

# 20 Tips for Producing Way Better Webinars

A smart, well-run webinar is one of the most powerful tools in the content marketer's toolbox.

If you present an organized, content-rich webinar and you make a connection with each audience member, you'll be well on your way to becoming an authority in your field.

But, if you present a webinar with faulty slides, cackling audio, or worse ... you'll likely *lose* the trust and respect of the audience that you've worked so hard to gain.

The reality though, as we all have experienced, is that even good webinars run by experienced hosts will occasionally run into errors or technical glitches.

Is there a way to stop these everyday glitches from turning into a total webinar catastrophe?

We've created this initial checklist for running higher quality, less stressful webinars. Use it when you're executing your next online event (and add your own ideas to customize the list) ...

## **The testing process**

The most important part of your webinar is making sure all of your attendees and panelists can hear and see your content. If they can't, your webinar will be a non-starter.

You've got to ensure a glitch-free experience for every attendee who comes to your event — and that means testing every element of the webinar process *before* you show up for the real deal.

- 1. Set up a test webinar.**

If you're inviting guest panelists to join you during the event, ask your guests to join you for the test run.

- 2. Fully test your audio, video, and slides.**

Check everyone's audio, and ask your panelists to use headsets to eliminate echoes and tinny-sounding presentations. Make sure your slides work smoothly. If you'll be switching presenters, make sure your panelists can advance the slides or show their demonstrations.

- 3. Test the recording process.**

Make sure recording works and creates a usable video file. Recruit a couple of friends to attend the webinar, and get them to do backup recordings for you.

- 4. Run tests on all interactive components.**

This includes polls, surveys, questions, quizzes or challenges. Make sure the chat box is working so your attendees will be able to get in touch with your team to ask questions or report problems.

## **A few days before the webinar**

- 5. Recruit a wingman.**

Having a wingman takes a lot of stress out of webinar presentation. If possible, recruit a colleague, coworkers, or assistant to be your behind-the-scenes person

on the webinar. This person's job is to help attendees troubleshoot individual problems. This way, you're not fielding "I can't see this in my browser" questions while you're trying to present.

**6. Create a back-up plan.**

If something goes wrong, what's your procedure for fixing it? How will you shift gears to work around the issue?

**7. Have bios ready.**

Get short biographies from each of your panelists. Read them beforehand so that you're ready to introduce them when the time comes during your live event.

## **Right before the webinar**

**8. Prep your computer.**

Close bandwidth-hogging applications, backups, and other resource-intensive processes on your computer. If you're running Dropbox, pause the syncing during your webinar.

**9. Stop notifications.**

Turn off all notifications from email, social networking tools, backups, etc. Anything that dings, flashes, flashes or beeps on your screen — shut it down.

**10. Power up.**

Make sure you're plugged into a working power source.

**11. Prep your work area.**

Remove kids and pets from the area where you'll be presenting. Also, organize papers and other materials to minimize shuffling and page turning while the event is live.

**12. Turn off noisy gadgets.**

Yes, this includes your phone. Turn it off for the webinar! If you have a lot of

things to turn off, make sure to make a list for next time so you don't forget anything.

**13. Be early.**

Sign on to the webinar at least 10-15 minutes early. This allows you to be relaxed and ready when the webinar starts, plus you can handle any last minute issues that may come up.

## **Running the webinar**

**14. Start your broadcast on time.**

Nothing is worse than a webinar organizer who kicks off their event 10, 15, or even 20 minutes late (yes, I have seen it).

**15. Check sound levels.**

Ask your audience if they can hear and see you. Ask them to verify by sending a thumbs-up in the chat box.

**16. Be organized and in control.**

Announce any status updates, special instructions, or housekeeping items at the beginning.

**17. Provide relevant social sharing info.**

Remember to share the #hashtag and encourage social discussion. You might even consider putting the hashtag in the corner of every slide in your deck.

**18. Introduce all of your participants/panelists.**

Before the event officially begins, introduce the participants and panelists to the audience. This provides proper recognition and can help you avoid confusion once the event starts.

**19. Start the recording(s).**

Don't forget to hit Record! You will want the recorded version for posting

later. You can create additional content on your site with it, plus you ensure that those who could not make the live event can still see your webinar.

## 20. **Kick off your webinar.**

Have fun!

## **Running webinars without losing your mind**

When you're doing a webinar, something *almost always* goes wrong. Let your wingman deal with the issues, if possible, but don't be afraid to pause your presentation temporarily if the situation demands it.

Your audience will not mind finding out that you're human, too.

The difference between success and failure in the webinar world lies in your ability to recover from problems. Stay flexible, keep your sense of humor, and have a good back-up plan.

And remember — you can edit almost anything out in the recording after the fact!