Disclaimer

Table of Contents

Contents

Introduction

Seminars, lectures and presentations are important modes of sharing existing knowledge and dwelling on new and innovative ideas. These are regularly conducted by almost all the organizations to make sure that the new thoughts keep on coming while the existing ideas are best utilized. Since these are so necessary, hence it is almost inevitable to participate and communicate through these. However, a lot of time and money are spent which largely discourage the participation as well. Webinars are very effective to counter these problems while providing an effective source of communication at the same time.

Fame and money are the key drivers to any organization and its success and failure. Fame may be achieved by being known and getting to as many people as possible, but with positive virtues and connotation. This is key factor which determines the success and back account of an organization. One must try and build contacts which is done through building email lists while promoting a virtual event like a webinar. A number of steps that are mentioned in the chapters are effective and necessary for building a huge email lists that could provide essential profits.

Chapter 1: What is a Webinar?

Webinar is the shortened form of web based seminar which could be anything from a seminar, lecture, workshop or a presentation. Webinars are:

- a means to exchange ideas, thoughts and information at almost real time.

- a very effective mode of sharing information to remote locations over the internet.

- different from television in the terms that on television, one sided flow of information or data (to be precise) is allowed.

Webinars allow you to interact with other members or public over the internet in a large number. Interaction of these people or the participants of the webinar are just like the participants in a seminar where a participant asks a question from the presenter or the lecturer.

Video conferencing is more or less the same thing, but it allows only a small number or group of people to communicate at the same time. Webinars on the other hand, allow a larger public to communicate effectively, but it does come with the additional cost of software and hardware capability requirements.

Participants need to have PCs or laptops with working high speed internet connections as the basic hardware requirement to participate in the webinars. They also need to have the same software as the one with the presenter, which can be easily downloaded from the internet or may be provided by the presenting authority or organization.

A number of people feel that the webinars are only a one way mode of communication and they discourage participation from the people. However, the one way presentations or lectures are more appropriately called webcasts. As far as the quality of communication or interaction is concerned, many presenters include question and answer or polling sessions in between or at the end of the webinar to improve the participation. While the IP/TCP is a basic requirement for a webinar VoIP is not and hence the question and answer or polling session must be preferred in the text form.

Innovation forms an important component in almost every other form of business to keep it going. Webinars also require new and innovative models to keep the general public interested in participating and thus making it a success. Webinars are performed over VoIP, which is voice based communication, almost inevitably to improve the level of communication among the participants. Webinars must offer the opportunity to the participants to interact with each other in order to keep the webinar going and turn it into more of a professional meeting rather than a lecture which could have been done via video recording itself.

Chapter 2: What can I do with Webinar?

As already stated, webinars are used for:

- delivering lectures
- conducting seminars
- conducting workshops
- presentations
- official meetings

These may be used by an organization to attract the general public or participants or can even be used by a large firm for sharing thoughts and information with all or a number of its employees.

As the presenter discusses or shows the presentation to the participants, a mouse pointer may be used by the participants to point to a certain location to clarify their doubts or questions. Web conferences are appropriately designed for making up for the physical presence of the presenter and participants at a single location. These offer the presenter and the participants to interact in a similar fashion, by the use of appropriate technology and resources, as in case of any seminars or workshops, except for real time exchange of articles which can usually be covered up by sharing the articles before the conference.

You can attract, interact and approach a larger audience at once, thus increasing the impact of the conference while sharing more thoughts and ideas. More sharing of thoughts and ideas leads to an effective communication and a bond of the presenter with the participants. This kind of communication is usually missing in case of physical seminars owing to the lack of participation and a slim crowd. Since, web conferences are not so popular yet, thus it can be used as your firms Unique Selling Proposition (USP) while showcasing it to other clients and new entrants.

If your firm uses it to interact with the employees of your organization, it is guaranteed to improve the attendance of your employees as they are not bound to a place any more. You can mix the conference with a polling or question and answer session to ensure the attention of the participants, thus making up for your physical absence. It can even be recorded by the employees who are not able to attend the meet or conference. The plan for the meet or conference may be discussed by emailing or calendaring with the employees to ensure their knowledge and participation in the conference.

However, there is a certain limitation to the workshops that may be conducted using webinars. Only those workshops are conducted through webinars that do not require the presenter and the participants to share any physical articles or which may already have been shared, or presentations.

Chapter 3: What are the Benefits of Webinar?

As already stated, a webinar is a revolutionary phenomenon that has the ability to change the entire market. The advantages of a webinar are:

- It reduces the travel expenses and travelling time of customers, co-workers and clients, thus improving the possibility of participation at the same time.
- It also lets you communicate effectively with individuals in remote locations.
- It also reduces the cost and management of seminar halls and conference rooms.
- Product demos, meetings and lectures could be conducted with more ease thus improving the productivity of the meeting at the same time.
- It can also be used for training employees, clients and students without any need for their physical presence at the location thus saving on time and money of all the involved members.
- It is also used for teaching purposes by conducting lectures and seminars for students and employees.
- It is even essential for improving customer relationship and you can offer a more effective service to your clients thus improving your connections and future opportunities. You can even sort out your customer and client's problems in a timely and efficient manner.
- It lets you have the opportunity to handle multiple clients at once improving the business and profitability by your firm, reducing the time and cost of travelling at the same time.

Web conferences are made to eliminate geographic and demographic limitations, thus ensuring that the entire organization and its arms operating at the same page and same level. It helps you to strategize more effectively and without any communication lag or misunderstanding. It improves the flow of information from one location to another; not just the hard data, but also

the thoughts, ideas, views and perceptions and letting the managers take more effective and informed decisions.

Apart from all the aforementioned benefits you are bound to increase the popularity of your organization and increase the intake. Incentives like special offers may be provided to the participants and more then effective presentation help you build your email list. This boost in the email list is bound to increase the profits and further make your company grow exponentially.

Chapter 4: How much does it Cost?

The cost that one needs to spend on conducting webinars is definitely a lot lower than the standard seminars. Not only the organizers or the organizing authority saves money, but even the participants save some crucial money, especially in this time of recession. The time equivalent of money that is saved is never counted, but is certainly worth it.

The major cost of conducting a webinar includes the marketing and publicity cost which might be reduced to zero when it is being used in a firm, as the publicity is done via internet and emails. The other costs include the hardware cost and the software cost, which depends on the number of participants that one needs to cater to.

As the organizing firm or authority, if the number of people that one is catering to is limited (say around 100), the hardware costs mainly include the cost of the setting up equipment. Various websites offer their servers to conduct webinars and charge according to the number of participants.

The equipment consists of cameras, microphones and speakers which may be setup in different well defined locations in a room to maximize their performance. In case, it is an open webinar and the firm is catering to a very large number of people, then the hardware costs also include the cost of setting up dedicated servers. The size and cost of servers again depends on the number of people being addressed at the same time.

As far as the software cost is concerned, it is a onetime cost of buying an appropriate software that best meets your requirement. This software is generally sent to the participants in CDs through mail or post or can even be delivered while they meet any of the members of the organization. A more appropriate option of delivering the software includes uploading it on the website and asking the participants to download the same, thus making the process rather simple and cheap. All in all, webinars are very cheap and effective and help you save a lot of time and money.

The cost of hosting the server varies from around $50 per month for a maximum of 15 attendees to $500 per month for a maximum of 1000 members. The annual charges for the same are $470 per year for a maximum of 15 attendees to around $4800 per year for a maximum of 1000 members. These costs include the cost of the software that is provided by the serving site and has high compatibility with their servers. This also lets you save some precious money in buying altogether different software from another organization.

Chapter 5: Video Seminars

Video seminars are effective in gathering a large crowd, especially some of the young generation guys to attend the seminar. These seminars save the hardships of going to the location where the seminar is being conducted. Seminars, as are generally perceived, are uncommunicative and involve minimal participation. It is usually the presenter who goes on all the while, presenting his thoughts and views to the crowd.

Video Seminars are also somewhat the same however the participation of the people might be increased by using innovative ways and techniques to make them respond to the views of the presenter. These techniques include the use of polls, feedbacks, queries and other such ways. These are tailor made to keep the crowd interested while meeting your own goals. Today, more and more teaching institutes and other firms are using video seminars to attract large crowd.

Online surveys can also be used for improving the level of participation. Participants need to have a microphone and the servers used must allow VoIP, only then they can question the presenter. However, even this limitation can be eliminated by allowing the questions in the written from through the use of appropriate software and software upgrades.

Video seminars are very essential in building up your email list. They help improve the participation of people with an increasing interest in your organization and its activities. You may offer the participants an opportunity to subscribe to the recent activities of your organization by offering them additional benefits like free counseling sessions to first few registrants etc. This also improves the marketing and publicity of your organization.

In a nutshell, an effective and successful webinar is the key to explode your email list and increase the name, value and profits of your organization. This can be made sure by following some simple steps for effective publicity campaigning and running of the webinars that are discussed in some of the other chapters. You must also avoid some of the commonly made and so called silly mistakes to improve the quality of your webinar to make an impact on both your email list and bank account.

Chapter 6: Preparing for your Webinar

As with any other seminar or meeting, effective planning and an equally effective execution is the key. Some of the key points that must be kept in mind while preparing for your webinar are:

- You must prepare an effective presentation which is sure to work as per the plans.

- Practice the presentation well one day in advance before the day of webinar.

- Check all the systems, equipment and internet connection well before the start and take necessary actions to ensure the smooth running of the webinar.

- You must also keep back options available with you, in case your primary systems fail, you must not be left in the middle of nowhere. Technical faults and technical glitches are uncompromising and reduce the quality of the webinar tremendously.

- If you are using one of the online servers, which are more commonly used since the dedicated servers are very costly, you must make sure that you turn on and check all your systems at least 30 minutes before the start of the session or the webinar.

- You must also make sure to log in to your server account or area around 15 minutes before the start of the webinar and greet the incoming users with welcome messages.

- The webinar software must be sent to all the participants or uploaded on the site well in advance to avoid the last minute rush and make the whole process smooth and simple.

- Try and keep the presentation and the entire present simple and to the point, as the audience on the internet is too vulnerable to drift even while attending the webinar. Internet offers unlimited prospects and opportunities and can move away the crowd within seconds if they feel disinterested.

- Webinars must also be publicized effectively using all the right means including an email to all the prospective participants.

- Participants must be emailed and made aware of the webinar well in advance so as to improve the possibility of word of mouth publicity and also take into account the delay in checking the mails by the participants.

- All the registered participants must also be emailed in advance reminding them of the webinar to being conducted. Everyone is busy and people tend to forget, hence reminder mails are necessary.

Chapter 7: How to Profit from Webinars

Internet has changed our lives rapidly and is itself changing exponentially day by day. Internet Marketing has proven itself to be the best business in the current climate thereby producing some of the best profits in the market. There is a possibility of earning while you do anything on the internet; all this requires is a clever mind and the right approach. Webinars are also not away from the making profits.

Generally webinars are not used for making money, but they offer great prospects and can be a source of revenue while helping you achieve your goals at the same time. A number of organizations use them as a source of income or at least a source of revenue to reimburse for the amount invested in setting up the webinar.

- An indirect way of generating revenues is just like generating revenues from a website. It is done by posting advertisements through google ads or travian, which is a more humiliating way for some to earn revenues. It can easily compensate for the amount of money you spent in setting up the entire system.

- A more direct way of earning profits from webinars is through marketing and publicizing the firm or the organization.

    o When catering to a more general public, one can use this method of promoting the organization which is a proven technique for generating and improving revenues.

    o The step before marketing and publicizing is to analyze and research about the prospective participants and clients. Catering to their needs during the webinar is important for achieving best results.

    o It also requires the organization to improve the number of participants, which involves an even more effective publicity of the webinars, rest others follow. To generate viable profits, a good strategy followed by a better implementation is required.

Build your email lists with the help of webinars

Webinars can be a great tool for building responsive email lists. They help you to stand apart from your competition. They are popular ways in which you can enter into a new market.

The good news is that people who have attended webinars know the effort that goes into creating them and hence, they generally appreciate all the hard work that goes behind a well done presentation. Also remember how you like it when a marketer actually over-delivers on value. You can follow this tactic to keep people hooked up.

You can create a simple opt in page that promotes your webinar. Along with this, also have a lead capture page. You can promote your webinar by ensuring that there is a lead capture form embedded in every post you make. This can normally be at the end of your post.

Create a simple script that works at encouraging your readers and visitors to 'tell a friend' about the webinar. It is extremely simple. If they are interested in the specific topic of your webinar, they will be sure to have friends, relatives, colleagues etc who will be interested in the same topic.

Another good way of getting responsive email lists is to incentivize. Always give a free gift. The word 'free gifts' does wonders, however small the gift may be. You can get a lot of people to spread the word by promising and then delivering the free gift.

You can add your own personal touches to your webinar to make sure you get in more people. You can design a welcome letter to thank and make each and every one of your sign ups feel really special. You can also create auto responder emails that can answer common new sign ups queries. This can help you build loyalty and also lead to more people signing up due to word of mouth review.

The way the trend goes today, people love to join in on webinars and learn about new stuff. The most vital thing to take care of here is to pick up a really relevant and hot topic that can connect to the people who are your main target and build a webinar around that topic. If you can zero in on the right topic, once people register for the webinar, they will definitely tell everyone around them about it and in this way you will definitely have a lot more sign ups and those would be people who are actually interested in the product/service that you are offering.

You can also record your webinars and post them online so that your audience or their references can view them whenever needed. Include in an option of promotion of the webinar on other social media channels so that your audiences can help promote your brand and thus also generate new leads.

Promoting your webinars on popular social networking sites like facebook, twitter etc can also help create buzz around it. It will give them a glimpse of what they can actually gain in terms of value if they join you. This will definitely add on to your list.

Except from monetary profits, building your email lists is also important in order to affect your bank account positively and indirectly. Building your email list starts by effective marketing of your organization and its events. Have a large mailing list is not as important as having a responsive mailing list even if it is not as large.

 You may offer special benefits and opportunities to some of your participants to further affect the number and quality of people in your list. Have regular updates, information and related query solving sessions to improve the participation and interaction with the people. Marketing and publicity is the key to building an effective and large email list and also increase your monetary profits.

Chapter 8: Do Webinars Improve Communication

The communication during the seminars needs to both ways, from the presenter sharing his thoughts and views and from the participants questioning his thoughts and providing suggestions. However, this is generally not the case as some of the people sitting in the crowd are simply not interested, some lose track of the conversation or presentation while others are more introverts and subdued and generally do not speak from the fear of the crowd.

There are different thoughts and views persisting when it comes to the level of communication during the webinars.

Some feel that the level of communication falls down during the webinars as:

- The people are more in passive mode while sitting on the internet in front of their PCs.
- There is a high probability of wandering away of the people even during the webinar. To quote it this way, the presenters are usually boring and cannot attract the attention of the crowd for long enough.
- During seminars in seminar halls, it is hard for someone to get up and walk away from the seminar for the fear of offending someone, which is simply not the case with webinars.
- Webinars offer more freedom to the participants as well, thus letting them take their own will without the fear of offending anyone.

On the other hand, there are people who believe that webinars offer the best mode of communication, as:

- They let the presenter and the participant to communicate clearly and effectively.
- The communication between the two is personal and public at the same thus improving the quality of communication. It also reduces the possibility of misunderstanding or understanding the questions or thoughts differently as is generally felt with the seminars in seminar halls.
- It also provides the introverts and the subdued kind of people to speak up as they do not have the face the crowd, thus improving the level to communication even further.

Webinars help you boost your email list and you must provide them certain features and opportunities to let the people communicate and participate before and after the webinar as well thus improving the chances of an effective level of communication during the webinar as well. They must be allowed to ask questions, doubts and queries from the presenter and may also be allowed to discuss among themselves on forums or email threads thus improving the participation and communication of people.

Chapter 9: How Successful are Webinars as a Training Tool?

Webinars are just like some of the other training tools like seminars, presentations and lectures. They are equally effective and even more at times when it comes to training students.

- They have an obvious advantage of attracting more crowd especially the youngsters, due to the removal of the need to move to the place of the seminar.

- Some also believe that they also improve the level and amount of communication, thereby making to advantageous over the other types of training tools.

- It is quite obvious that webinars for the physical presence of the presenter, but most of the time it is not that essential as well given the required tools and equipment are present with both the parties.

- The presenter can thus teach and train step by step to the participants and can even be stopped and questioned in between unlike some of those video tutorials that are offered and prove to be usually ineffective.

- Webinars also let the presenter dedicate more time for the participants, some of which was earlier wasted in travelling.

- Online doubt sessions may also follow the webinar at odd times without causing much trouble to anyone.

- Trainees also don't need to visit the actual site of presentation which saves them a lot of trouble and makes learning easy and fun for them.

Thus, it can be said that webinars improve the quality of presentation and seminars and hence are very successful as a training tool.

All this makes sure that you keep on improving as an organization thus building your email list and having maximum income. Effectiveness of a training program also depends on the number of participants and the amount of interaction between them. Thus, your email list forms an important factor as well in determining the success of a webinar on certain occasions.

Chapter 10: Your Webinar Agenda/Setting Goals

Webinar goals must be set forth well before the day of the webinar and must be mailed to each and every member or participant. The agenda must be able to provide a clear idea of what the webinar will be about in small and varied steps. The idea is to make the participants aware of the idea that needs to be discussed and the chronological sequence of the same.

The goals of the webinar must be clear, precise and concise and must be able to deliver the idea of the webinar in the best possible way. They are made to set the track for the webinar and stay in tune for timely and effective completion of the whole process.

The webinar agenda must be sent to all the members of the email lists and not only the registrants to develop an interest among them for future participation. Your agenda and goals of the webinar must be clearly stated in the email and must also be reinstated in the reminder mails.

Chapter 11: How to Increase Attendance

Although, webinars are an effective mode of communicating with a large number of people at the same time, it still needs a decent amount of effort to improve the attendance of the webinar. Improving the attendance starts with an effective publicity of the event. The event needs to be:

- Publicized through various media like social networking sites, emails and other such modes. Such publicity develops the interest of the crowd in the event and increases the chances of a large turn up. It must also be done well in advance of the webinar to let the news spread and get to more and more people. Word to mouth publicity which is considered as the best mode of publicity also needs some time to settle in and generate the interest of the crowd.

- Crowd can also be attracted by offering them attractive and exciting opportunities to participate and win during the webinar.

- The time chosen for the webinar must also be appropriate to ensure a large turn up and try and build consensus to decide the time of the webinar if possible. It is a very important factor and can increase or decrease the number of participants by a large amount. For most of the attendees, time is an important constraint due to which they opt for a webinar and hence it needs to be carefully selected to encourage them to participate.

- The quality of presenter or a lecturer is also an important factor in deciding the turn out in a webinar. A lecturer with effective communication skills is bound to have a large social background. Such a lecturer must be preferred over the others as he would keep them interested and make them come back each time.

- Marketing and publicity of the event in an area with less physical reach but considerable internet penetration can also lead to an increase in the number of participants. As the people in such area are not able to participate due geographic limitations so they are more excited about any such event that would let them participate. Their participation

not only increases the number of participants but also the number of really interested participants.

- If the webinar is being conducted by an organization for its employees then the participation of all its employees must be ensured. Employees from the lowermost level to the chairman and CEO of the company must be invited to the webinar. All the ideas must be discussed as more the minds, more the ideas and more the profit. The inclusion of lower level employees not only increases the turn up and profit but also improves the bonding of its employees. A better network and understanding is developed among its employees thus making the workplace more desirable and hence increasing the profits of the company, though indirectly.

Chapter 12: Actually Hosting a Webinar

If you are hosting a webinar for the first time then you might require several steps and guidelines that may be followed in that very order to make sure a successful webinar is hosted.

Step by step guidelines for effective hosting and success of a webinar:

- The first step in hosting a webinar is to plan. Plan for the subject or basic motive of a webinar and create an outline of the basic points that need to be covered during the webinar. Choose a speaker who has the experience of conducting seminars and the ability to keep the crowd with himself on the same level. He must have the ability to retain people without letting them think about anything else even for a minute.

- Once the speaker is decided, the complete presentation, lecture or training program must be developed on the predefined outline according to his convenience. Speaker has an important role to play in deciding the details of the predefined outline and may even require just some major points which can be kept in mind while the whole webinar is crafted around it. The process is more or less similar to organizing a seminar, up to this point.

- This is followed by registering by payment with one of the online servers to conduct the webinar.

- An effective software must be purchased or may even be developed. The software may be developed in house or can even be outsourced to some of the other firms that develop the same as per your needs and requirements.

- Once the software is developed, it must be uploaded on the website from where the participants could download the same, date and time are fixed and the publicity of the webinar is started.

- On the day of the webinar, before the start of the session, the equipment must be checked, analyzed and corrected (if required).

- Turn on the equipment and get ready for the webinar an hour before the session. One must log in with the server at least 15 minutes before the start to avoid any kind of hassle.

- The participants may be greeted by welcome messages before the start of the session and a thanking note at the end.

- They may even be asked to fill up a feedback form to improve the quality of the webinar conducted.

A few additions might be induced in between to improve the suitability or requirement, but it remains largely the same.

Chapter 13: The Best Servers for Hosting Webinars

Before registering for the webinar one must decide if he needs to host live webinars that are available to the participants in real time or webinars that are recorded and uploaded on the server for easy 24X7 access of the members.

A larger number of websites offer recorded webinar option and is usually not preferred by the presenters as it make webinar dull, boring and also reduces the participation of the people. It makes it hard for the presenters, as with the lack of communication or response from the other side it is really difficult to keep up the spirit and passion.

Some of the best servers that offer the service of hosting webinars include:

- Gotowebinar: which is currently the most popular and most widely used. It offers the most reliable and efficient service and has received the maximum positive feedbacks in regard to up time. It also offers the option of recording the webinar for those who did not attend the same for their later use.

- Instant Teleseminar is also currently up in the market of webinar hosting service. They offer a 1 day trial service which can be tried and tested before the final selection. This service provider has also received a lot of positive feedbacks.

Voice text, Free conference call, Instant conference are some of the other webinar hosting service providers that offer very good and reliable service. Just like any other service there are a number of other webinar hosting service providers as well and decision finally rests on your suitability.

Chapter 14: How can Webinar Software Help You?

A number of recognized and unrecognized softwares are available in the market to help you conduct your webinar with a lot more ease and efficiency. Most of these programs are affordable and easily achievable without any hassles. Almost all these programs offer everything that you need and a lot more. Toying with these softwares for sometime will make you realize that these offer you a lot more than you expected and probably a lot more than you even need. Some of these help you develop a successful webinar from the very first step to the last.

As an example the software might include registration plans which help with the registration process and reducing the need of some of the other softwares for the purpose. It may even include the option of recording the webinar which can help the participants, in case they missed the webinar or need to look at it over again. They even include email templates for publicity, marketing, registration, confirmation, greeting and biding goodbye, thus making not only the webinar but your complete organization successful in its true spirit. Toll free options for conference calls are also included in some of the softwares. Practice sessions are some other important inclusions that help you to conduct a successful webinar. Other options that are available include the delivery of the webinar and branding.

Softwares are made to cover several aspects and needs that need to be catered generally during the webinars. However, there may be some specific needs and conditions that need to be implemented into the webinar. In such cases, the software may be tailor made catering to your needs and requirements. Such softwares may be made in house if the resources are available otherwise outsourcing is always an option.

Some of the features that webinar software may offer or a feature that may be innovatively and cleverly designed to attract the crowd and may be essential for determining the success of the event. They could very well help in building your email list and providing you an effective source of publicity and marketing. Some of the softwares also let you manage your email list and in an effective manner by dividing them as per demographics or other criteria.

Chapter 15: Types of Webinar Software Available

There are various types of webinar softwares available in the market that fulfill your various needs. However, there are a few things that one needs to keep in mind while choosing the software. It must include desktop sharing as during webinar sometimes it becomes inevitable for the participants to share their desktops. For large organizations this is the foremost requirement as it lets the members to connect effectively and communicate with a lot more ease. This service also allows the presenter to offer control of his laptop to other members temporarily. It must also include application integration as it needs to integrate easily and efficiently with some of the most popular messaging and email applications. This makes the presentation or lecture more communicative and turns it into a meeting.

Servicing availability is also an important factor to keep in mind while looking for a software. You must make sure that your service provider offers service everywhere and every time, after all that is why we are using the webinar. Rate is a factor everyone will keep in mind, but still one must make sure that the conferencing software is affordable, worth spending and makes you money used intelligibly. Audio and video support must be present, as though all the softwares provide video support, quality audio support might lack in some of them. Quality audio support is essential to making your webinar successful. As the software needs to be used by a number of people with varying skills and talent, it must be easy to use so that everyone can use it easily and effectively. It must be easy to install as well for similar reason and hence must be adequately chosen. Thus, it can be said that conferencing software forms an important part of the webinar and hence must be appropriately chosen from various types of softwares available.

Some of the best webinar software available in the market include Mikogo's webinar software, Evergreen Business System, Adobe Connect, Communique Conferencing, DimDim, Premier Global Services (PGi) and Infinity Conference Call.

Chapter 16: How to Run a Successful Webinar

The success of a webinar depends on how well it is market and publicized to a large extent.

- It must be marketed and publicized through various media like social networking sites, emails and other such modes. Such publicity develops the interest of the crowd in the event and increases the chances of a large turn up.

- It must also be done well in advance of the webinar to let the news spread and get to more and more people. Word to mouth publicity which is considered as the best mode of publicity also needs some time to settle in and generate the interest of the crowd.

- The quality of presenter or a lecturer is also an important factor in deciding the turn out in a webinar. A lecturer with effective communication skills is bound to have a large social background. Such a lecturer must be preferred over the others as he would keep them interested and make them come back each time. He must have the ability to keep them interested in what is going on in front of them. For this, he needs to be smart, intelligent and humorous at the same time. Handling people is a skill in itself and such presenters must be selected who ace in this field.

- Crowd can also be attracted by offering them attractive and exciting opportunities to participate and win during the webinar.

- The time chosen for the webinar must also be appropriate to ensure a large turn up and try and build consensus to decide the time of the webinar if possible. It is a very important factor and can increase or decrease the number of participants by a large amount. For most of the attendees, time is an important constraint due to which they opt for a webinar and hence it needs to be carefully selected to encourage them to participate.

Chapter 17: How to Create a Winning Webinar

If you are wondering what it takes to create a winning webinar, then the answer to your question is planning and strategy. Planning and strategizing form the initial steps and they must be performed effectively with rigor and zeal. One must take informed decisions and informed plans must be developed to suit the needs and requirement of all the involved members.

- Plan for the subject or basic motive of a webinar and create an outline of the basic points that need to be covered during the webinar. Planning and strategy goes into each step and walks hand in hand with the whole process. Planning is followed by effective execution of these plans which is the key for the success of a webinar.

- The complete presentation, lecture or training program must be developed as per the predefined outline according to his convenience. Speaker has an important role to play in deciding the details of the predefined outline and may even require just some major points which can be kept in mind while the whole webinar is crafted around it.

- The conferencing software used may be developed in house or can even be outsourced to some of the other firms that develop the same as per your needs and requirements.

- Once the software is developed, it must be uploaded on the website from where the participants could download the same, date and time are fixed and the publicity of the webinar is started. Apart from fulfilling your needs it must have some other basic functionalities and usability checks.

- On the day of the webinar, before the start of the session, the equipment must be checked, analyzed and corrected (if required). Turn on the equipment and get ready for the webinar an hour before the session.

- One must log in with the server at least 15 minutes before the start to avoid any kind of hassle. The participants may be greeted by welcome messages before the start of the session and a thanking note at the end. They may even be asked to fill up a feedback form to improve the quality of the webinar conducted.

- Backup equipment must be kept in place so that if anything falls, it can be replaced at the earliest without much loss.

Chapter 18: Webinar Mistakes and their Avoidance

"Once a customer is lost, he is lost forever" and he even carries a negative impression of the organization which can responsible for defaming your organization. There are certain mistakes that must never be made while conducting webinars to improve the rate of success of the webinars and keep on building your email lists. Some of the commonly made mistakes and the ways to avoid them are:

- *The Presenter*: Most of the organizations, especially the ones who are conducting the webinar for the first time, choose a presenter that they normally use for conducting seminars. They may also choose a presenter who has a lot of knowledge and experience to share with the audience. However, this is not enough as the presenter needs to be interesting and entertaining at the same time. The presenter must be attractive, have a sense of humor and must be able to gel with the people very quickly and nicely to keep them bonded to what is going on.

- *Reminder*: People are very busy and often forget things that need to be done, especially those things that do not require travelling. Though the absence of travelling is an advantage of webinars, but it can make them forget the day on which it is being conducted. So, participants must be reminded a day or two before the webinar so that they can arrange time and are available for the webinar.

- *Title*: The title of the meeting or the webinar must be interesting, as boring title drives people away from the occasion.

- *Participants*: Organizations often make the mistake of showing the same presentation to everyone. Although the base or root of the presentation remains more or less the same, final presentation needs to be as per the needs and requirements of the participants. After the registration, the demographics and various other prospects of the participants must be checked and final changes in the presentation or schedules must be made accordingly.

- *Need to Change*: Every client or customer has certain needs and the presentations. Same webinar usually does not work for all the clients and must be updated regularly and according to the needs of the clients and customers.

- *Lack of equipment*: Proper equipment must be used and the content of the conference must be carefully designed, as lack of these distract and irritate the participants. The webinar may tried and tested before the actual day or time of the session to make sure everything is in place and working effectively.

Chapter 19: Marketing Your Virtual Event

Although, webinars are an effective mode of communicating with a large number of people at the same time, it still needs a decent amount of effort to improve the attendance of the webinar. Improving the attendance starts with an effective publicity of the event.

- The event needs to be marketed through various media like social networking sites, emails and other such modes. Such marketing develops the interest of the crowd in the event and increases the chances of a large turn up.

- It must also be done well in advance of the webinar to let the news spread and get to more and more people. Word to mouth publicity and promotion which is considered as the best marketing strategy also needs some time to settle in and generate the interest of the crowd.

- Marketing and publicity of the event in an area with less physical reach but considerable internet penetration can also lead to an increase in the number of participants. As the people in such area are not able to participate due geographic limitations so they are more excited about any such event that would help them participate. They are also high spirited about such efforts and offer hands on publicity for the firm. Their participation not only increases the number of participants but also the number of interested participants.

- The quality of presenter or a lecturer is also an important factor in deciding the turn out in a webinar. A lecturer with effective communication skills is bound to have a large social background. Such a lecturer must be preferred over the others as he would keep them interested and make them come back each time.

- Crowd can also be attracted by offering them attractive and exciting opportunities to participate and win during the webinar.

- The time chosen for the webinar must also be appropriate to ensure a large turn up and try and build consensus to decide the time of the webinar if possible. It is a very important factor and can increase or decrease the number of participants by a large amount. For most of the attendees, time is an important constraint due to which they opt for a webinar and hence it needs to be carefully selected to encourage them to participate.

You must market the webinar sessions effectively to your email lists and also to the new subscribers. Present participants and their participation is equally important as is the inclusion of new ones. An effective marketing is the key to the success of a webinar and hence it must be done with equal amount of determination, dedication and diligence. This is the factor that also decides the future prospects of your company and the possibility and amount of future participation.

Conclusion

By the very facts stated above, it can be concluded that webinars are effective modes of communication which save both on time and money. But, it necessitates an effective publicity campaign of the event whilst maintaining the 'quality' level of the webinar by keeping some key points in mind. It is also clear that it is harder to keep the audience at the same level, so it also requires an effective orator to keep them bonded with the session and thus your marketing message. If such basic points are considered while organizing a webinar, then it is assured to be a very successful event.

Such a successful event is the key driver for any organization which may be calculated by ever increasing email lists and incomes. Effective participation of people not only requires the exploitation of present participants but also the participation of new entrants. One must also focus on building their email lists by offering them great features and opportunities to ensure a large crowd and their effective participation.