

WEBINARS 101



Eight tips for hosting a successful webinar.

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Webinars can increase clicks, boost social media engagement, and generate more leads for your brand or practice if you leverage the technology correctly. Make sure that your next webinar shines by following these eight tips.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT HOSTING PLATFORM

A webinar or webcast is a highly interactive event conducted on the web, where virtual attendees are kept engaged and entertained. There are many webinar platforms available for hosting. For example, you may consider using AnyMeeting.com or ClickMeeting.com.

BUILD YOUR AUDIENCE

It takes some effort to ensure that a sizeable number of people attend the webinar. You need more than just promotional emails. You need to have follow-ups to ensure that somewhat-curious attendees are transformed into a loyal audience. Remember: this is a very desirable audience. Most people attending webinars have more-than-average curiosity levels about the topic or theme and genuinely want information.

DON'T BAIT AND SWITCH

Securing registrations is not easy, and you cannot be too aggressive about pushing someone toward it. The best way is to provide factual information about what the webinar will include and what value the attendees can expect to receive from it.

SAVE THE DATES

Maximize attendance by planning all webinars in advance and sharing the schedule with your desired audience. It is a good idea to use a webinar calendar. Clients can download it and set reminders. A webinar calendar should mention the type of webinar, the theme or subject, and the possible takeaways along with special or invited participants or industry veterans, if applicable. You should distribute the webinar calendar link for easy, hassle-free downloads. A webinar calendar (or schedule) can be added as a page on your website or created in the form of a banner on Facebook or other social media. Here is an example: lca.org/main/learning/knowledge-center/webinar-calendar

GET ATTENDEES IN ON THE ACTION

Questions and answers drive the session toward its ultimate goal of sales and website clicks. The host should field

the questions in a non-condescending manner. All participants should feel that they are valued and that their opinions are being heard.

Giving the hosted event a workshop-like feel rather than a classroom environment also boosts engagement. Use some “hands-on” activities like instant polling for the attendees. During these activities, you can subtly suggest and push the idea of your product or service. This might mean using basic online tools for screen-sharing or trusted video and audio setups. Make sure these work flawlessly and are integrated smartly into the web session.

How do you know if these strategies are working? If the webinar shows too many withdrawals or closures during the event, it did not make the required impact.

SELECT ENTICING TOPICS

If your marketing strategy is not all about immediate gains, educational sessions can be effective. Provide guidance about how to perform an at-home procedure or how to use a product or service, and present it in a compact and professional way. This approach will increase customer loyalty. When potential clients realize that a brand is not always selling something, they are more likely to trust the messenger. You can use pre-recorded tutorials to make production easier.

You might also want to invest some time in customer-acclimatization webinars. These short webinars help first-time users get more familiar with your services or products and any updated features.

SWEETEN THE POT

Another way of driving up the engagement at a webinar is to offer free downloadable resources. Don't share these important materials too early, as attendees may abandon ship the minute they receive the promised resources.

SAY “THANKS” AND ASK FOR FEEDBACK

Without feedback, a webinar serves little purpose. Make a point to acknowledge the attendees and thank them repeatedly for their time. Humility and gratitude, offline or online, always strengthen relationships! ■

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