI port, please bring the appropriate adapter (this is applicable to most Mac devices).
    - *Android users, please be aware that anti-piracy protections on the phone can make it difficult to get video out through HDMI. Often, we find workarounds, but it's best to bring a backup device.*
- Internet connection: A high-speed wireless network with dedicated bandwidth is available for demos, and we supply the network password backstage before your demo. There's also a hardline ethernet connection.

Q: If we're using multiple devices, can we show them on a split screen?
A: No, our system is not set up to blend feeds together (although it is possible to set up something like a split screen on your laptop, which then only requires us to show the feed from the laptop). We also do not recommend split screens because the resulting images are smaller (50% of the size of the normal full screen) and harder for the audience to see. Instead of showing devices on a split screen, the A/V team transitions between them. There are two ways to transition to a different feed – see the Q&A below.

Q: If we're using multiple devices, how will transitions work so that the audience can see each device on the screen?
A: Transitions between multiple devices can be done one of two ways. The first and vastly preferable way is to give the A/V team a detailed script with the transitions clearly marked on rehearsal day. Good examples of scripts are here: https://finovate.com/download/FinovateDemoScriptExamples.pdf

The second and more casual way is for you to use audible commands from stage for the A/V team – i.e., you would say "Please switch to the laptop now" or "Let's go to the mobile device" when you're ready to switch. Please understand these transitions are not instantaneous, so be prepared for a 3-5 second delay while the command is processed.

If you do not give the A/V team a script during your rehearsal, please plan on using audible commands for your transitions. We cannot use scripts that are submitted after your rehearsal.

Q: Can presenters bring scripts or notecards on stage during demos?
A: We strongly recommend presenters memorize their demo. If you need a script or notecards on stage, only use them as a prompt and do not read off them directly. The audience prefers natural and conversational presenters.

Q: What should presenters wear on stage?
A: Dress is business to business casual. If you plan on wearing a dress, make sure it has pockets for the microphone pack or a belt that it can be attached to.

AT THE EVENT

Q: When do you run in-person demo rehearsals at the venue?
A: See the Demo Workspace.

Q: I couldn't come to rehearsal day. Can I still check my devices' connectivity on stage?
A: Possibly. Please come to the backstage area at 7:45 am on the day of your demo. We'll try our best to have an A/V tech connect your devices and confirm everything works (and looks good) before the audience arrives. This is not a time for rehearsals, only to check your devices. If you would like to do so, please email Madeline.

Q: What is device drop off? What do we drop off and when?
A: We want to have all devices backstage with us before demos begin for the day. The reason is so that the A/V team can familiarize themselves with the devices, make sure resolutions and settings are correct, troubleshoot problems with particular devices, etc.

Other than mobile devices, you will drop off all devices in the morning or over lunch depending on your demo slot. Please refer to your personal schedule for your device drop off time (distributed the week before the event). When dropping off your device, make sure it's fully charged, and demo windows are open (so that our A/V team can easily bring your laptop up on stage and set it up when it's time). If your device is password protected, we suggest changing your password to something simple that you can write down for us or removing it for the day.

All devices remain in the staging area until your demo, so you'll likely need to bring a second device for connecting to the monitor at your demo stand.

Q: Once we're at the event, how does the process work for before, during, and after our demo?
A: The stage has two podiums on the far sides and demos alternate between them. As one demo is happening at the lighted podium, the next demo is being set up on the other, darkened podium.

In the agenda, demos are divided into sessions. Presenters check in with our staff at the Speaker Check-In & Lounge **15 minutes before the start of the demo *session* in which they are presenting** (*not* 15 minutes before their individual demo time) – this time will be noted on the personalized schedule shared the week before the event. Presenters stay in the Speaker Check-In & Lounge until their demo.

About 3-4 demos before yours, you're escorted backstage where the audio technician puts a microphone on you and another A/V tech consults with you and ensures your devices are ready to be connected on stage.

When the demo before yours starts, the A/V tech carries your devices to the podium and connects them to the A/V equipment and internet. A couple minutes before your demo, you join the A/V tech at the podium. The A/V tech stays with you until you're certain you're ready to go, at which point they head offstage.

Once the demo before yours ends, the MC thanks them and checks to see that the A/V tech is no longer standing next to you (this is the MC's cue that you're ready to begin your demo). The MC introduces you, the lights come on at your podium, and you begin your demo. We will start the timer when you begin speaking.

After your demo is complete, leave all your devices on the podium, exit the stage, and see the audio tech to have your mic removed (do not remove it yourself – it damages them). As the MC thanks you and introduces the next demo, the A/V tech unplugs and brings your devices to you backstage. Once you have your devices, head back to the Speaker Check-In & Lounge to check out with our staff and pick up any bags, jackets, etc. Then you can either go back to the auditorium and resume watching demos or head to your demo stand to prepare for networking.

Q: As the MC introduces us, what will be shown on the screen?
A: We display a still screen with your logo and other event information. We transition to the device feed as soon as it seems appropriate unless you give us a script noting a different transition.

Q: Where should we stand on stage/how much of the stage can we use?
A: The stage has two podiums on the far sides and demos alternate between them. There is enough room around each podium for someone to stand behind it and another person to stand next to it. When standing next to the podium, stay within a few feet of it – this is where the stage lights are focused. If you move beyond this area (like into the middle of the stage), the audience cannot see you and you'll block the screen showing your demo.

Q: What if we run over 7 minutes?
A: It's important that your demo is 7 minutes. If you are not finished within that timeframe, a bell will sound and your microphone will turn off, which is awkward.

All presenters can see a small timer on the podium and a large timer at the foot of the stage counting down from 7 minutes. Please plan to keep your demo well within the 7-minute window so that the bell does not sound.

Q: Any other tips for my demo?
A: Yes, we're full of them!

During your demo:

- Show ENERGY! The audience will find it contagious.
- Start speaking only when you're hooked up, online, and **the stage lights have turned on**. Once you start speaking, the timer will start.
- The timer is counting DOWN from 7 minutes to zero – make sure you end on time.
- Track your demo by using the monitor in front of the stage – don't turn your back to the audience by looking at the screen behind you.

Right before your demo:

- Turn off sleep/hibernate mode and auto lock features. Inactive devices appear as disconnected devices to the A/V team, causing unnecessary concern.
- If you're not using audio, mute your device.
- If you're using a mobile device, connect to the stage wireless network and then put your device in airplane mode so that it does not search for a cellular connection (which disrupts internet connectivity).

- Turn off all system/application updates (they can ruin your demo if they start updating right before or during it).
- Turn off all notifications (e.g. text, email, calendar appts, social media and other pop ups).
- Leave your name badge, bags, etc. in the speaker lounge to retrieve when you're done demoing.

AFTER THE EVENT

Q: Are you recording the demos? How do we get a copy? When is it available?
A: Yes, we record the demos and edit them within a couple weeks after the event. Once ready, we'll share a link for you to download your video, and we'll also post it on Finovate's media channels.

Q: Will sensitive information be blurred in our demo video (e.g. phone number, passwords, credit card number, etc.)?
A: Blurring can make it difficult for those who watch your demo video to see and understand what's happening. It can also delay editing your video. While it's possible, it's best to use a test account/data/credit card/etc. during your demo.

If you do need anything blurred, please let Madeline (madeline@finovate.com) know before the event. We will not blur anything unless you request it.