

Tips and tools to create the perfect online event

How do you create a webinar? What needs to be included in your presentation? In this guide, Maddyness has compiled the basic essentials and best practices into 10 easy steps that will help you to conduct successful online events.

Temps de lecture : minute

2 July 2020

Since everyone is working from home and events have all been called off, businesses are increasingly forced to turn their face-to-face presentations and workshops into online sessions. But if you never created a webinar before, whether you're a company, a startup or a self-employed, how can you adjust to provide content that can still engage your remote audience?

Create your team

To make your online conference work, you need to choose different actors to ensure the session runs smoothly.

The organiser, responsible for developing content for the webinar, finding a relevant spokesperson and engaging with the participants at the beginning and end of the webinar.

The presenter/expert, responsible for delivering the presentation, looking after any troubleshooting, event registration and anything else related to the presentation.

The assistant, to answer questions that the presenter or the organiser won't have time for, and deal with any technical issues - an assistant is definitely required for sessions with large audiences.

Choose your format

Different formats exist for webinars and can depend on the content of your conference and what you want to present to your audience. Here are the usual formats to choose from to engage your community:

The Single Speaker mode is good for a small audience and involves one speaker communicating with the attendees who will present the content of the webinar and answer attendees' questions directly.

The Interview mode is highly engaging as it involves a speaker acting as an interviewer and asking a set of questions to the expert(s). This type of webinar is a good format if you want to encourage attendees to ask questions.

Similar to a panel discussion, the Panel Webinar has several speakers who talk over a specific topic but requires a moderator to facilitate this type of discussions as well as ensuring that timing is followed.

The Q&A mode is close to the Interview format as it enables the speaker to answer questions, but this time, instead of coming from a speaker, the questions come from the audience. It's better to collect questions in advance so you can anticipate the answers and address most of them to avoid repeating and time waste. Important: Q&A can be added at the end of any webinar format.

Design your slides

Audio and visual materials matter more than anything else in demonstrating a webinar's contents. As a result, slides that are too dense with text will not be efficient, so you must keep your slides succinct and to the point. The most successful webinars feel like a face-to-face meeting and speakers should of course use their cameras (ideally something higher quality than a laptop webcam), to add authenticity and life to the session.

Here's a few essential tips to consider before preparing your webinar slides:

- Introduce your online presentation with a summary slide including the points to be discussed in the webinar. It's a good opportunity to catch your audience's attention so make it eye-catching.
- Next, add a synopsis showing the topics that will be covered in your webinar.
- Include a slide of tools and websites that will be used in the process. To keep your audience engaged, it's better to use the tools and websites in real-time along with the webinar, step by step.

Find a topic

Focus on what you need in this webinar: people. How do you get people to attend your online session? By engaging them. How do you engage them? By selecting a single and interesting topic for your webinar, because if your subject does not interest your audience, you'll struggle to get them to attend.

Most webinars last an hour so the key is to select one very specific topic

and then dive into it. Your audience has to learn something new from you, so your role is to keep your discussion engaging. Putting your topic in the form of a question can be an excellent start to open the discussion and will make you feel more confident in conducting your webinar. Always ask yourself:

1. What are the questions your clients (and thus audience) often ask and how can you answer them in a webinar?
2. What would be really engaging for you to talk about?
3. What valuable knowledge could you possibly provide in 40 or 60 minutes?

Look at previous related content - yours or not: blog posts, social media posts, articles... Evaluate previous engagement stats and find the one that received the most attention. This is a helpful strategy to understand the topics that your audience shows a high interest for. Once you have the answer and selected your topic, you can consider providing in-depth details and analysis to your attendees to keep them engaged.

Alternatively, invite yourself to other webinars: what webinars are already taking place in your industry or your field? The aim isn't to copy your competitors but to see if you can find any interesting angle that could be useful for your audience.

Select your tool

Before choosing the right tool for your webinar and online conference, it's important to consider these three points:

- What are you trying to achieve with this webinar? Think about the objectives of your presentation. Is it a product launch? A business promotion? Are you targeting a large audience? If so, you need a

webinar solution that will help you interact with a large number of attendees.

- How easy-to-use are the platform and its interface? If you're a beginner, then intuitiveness is the key to creating the perfect webinar. And since webinars are time-sensitive, it is important that you adopt a tool that will increase your time-efficiency. If you are planning a webinar in the *single speaker* format, you want to get the easiest possible tool to showcase your content to your community.
- How much is the software? As not all the platforms are free, when considering the cost, just keep your target audience in mind. Depending on how large is your public, you may want to opt for an enterprise package. However, if your business is smaller, start with a free trial and decide later if you want to subscribe for a premium membership.

Naturally, there is a broad range of user-friendly tools for creating and running online sessions, so take your time evaluating the options. Here's a series of platforms to consider and choose from to design your next webinar:

Founded in 2011, [Zoom](#) helps businesses and organisations bring their teams together in a frictionless environment to get more done. It's an easy, reliable cloud platform that suits any needs for video, phone, content sharing, and chat running across mobile devices, desktops, telephones, and room systems.

[MyOwnConference](#) video conferencing and webinar tool is the most robust alternative to Zoom. While Zoom has a dozen security and privacy problems, MyOwnConference encrypts all meetings and provides a secure solution. This supports up to 10 presenters who can speak simultaneously and up to 10,000 attendees. Unlike Zoom, MyOwnConference does not limit the duration of the broadcast. You can hold an unlimited number of meetings during the day.

GoToWebinar is a simple, self-service webinar tool that enables you to host large-scale online events. Thanks to *HDFaces*, you can share your webcam with a single click, which adds a whole new dimension to any presentation.

With 20+ years expertise in online video services and productivity, WebEx is a hassle-free video conferencing tool that works smoothly, makes people feel like you're in the room with them, enables you to build stronger relationships, and can elevate your brand. WebEx allows you to reach anyone, anywhere, anytime and increase your business reach while reducing office and travel expenses.

Created in Paris in 2016, Livestorm is a webinar tool that functions 100% in any browser, and, besides the basic webinar requirements, provides advanced post-webinar analytics tools, audience segmentation capabilities, a lead management system, and native integrations with CRMs and marketing tools.

EverWebinar is a completely automated solution that helps you manage all your live and evergreen webinar marketing in one place. You can import a past live event and EverWebinar into an evergreen event, track your stats, access chats and videos all in one convenient location.

From Poland, ClickMeeting is a browser-based platform for hosting webinars and training sessions. The platform works in any browser and is available across all devices and operating systems. It does not require software installation, and the user interface offers all the tools necessary to make webinars engaging for attendees and cost-effective for organisers. It also allows you to customise your webinar's content and elements to create a personalised brand experience.

Developed in 2011, BigMarker is a very efficient solution in webinar hosting, marketing and automation. Companies, organizations, and

universities use BigMarker to host highly-customized live, on-demand, and automated online presentations, trainings and events, creating meaningful conversations and stronger relationships with prospects, customers, and other important stakeholders. BigMarker also provides integrations, APIs, analytics, and white label services that enable companies to integrate powerful interactive video experiences into their marketing, sales, and learning stacks.

Find a quiet space

Conducting a webinar starts with having the proper equipment and space to guarantee a seamless experience for your attendees.

Preferably, and to make sure that your webinar goes smoothly for yourself and your audience, you'll need to be in a quiet place to conduct your webinar. Whether it's a meeting room or any other place free from noise and interruptions, select the spot that'll make you feel confident and look professional.

Don't forget to bring the right equipment as well, such as landlines and headset microphones, to feel as free as possible during the presentation. Overall, anticipate, check and double-check all your devices prior to the online meeting. As a backup, in case something goes wrong, it's highly recommended to bring a fully-charged laptop, with all the necessary data copied and stored in it.

Promote your webinar

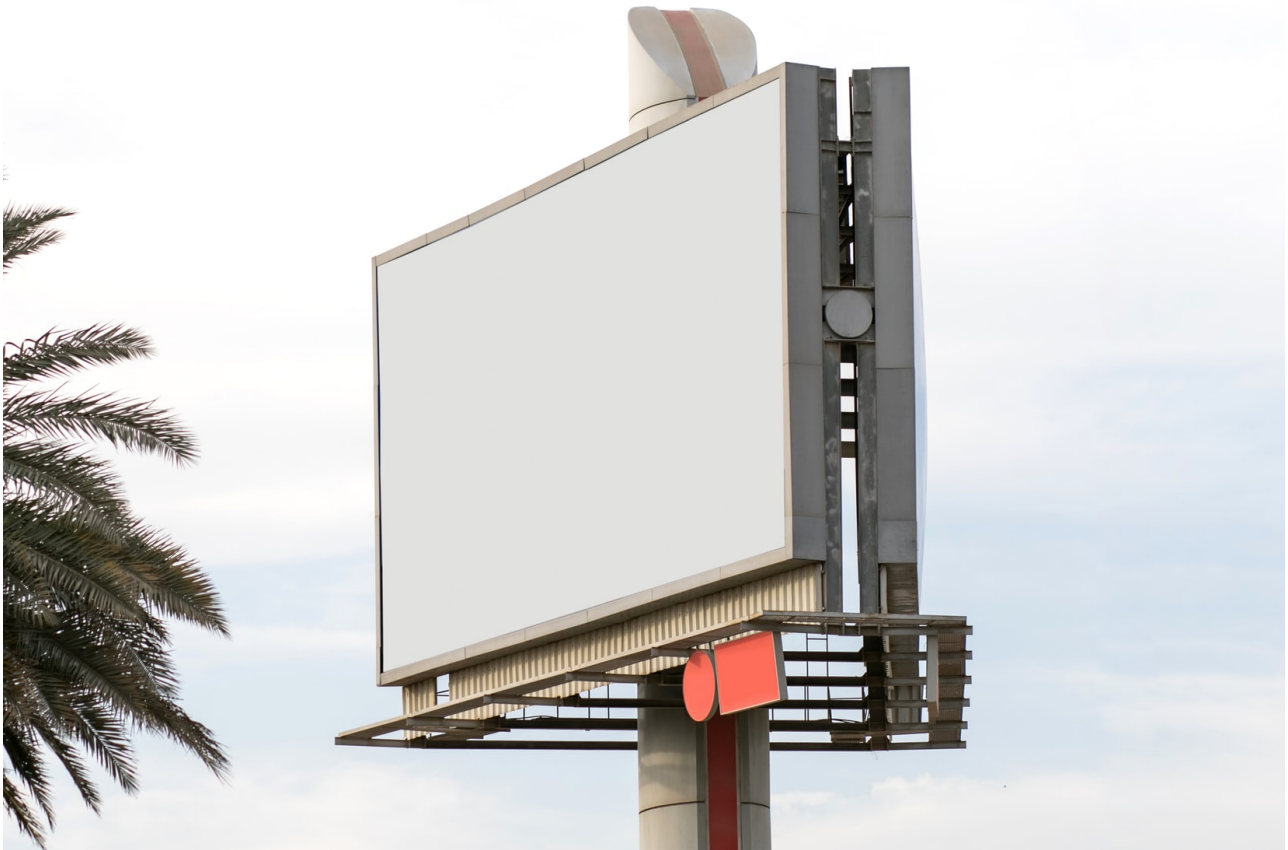
According to a GoToWebinar report, Tuesdays are the best days for promoting your webinar. So when you have your content ready, you need

to communicate and promote your webinar so that as many people as possible are aware of it. To maximise your webinar's attendance, it's crucial that you shout about it beforehand. To do so, use these simple tips:

- Create a landing page introducing the webinar topic, the speakers, the date, the time, and add a call-to-action for people to sign up to attend the event.
- Design a banner or set up advertising on your website to make visitors aware of the upcoming event.
- Use the power of social media to spread the word about your online event: you can even create an original hashtag to amplify your event, which will benefit you at the time of the event, as you will be using it to interact with the attendees.
- Schedule and send multiple reminders with a countdown to your event.
- On the day of your webinar, make sure to send emails including the direct URL to your webinar.

Take a step further...

For more details on promoting your webinars as well as your live social gatherings, the [Digital Event Guide "Making your online gathering a success" compiled and designed by JIN Agency](#) gives lots of useful tips and should be a highly valuable addition to the communication about your online sessions.



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Timing is everything

Obviously, not all your audience members will be from the same location and the webinar should be scheduled at a time and date that will allow the maximum number of attendees to attend. Keep in mind the time difference (tools such as [World Time Buddy](#) or [The Time Zone Converter](#) are useful). According to research conducted by marketing specialists, the best days to host webinars are Tuesdays and Wednesdays, between 10:00 and 11:00 (GMT).

Practice, practice, practice

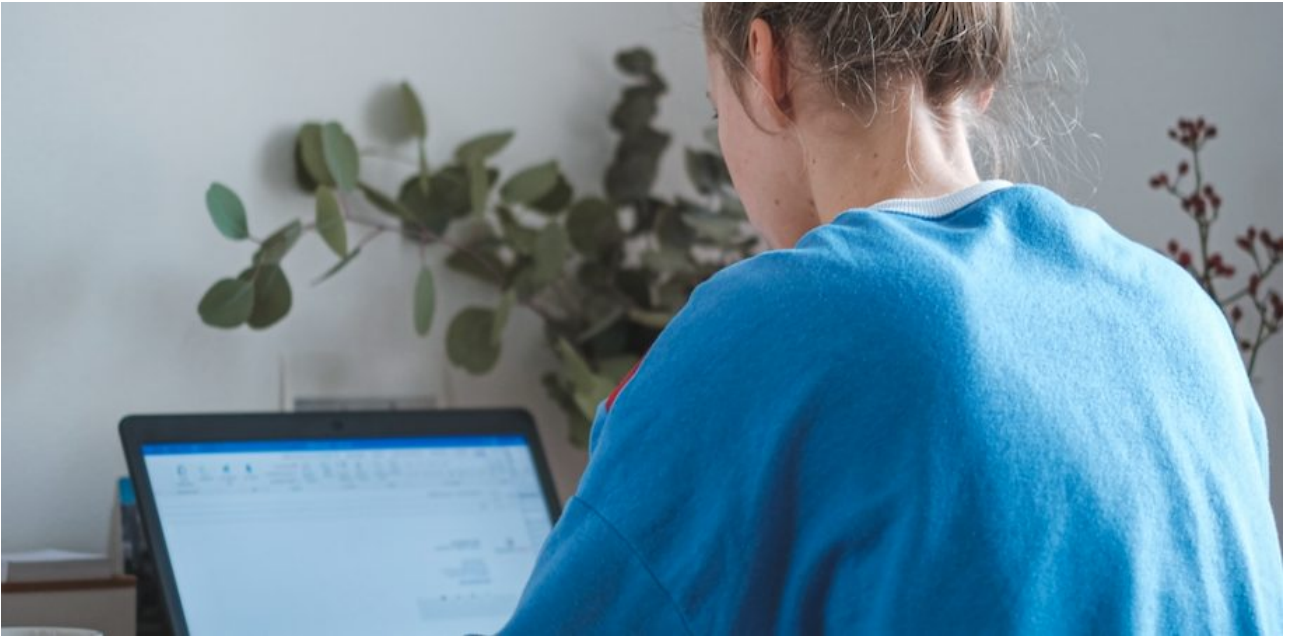
Ahead of the webinar, rehearse your presentation, whether it's face-to-face or online. Test all the software, equipment and devices to make sure that they work properly, and check the following:

- Make sure everyone is familiar the software and the content.
- Update and finalise your slides to avoid stressful last-minute changes.
- Choose a communication tool to keep in touch with your team.
- Dispatch tasks that need to be monitored during the webinar such as polls, Q&As, group chats, etc.
- Review the final registration based on details such as names of attendees, their industries, etc.

Remember to follow-up

It is a fatal error to overlook the follow up, as you may be missing out on opportunities to further engage with your audience.

Once your webinar is done, email the participants: your message should be thanking them and include a survey to collect their feedback and rate their experience, as well as a call to action for future webinars. Collecting this feedback is ideal to make adjustments to your next webinar. You can also send them a recording of your webinar separately, especially to those who couldn't attend.



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Article écrit par Audrey Langevin