

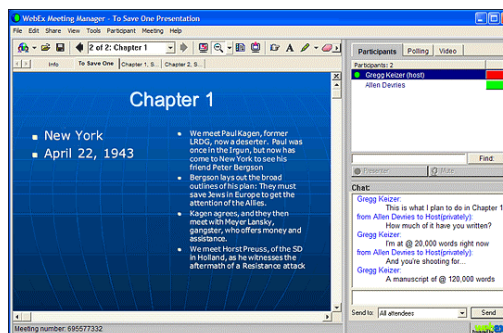
Conducting a Webinar

A step-by-step guide to planning and executing a successful Webinar.

Webinar Marketing Success

Organizations are using the Internet as a tool to cut costs, generate revenue, increase productivity, and communicate effectively.

Web seminars are a cost effective way to communicate solution-oriented information to your target audience, build your brand, generate quality sales leads and build strong customer and prospect relationships. Traditional face-to-face seminar marketing events have been recognized as a very effective business relationship builder, however the costs associated with travel and time away from the office have become significant barriers to getting and keeping attendance.



New Internet Conferencing technology leverages the strength of the telephone and fuses it with the Internet's capacity to delivery real-time visual communication at low cost. Web seminars enable presenters to conduct virtual seminars for anyone to participate as long as they have a PC with an Internet connection. Webinar technology not only makes traditional seminars more affordable, they facilitate reaching a wider audience and add considerable advantages over traditional onsite seminars such as interactive Q&A, real-time collaboration, and the ability to digitally archive for playback from a company Website. Web-based technology also can help facilitate seminar registration, attendance management and post event reporting.

How Does it Work?

Follow these simple steps to conducting an effective Web seminar. The key to a successful seminar is selecting a valuable topic and content for the audience and having a good speaker.

1. Determine the goals of your event – educate clients and prospects, generate sales leads, product launch.
2. Determine compelling topic that will make the *right* people want to attend
3. Choose your technology – You'll want a web conferencing solution that works with a variety of operating systems, is reliable, can scale to a large number of attendees, and has the features you need including polling, chat, Q&A, and recording.

There are two options for delivering the audio portion of your seminar, which include a teleconference call or audio streaming. Audio streaming is less expensive for large audiences, however, only allows for one-way communication and the sound quality not as good. A teleconference is more reliable and allows for two-way interaction.

4. Select your speaker and meeting support team.
 - a. Speaker: It's preferred to have a speaker who is recognizable to the audience, credible and has good speaking skills.

- b. Moderator: A Web conference is much like a radio show to your audience. A skilled moderator improves the flow and feel of your event in several ways. A moderator will put a nervous speaker at ease with easy questions and prompts that will help them stay focused on their presentation. In addition, a good moderator can read the audience's mood by viewing the questions and comments submitted by online participants. This gives the moderator cues about speeding up the program, or taking time to answer pressing questions raised by the audience.
 - c. Support person: Have a support person on hand to handle any technical issues experienced by participants.
5. Select an appropriate time for your event: For events based in the U.S., 10:00 am PST, 11:00 am MST, 12:00 pm CST, 1:00 pm EST is usually a good time. Skip Mondays and Fridays.
6. Establish your registration process: Streamline the registration process as much as possible – make it quick and easy. Online registration is effective and convenient. Also, make sure the technology can separately track who attended the meeting for follow up.
7. Invite and engage in a mix of offline and online promotions early and follow up, follow up, follow up. Send confirmation e-mails immediately after registration and at least two reminder e-mails prior to the Webinar. Reminder phone calls the day before the event is also effective.
8. Pre-seminar walkthrough – Practice your Web seminar with your speaker(s) and content at least once prior to the actual event.
9. Conduct your Webinar.
 - a. Join early - Presenters should join at least 15 minutes early to set up the presentation including any interactive content such as polling or Q&A.
 - b. Interact with the audience - Your content can be delivered with PowerPoint slides only or also include interactive polling and Q&A. Polling is the most popular method of increasing interaction. Once participants respond to a polling question, results can be shared with the entire group for further interaction. Many web conferencing solutions offer a chat feature so that participants can send questions to the presenter without interrupting the presentation. Interactive content is recommended when possible in order to keep your audience engaged in the seminar and it enables you to collect valuable information and feedback. Remember, keep your seminar educational and avoid sales pitches.
 - c. Emphasize the main points: Annotation tools are a great way to emphasize what you are talking about at any given time. These tools allow you to highlight areas within your presentation and keep your audience focused on the subject at hand.
10. Collect feedback – Use the polling, Q&A and chatting transcripts to learn about your audience and develop a post event FAQ.
11. Archive for playback - By selecting a Record and Playback option, both the audio and the Web portions of the presentation are synchronized for future playback further extending the reach of your event.

Tips to make your next Web event more successful

- ✓ Let your event determine the technology, not the other way around: Is it important for your attendees to communicate with the presenter during the presentation? Is a valuable element of your presentation to show live software? Do you want the option to record and archive the event for playback?
- ✓ Offer something valuable: Don't be disappointed if your attendance numbers are only at 40-50% of your registration numbers, that's the industry standard for attendance at Web events. Increase your numbers by offering a prize or valuable item at the end of the program. A special gift that only those that registered, signed on, and attended the entire event are eligible to receive. Also, a recognizable speaker is the best way to draw attendance.
- ✓ Make it interesting: To keep your attendees interested in your event, and not off reading checking their e-mail, make sure it's designed to be appealing, fast moving, and interesting. This doesn't mean that you need to become an expert using all of the robust Web event tools; it means that the presentation material itself should be exciting. Web event tools help you get your point across; they should not be a replacement for good content. Hire a professional moderator to help "DJ" your event and transition topics.
- ✓ Reminders are the key to increased attendance: "It's so easy to attend a Web event". We've heard it over and over again, but it's also just as easy NOT to attend. A Web event is designed to 'fit' into your busy schedule, and it can easily get forgotten. E-mail and phone call reminders are key to increasing attendance.
- ✓ Start and end the event on time: Unlike a live face-to-face audience, where you physically scan the room for familiar faces, search for a seat and greet your neighbor, Web audience members are generally sitting quietly in their offices reading e-mail, and checking the clock for the event to begin. A slight delay in a face-to-face event generally goes unnoticed, but at a Web event, a few minutes can seem like a lifetime.
- ✓ Create a welcome slide that let's them know they are the right location and what to expect. When starting your event go through ground rules such as how to use chat and polling features.
- ✓ Troubleshoot before the event begins: It's important to know what to do in case of an emergency. Review all possible catastrophes such as what to do if the presenter loses his/her connection, or what happens if you can't hear the presenter's voice. It's important to be prepared, and to stay calm.
- ✓ Proofread and test everything twice: It can be devastating to a Web event if the 'log-on link' doesn't work, or if the date and time of the event on the confirmation is incorrect. One of the most common -- and avoidable -- mistakes in producing a Web event is providing incorrect information. Remember, you don't get a second chance to make a first impression.

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