

Getting the Most Bang for You Buck- Tips for Conducting a Successful Webinar **By Daniel Marks**

Hosting a webinar can be a handful for the novice. For those of you who do not know what a webinar is, it can be defined as “A seminar conducted over the web.” Simple, right? Correct you are my friend.

Unlike traditional audio conferencing, web conferencing gives you the ability to share visual content such as PowerPoint presentations, Excel spreadsheets and other applications. Conducting webinars is a cost-effective means of reaching a geographically dispersed audience, which has made them a ubiquitous tool for marketing, training and collaborating. After speaking with several professionals in the industry and sharing some of my own knowledge I have put together a few tips to assist you with your event.

- 1. Plan Ahead-** The number one reason why webinars are not as successful as anticipated is from a lack of planning. Putting together a timeline is the most effective way to accomplish your goals. Following a few simple steps will ensure you and your participants get the most out of your presentation.
- 2. What Should I Share?-** Decide on a presentation/application that you would like to share with your audience that best conveys your message once your topic has been decided on. Most document types including PowerPoint, Word and Excel are supported by today’s web conferencing platforms. Be prepared to make modifications to the document several times before the event.
- 3. Contact Speakers-** This should be done ASAP. Without a commitment from speakers you will not be able to conduct your event. You may ask, “How many speakers are necessary?” The answer is as many as you feel necessary, but do keep in mind that too many speakers can invite confusion during your event.
- 4. Sending Out the Invitation-** Give your audience as much advance notice as possible to set time aside for your event. It is also a good idea to include some information about the event for participants to review before the meeting. This will give participants the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the topics discussed at the time of the event.
- 5. Practice, Practice, Practice-** Walkthrough the presentation with the speakers involved. Make sure they know exactly what their role is during the presentation. This should be done several days prior to the event allowing time for adjustments to be made if necessary.
- 6. Meeting Day-** Speakers should log into the meeting 30 minutes before the event is scheduled to begin. At this time a final walkthrough should be completed. If an operator is involved instructions should be given a final time.
- 7. Make Your Meetings Focused And Interactive-** Stick to an agenda and try not to veer off topic. It is not uncommon that participants may ask questions that cannot be

answered or would like to see things that you cannot show them. There are several strategies to address these unexpected events. The most popular method is to privately or publicly tell that participant that time does not allow you to touch on that subject but that you would be more than happy to discuss it further when the event has concluded. At the end of the event make sure to post your contact information so that participants may follow up with you.

Dan Marks is the Principal and Co-Founder of Pioneer Conferencing LLC, an innovative audio and web conferencing provider offering a full suite of services to the business community. The company provides user-friendly tools effective for use in any environment ranging from small collaborative meetings to large media rich events. Headquartered in New York, NY, Pioneer is rapidly becoming a global leader in the market place traversing all professional verticals. To learn more about Pioneer, please visit our website at www.pioneerconferencing.com or call 212-535-3710.