



Use Webinars to Reach your Audience Faster

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Assume you want to start “getting the word out” about your book, product, or service. The problem is: nobody knows you or what you do. What do you do to get your content out there?

Build Trust

Your first goal is to create trust. People will listen to you only when they find a reason to trust you – it could be your knowledge, experience, background or even your philosophy. It’s about feelings ... your listeners and viewers must *feel they know you* and *feel you understand* them; that you have something that addresses what they *feel is important*. At some level, they feel *some personal connection* with you.

The Internet is a terrific tool to create that connection. Websites, downloads, listings on Amazon, YouTube and much more. There are many ways to connect with your audience. One excellent way is through the use of webinars.

What Is A Webinar? How Does It Help Me Connect?

Webinars are unique. Many of you have already participated in one.

Simply, a webinar is a live online session that allows you to connect with literally hundreds or thousands of people at the same time anywhere in the world. You can show a great variety of visuals—slides, pictures, PowerPoint presentations, artwork, documents, short video clips and more—anything you can put on a computer screen. Almost any visual that will create a personal connection with you and your intended audience can be shown during a webinar.

You speak to people using the telephone or over the Internet. You interact with your audience through polls, surveys, text messaging and Question and Answer sessions. You can make requests of your audience and they can request things from you. How personal, or distant, you want to be with your audience is up to you.

What Purposes Can A Webinar Fulfill?

The uses of webinars are endless—how creative can you get? Here are a few categories to consider:

- Building relationships with your audience.
- Raising your image as Thought Leader or Expert.
- Finding Prospects – whether you want to connect with a reader, a customer or a client, you want a continuous flow of interested people – your “Audience” – coming to you.
- Selling and/or Order Taking — informing your Audience of features and benefits with the intent to close a sale or transaction.
- Demonstrating — showing and explaining how something works or is done.
- Teaching and Informing – presenting information to your audience that increases their knowledge and understanding.

Whatever purpose you may have, webinars are an important tool and growing in popularity. They provide a number of benefits, including: reduced time to connect with an audience, more effective training, reduced travel expenses, lower costs than participation or attendance at trade shows, fairs or book signings and greater productivity. Webinars are inexpensive to produce and can be re-used indefinitely.

Steps for a Webinar to Connect With An Audience

Obviously you must have good content – that’s a given. But it’s not enough. Let’s look at what can make a difference between making a personal connection and just a speech.

Developing Content – You formulate the ideas, write the script and polish the delivery. Here is where you choose the best visual methods to connect with your audience. You rehearse and refine. Webinars are very different from facilitating a group or giving a speech. Both the scripting and how you present during the webinar are different. Someone might be a fantastic group facilitator but a mediocre webinar presenter. Using typical group facilitation skills in a webinar will guarantee failure.

Pre-Webinar Marketing – *Put The Word Out.* You need to find potential audience groups, develop the messages to be sent and set the stage to have continuous contact with your audience. The best way to fail is for your efforts to be *One and Done*. Not only do you want to publicize your webinar but you want it to fit well with any other marketing campaigns you are doing. Not making your webinar line up and complement your other marketing efforts and tools will usually be counter-productive.

Conducting the Webinar Broadcast. – You must find a venue to run the broadcast as well as the software and equipment to actually perform the broadcast. You can learn to run all the equipment and software yourself or you find a service/someone that will do that for you. You will have to have at minimum:

- A computer capable of broadcasting,
- A service to broadcast both the visual and audio part of the presentation (You can’t assume a service will do both—some do and some don’t).

- High quality microphones,
- A quality telephone system capable of digital transmission
- Recording hardware.
- Editing software to produce a final copy that can be shared with your audience in a variety of formats.

You must determine how much of a “techie” you want to become *before* you broadcast. Then you will be ready to present your program.

Post-Webinar Contacts – Your presentation is only your first contact. You built trust between you and your audience and now have a closer relationship with them. If you have done a good job, good things happen. Your audience will want more from you.

You have a short window of time to reach out to reconnect. You may want to provide more information, offer a product or service, publish your recording for others to see (or purchase!). There are a hundred different things you could do. The key is to take immediate action. Capitalize on the trust you have built. And move forward.

Webinars are an increasingly important avenue for sharing information, creating connections and imparting a wide variety of useful information. Savvy authors and publishers use webinars to provide significant benefits to organizations of any size and to themselves. Webinars allow you to go online, increase your professionalism and make more money.

Michael Zabinski, along with Judith Briles, is a Partner in The Webinar Mentor; a webinar services company headquartered in Aurora, CO. The Webinar Mentor offers Webinar Services to include Content Development, Rehearsal, Broadcasting, Recording and Editing, Marketing and Sales Management. Contact Michael at Mike@TheWebinarMentor.com or call anytime 303-680-6944.