<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KEYS TO A WEBCAST THAT WOWS YOUR AUDIENCE</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEFORE THE WEBCAST</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRE WEBCAST CHECKLIST</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DURING THE WEBCAST</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DURING THE EVENT CHECKLIST</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFTER THE WEBCAST</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POST WEBCAST CHECKLIST</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
First, let’s define what a webcast is. A webcast can have several different components. For example, it can have video, audio, PowerPoint slides, a survey, a quiz, interactive Q&A and other collaborative features. Some people use the term webinar because at first glance they can look very much alike. There are a few differences between a webinar and a webcast, but the two biggest are that webcasts traditionally allow for higher-end video, even high definition [HD], and, webcasts can handle several thousand attendees in the event as opposed to most webinars that can traditionally only handle a few hundred.

START AT THE BEGINNING: WHY ARE YOU PLANNING A WEBCAST?

Ask yourself this question, because a webcast may not be the right tool for your purpose. And your purpose shouldn’t be to fulfill the quarter’s quota of webcasts. If you’re trying to tell your employees important news about the company, consider other tools—an all-hands meeting, a memo or a live chat on your internal social media system. A webcast may be the right tool, but don’t assume it.

On the other hand, if you’re trying to generate leads or reach a key audience for training, the webcast—some dare call them by that other term “webinar”—is a time-tested tool. Go for it.
Before The Webcast

This white paper is divided into three segments: Before, during and after the webcast. The Before section is the longest and most detailed because your preparations will dictate your success.

GOALS AND STRATEGY

Now that you know why you’re doing a webcast, create webcast goals, strategy and metrics. Target your audience. Although lead generation is the most common type of marketing webcast, marketers have other goals too: Nurture existing leads, deepen relationships with existing customers, demonstrate technical aspects of your solution, build brand awareness, demonstrate thought leadership, launch a product, educate influencers, etc.

For training webcasts, what changes the most is the audience: Internal audiences include new employee training, sales or field staff training, human resources or benefits training. Other trainings may be for partner/resellers or customers. Topics range from new products to regulatory to professional development.

What do you want your audience to do after your webcast? Be precise and narrow in how you define the goals of your webcast; otherwise you’ll produce an unfocused webcast with incoherent goals. As for audience, marketing-related webcasts generally seek as wide an audience as possible, except that you want to sure your content (and product) is appropriate for participants. If your sales are big ticket, you don’t want prospects with small budgets.

WHY METRICS MATTER

Identify metrics for your event; common targets for outbound marketing events are the number of attendees, sales, qualified leads or hot leads. Number of registrants is a worthless
metric—if you spend the time or money, you can get registrants. The trick is to get qualified registrants who actually attend the event, so your conversion rate [percentage of registrants that attend] is a key number. For training, think about a metric for mastery of the material taught, which could require in-webcast quizzes.

Metrics are important because they give you benchmarks for success, but they also force you to think through the characteristics of your target audience—education, budget authority, technical sophistication, attention span, needs and motivations. Those characteristics help you devise a plan to achieve your goals. Decide how many conversions you want, then work backwards to how many attendees you need to generate that number, how many invitations to send, etc.

SECURE SPEAKERS AND OTHER TEAM MEMBERS

A webcast team usually consists of one or more speakers, an organizer who is often the moderator, and may include one or more assistants, especially during the event. The webcast organizer develops the topic, recruits speakers, sets up and handles webcast logistics, and can moderate the event. Depending on your organization, the organizer also may handle marketing and communications. The moderator introduces speakers, handles Q&A, monitors audience engagement, encourages interaction using the polling feature, and troubleshoots technical problems by alerting your service provider, who is responsible for technical execution.

Identify your webcast format and recruit accordingly. Will you have a single speaker, two or more presenters, a panel discussion or an interview format? You may want multiple speakers with different specialties, especially for longer training webcasts. How long is your webcast? Two hours is considered the upper limit for training; marketing events of an hour are common but increasingly companies are looking at 30 minutes. Many webcast providers, including InterCall, allow presenters in multiple locations, making it easy to recruit the subject matter experts you want, no matter where they are.
**SCHEDULE THE EVENT**

Before you pick a date, make a timeline. Give yourself enough time to fully develop content, recruit speakers and other team members, promote the event, and develop your follow-up plan and materials. Avoid dates your target audience is likely to be unavailable, such as holidays, during a big industry trade show or in the final week of a quarter, unless you have a over-riding strategic reason for holding it then. If you’re going global, remember that different countries and religions observe different holidays. If your audience spans time zones, account for the variations in time. Unless your webcast has blockbuster content or required attendance for an internal meeting, it’s unrealistic to expect participants to log on at 5:30 a.m. their local time.

As part of scheduling, event set-up includes supporting functions such as multi-tab microsites, landing pages and registration forms. In picking your service provider, look for an intuitive interface that makes it easy to set up the event. Experienced users can set up an event in less than an hour.

**CONTENT IS CRITICAL**

Content must be strong, actionable, well organized and targeted to your audience. Give your audience solid understanding of the topic and new ideas they can use—valuable in other words. If you get a slew of people checking out before the end, it’s probably boring content. Consciously pep it up beforehand.

Pick a catchy title—it helps grab audience when you’re trolling for sign-ups. Make sure your webcast provider offers the ability to do polls and quizzes—empowering your attendees to be interactive holds interest, and you might learn something. Open the session with a question about the audience. (How many years of experience do you have with the subject matter? or What do you hope to take away from this presentation?) You’ll draw the audience in, give the speaker information about positioning the material and can gain valuable insights for follow-up.

Too much material? Consider a two- or three-part series. Video vs. slides? If your audience has high bandwidth connections, consider at least some video as a change of pace. Live or prerecord presentations? A matter of
your taste. Share information, don’t shamelessly promote your product. Infomercials are a turn-off. Demonstrate your mastery of the subject as you act as a thought leader, not a sales exec. Leave the sales pitch for the follow-up.

**PROMOTE, PROMOTE, PROMOTE**

Identify tools to reach your target audience. Set up a schedule to communicate with them. For lead generation events, you’ll cast your net widely to pulling in people who match your customer profiles. For training, you may have the full list of eligible/desirable attendees, but you still must convince them to join you. Busy people typically need more than one invitation, plus a follow-up confirmation for those who’ve registered. Don’t bombard your email list with invitations, and consider a commercial list. Start with an email to your target contacts 15-30 days before the event. Follow up with one or two more invitations. The day before the event send a reminder with login information to everyone who’s registered. Some marketers send another reminder an hour before the webcast, but tread lightly so you aren’t tagged a spammer.

Promote the webcast via online communities, social media, newsletters, on your blog and your website and anywhere else your target audience is likely to see it. Early on, conduct A/B testing on messaging for email, landing pages and ads. Include a link and line about your webcast in your email signature. Issue a press release. Cross-promote with similar events. If you plan far enough in advance you can include a mention in your print advertising and submit it to related publications for their upcoming events listings. Create a landing/registration page specific to your event that sells your content or speakers.

Before sending any communication, always double-check dates and make sure links to your website and/or registration page are correct and functional.

When you get registrants, begin the conversation before the event. Open a topic about what their expectations or goals for
the event are—results can help mold your content. Not everyone who registers will attend, especially if your webcast is free, but compelling subject matter, sterling speakers and targeted promotion boost the chances that those who sign up will show up.

**ANTICIPATE LIVE EVENT NEEDS**

Plan for a webcast just as you would a physical event. Create a slide deck for the webcast, or have your speakers do it with your template. If they do it, get slides soon enough that you can make edits to be sure they’re on target for your needs. Consider a script or detailed outline with timing and flow for the entire event. Script out speaker introductions, announcements, opening words for each section, calls to action and closing statements, keeping everything brief and to the point. For live video, plan any whiteboarding in advance. Practice with your speakers so everyone is comfortable with timing, transitions and the technology. For practice, have your remote speakers work from the phone and Internet connection they will use for the live event. Load all content at least 24 hours before your webcast. Prepare at least three questions for your speaker to kick off the Q&A session. Create a production checklist in the days and hours before the event.
1. Create webcast goals
2. Create webcast strategy. What business initiatives will you integrate webcasts into in order to improve business. For example, get products to market faster, lower CPL reach more people.
3. Choose executive to champion your initiative
4. Create webcast calendar
5. Create your title, description and speakers
6. Choose date
7. Create the content flow and format of your webcast
8. Create PowerPoint slides, survey, seed questions and introduction
9. Kick off meeting with speakers to go over flow and content
10. Dry Run
11. Create promotional plan

Here are some ideas to get you started:

• Execute an integrated campaign using email, online advertising, e-newsletters and PR. Work with partners for promotional opportunities. Depending on your promotion period, send out at least two to three invitation emails for your campaign. Create a robust and engaging event microsite to attract registration. Activate social media options as part of the registration fields.

• Implement a social media strategy using tools such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to promote your event. Create a Facebook event and invite all your fans, find LinkedIn groups relevant to your audience, and schedule weekly tweets to create interest before the
event. Create a hashtag for the event so people can find and reference it as they tweet.

• Send reminders to all registrants one day before and the day of the event.

• Track the progress of different campaigns/marketing vehicles by embedding a ‘promo code’ to the event URL link. This way, you can monitor the progress and gauge the effectiveness of each vehicle.
MANAGING YOUR WEBCAST

Prior to the webcast, have someone dial-in (to make sure the number will work for participants) and submit a question (so you know the Q&A feature is working). Have an assistant to help during the event, especially if your audience is a large or unfamiliar with webcasts. The assistant can help with late registrations, respond to technical questions and, if he or she is knowledgeable about the topic, help screen questions when there are too many for the speaker to handle. Walk through your production checklist.

Before the webcast or pre-recording begins, make sure presenters’ desktops are cleared (no open documents), turn off email, disable popups and notifications that might appear during the webcast, etc. Reconfirm that all links and URLs are live. As with any event, not everything can be planned. If you have to improvise, stay positive and upbeat. During a demo, don’t scroll up and down a web page too quickly. It takes up to five seconds for your audience to see the changes.

Start two minutes early and end on time. Your attendees have cleared their calendars for you. Don’t ask them to wait for stragglers. If the meeting is running long, cut content to give your audience time to ask questions. Offer an online forum for attendees who may want to interact with speakers after the event.
YOU’RE IN SHOW BUSINESS

When attendees join the webcast, you still have heavy competition for their attention (email, tweets, the latest score in the ballgame, etc.) A little entertainment value will help hold attendees—compelling visuals, polls, video, images, quizzes. Nix wordy, cluttered slides and use large, readable fonts. Don’t let a speaker drone on—you want an entertaining expert, not a boring one. The price for reading the presentation verbatim in a monotone is a lost audience. If you have multiple speakers, let them banter.

To keep people engaged, encourage them to use the Q&A feature in the webcast interface to submit questions. The moderator or assistant can answer by text in real time or questions can be held until the end for the speaker.

Don’t tax the audience’s attention span. Make them wish there were more, not less. When it’s time to end, give a short wrap-up, thank attendees and end with a strong call to action that harkens back to your webcast goal. Tell them how to get in touch with you and/or the speaker.
During The Event Checklist

1. Start the webcast 30+ minutes early and have all the presenters arrive early
2. Load PowerPoint deck and surveys
3. Test audio with presenters
4. Have a hard copy version of the PPT sides just in case you lose your internet connection
5. Have 1-2 seed questions ready just in case you don’t get any questions from your audience
6. Turn off your mobile phone and other devices that could go off during the presentation
7. Have water nearby

Notes:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

12
GOOD FOLLOW-UP MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

Have your follow-up plan and materials ready to go in advance so you can connect with your audience while the event is fresh in their minds. Include a call to action whenever you contact them. Offer webcast slides, a white paper on the webcast topic, a web URL for other content, the archived webcast itself. Extend the conversation after the event by email or with a follow-up web chat with the speaker. Remember the folks who register but do not attend. Offer them the archived webcast. If it’s a marketing webcast, get attendees and no-shows into your lead management system.

Consider whether your archived event is suitable not just for on-demand replay but perhaps to split up into shorter, targeted videos that you hope will go viral on other websites.

ANALYZE YOUR EVENT

Your webcast technology partner should provide advanced audience analytics and reporting. Compare the results to your goals. Evaluating your event will help you improve the next one, allocate future resources and supply information to share with your management team. Did you exceed your objectives? By tracking results and comparing them to your goals, you’ll know, and you can justify your budget and use the information to plan future events.

CONCLUSION

Webcasts are an excellent tool for many purposes, but they require hard work in preparation. Even if all these tips don’t apply to your webcast goals, don’t forget these basics.
Post Webcast Checklist

1. Extend the conversation before and after the event. Use your webcast as a conversation driver, not an isolated event. Create interest in advance by blogging and posting to discussion boards or groups so attendees are attracted to your topic, begin thinking and communicating about it and are prepared to actively participate in the webcast. Engage attendees by creating a Twitter hashtag before, and keep it active after.

2. Create a centralized place such as a virtual environment or conference center where those interested can obtain information, “meet” and network, exchange ideas and participate in the conversation. Have subject matter experts continuing the conversation inside a virtual environment or conference center if you have one, FaceBook and Twitter, and available to answer questions that come from the archived event.

3. Remember the people who registered but did not attend. Send a thank you note to those people with a link to the archived webcast.

4. Conduct post-event analysis. Evaluate your content, presentation and event from your own perspective and attendees’. Read attendee feedback, survey results and ratings. Review chats, polls and Q&A from the
session. How many actively participated? Were their questions and comments appropriate to the topic? If not, examine your promotions, content and audience composition to determine if they’re aligned. Did most attend the entire session? If not, at what point(s) did they drop off? Talk with colleagues and attendees to get their input.