

Producing Wonderful Webinars

Part 3: Practice and Execution

In the first part of the series, Producing Wonderful Webinars, we explored some of the important planning tasks to create successful webinars. In Part 2 we explored the technology considerations to configure when preparing to conduct a webinar. In Part 3 we conclude with considerations for delivering the webinar.

Roles

A smooth webinar delivery many times relies on several people to perform different roles.

Moderators are sometimes used to start up the session. This role will post introductory material to help participants get logged in to the webinar and introduce the topic and speaker or speakers.

The Primary Speaker is the individual that will present the content throughout the webinar. If other speakers are used the Primary Speaker will introduce others and pace the webinar delivery.

Various support personnel may be needed to play the role of operator. There may need to be technical support depending upon the complexity of the software and the chosen audio solution. Content experts may be on hand to answer questions via the online chat. Planted participants that will ask prepared questions may be necessary to spark interactivity.

Practice

Do a dry run with all the roles involved. This will help everyone refine the execution of their role and discuss any suggested improvements. If happy with the practice delivery do it again and record the dry run. This will come in handy if "Plan B" is needed.

Practice the "Plan B". What will happen if the Speaker loses the internet connection? Use a printed slide deck to speak to the slides.



What will happen if the audio fails and can't be quickly restored. Use online chat or PowerPoint slides to let the audience know the situation and refer them to the recorded version (which you have recorded in advance and placed on an accessible website).

Ready...Set...Go...

An half hour before the webinar is to begin all the participants will get set up and logon to the PCs, webinar software, and audio. Materials are gathered with each participant provided a hard copy. Contact any technical support personnel for stand-by as participants begin to join the webinar.

At 10 and 5 minutes before the webinar begin to greet and/or acknowledge (depending upon participant size) participants as each joins the webinar. Make sure the introductory slide is displayed.

Begin the session on time. Review any housekeeping items, review the agenda topics, address how questions will be answered, and any other webinar logistics to fully set participant expectations.

End the webinar on time. During the closing script address how participants can get questions answered if time ran out during the webinar, ask to complete an evaluation, thank participants for their time, and instruct how to leave the webinar.

Conduct a Post-Webinar Debrief

Immediately following the webinar conduct a debrief meeting with all the

participants. What worked, what did not work. Brainstorm action plans for things that did not work.

Conduct a Post-Webinar Follow-Up

Send a thank you message to all participants. Be sure to include any resource materials or follow-ups on any outstanding items.

A good webinar takes planning and practice. Let's recap.

Planning involved reviewing the webinar objectives, establishing a budget, looking at technology, and scheduling. We selected and configured technology appropriate to our objectives. We practiced the delivery while testing the technology and made a recording in case we needed a "Plan B". We debriefed, action planned around lessons learned, and followed up with our participants. We produced a wonderful webinar.