

# top tips

## FOR HOSTING WEBINARS

### 1 Choosing the right tools

There are lots of webinar tools out there – each with their own benefits and drawbacks – but bear in mind – none is 100% reliable. Most offer a free trial before you buy, so find one that's easy to use; works with a variety of operating systems and your in-house technology; and is scalable.

Some of my favourite webinar tools are **gotomeeting**, **gotowebinar**, **webex**, **Adobe Connect** –and **anymeeting** (which is FREE!). **Online Meeting Tools Review** ([webconferencing-test.com](http://webconferencing-test.com)) have a list of webinar tools with peer reviews.

### 2 Preparing for the webinar

Get familiar with the technology. Make sure you know how to use the webinar tools inside out before the live event. This will eliminate nerves and the chance of any problems occurring.

Choose the right topic and deliver what you promise: Make sure your webinar topic is interesting and of genuine value – and stick to it. If you promise your audience A (genuine value webinar) – and deliver B (sales pitch) – they have a right to be angry and disappointed.

Have a co-presenter (an industry expert, customer or partner): This will generate more interest and could even double your attendance. It also takes the pressure off you when you're trying to answer questions, conduct polls or fix technology hiccups.

Write a script/outline and use this to structure the learning content: Don't cram too much into the webinar – it's better to have a small amount of really high quality content than a large amount of poor quality content.

Practice: Do a couple of dry runs, record it and play it back to hear how you sound. Time yourself so you know you're going to cover all the content within the time slot.

### 3 Timing

Start promoting the webinar at least five weeks in advance.

Choose the time and date of your webinar carefully. Avoid Mondays and Fridays as these are peak conferencing days, meeting days and annual leave days and attendance can be lower.

Consider where your audience is based – and what time is most suitable for their region. Start at 15 minutes past the hour rather than on the hour. Give attendees time to move between meetings and join the webinar.

Send two reminders only — 1 week and 1 day before the webinar.

Leave at least 15 minutes at the end of the webinar for a Question & Answer session.

### 4 During the event

Begin the session at least 15 minutes early to test the video and audio connections of all the presenters and panellists.

Join your meeting early and check that all links and presentations are working. Share a 'welcome' slide to let attendees know that the webinar will be starting soon. Provide attendees with an overview of how to use key webinar features – such as chat, raise hand and questions and answers.

Provide an overview of what the webinar will cover and how it will be structured. Introduce all speakers. Remember to mute all lines until the Question and Answer session begins.

### Keep your learners engaged

Use more than just PowerPoint to keep your audience engaged. Include multimedia such as animation, flash, photos, web-demos and video.

Don't just talk at your audience – invite them to join in the conversation. Conduct polls at regular intervals and host a Question and Answer session at the end.

### If things go wrong

If things go wrong – stay calm. Take a minute and try to fix it, but if you can't, apologise and move on.

### And finally

Leave lots of time for questions and answers.

Record your webinar and make it available on your website or blog afterwards.



### 5 Afterwards

Conduct a survey at the end of the webinar to get feedback from the attendees.

Follow up with all registrants one week after the event – both attendees and non-attendees. Include relevant links such as a recording of the webinar, case studies, white papers, survey results and feedback. Invite people to your next event.

Pass details of all registrants to your sales team for detailed follow up.

Review all feedback and work on lessons learned to make sure your next webinar is even better.

**Don't be afraid of the technology and good luck!**