

optics.org media information 2021

# optics.org Guide to Webinars

the business of photonics  
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# Why host a webinar?

## Webinars let you get directly to your buyer

Without the ability to engage with manufactures directly, buyers are struggling to get their technical questions answered and find the right products for their application. With so much data out there buyers often revert to what or who they know rather than looking at what's really available to them. According to recent studies B2B customers are significantly more emotionally connected to their vendors than consumers are to B2C brands.

So how can you ensure the balance is tipped in your favour? Drown out the noise and make direct contact with a personal connection to potential buyers. Webinars provide the space businesses need to personalise their business and show audiences they're engaged, enthused and listening.

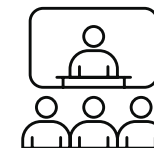
## Webinars nurture high quality engagement

Online media is often measured by the number of ad clicks, pageviews or downloads. However, webinars deliver direct interactive content and audience engagement that is essential in a world that cannot meet face to face. The average viewing time for a webinar is nearly 10x longer than the average time spent on a company web page.

Additionally, the interactive capabilities of a webinar let you engage, discuss and share knowledge in real time. This type of deeper engagement will successfully convert prospects into customers and your customers into key accounts.

## Webinars generate valuable data as well as leads

Webinars help sales and marketing managers raise awareness of the company, generate leads, develop prospects, promote product ranges/applications and maintain customer relationships. They build trust, whilst also providing an insight into customer applications, growth areas and potential product enhancements for the future.



### 1. Set your objectives

Good webinars will help to generate revenue and align to specific marketing goals. What do you want to get out of your webinar? Don't set too many objectives, you can't do everything in one webinar. Maybe you'll need to run a series of webinars to cover all product lines, technologies or applications. Keep your objectives SMART (Simple, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely).

**Hosting regular webinars**  
 Provides ongoing support and emphasises knowledge leadership/expertise

**Develop prospects**  
 Engage and demonstrate. Show you've listened to your prospects then deliver interactive content that provides solutions to a customers needs



**Brand awareness and reputation**  
 Webinars will enforce and instil a reputation of quality and trust building a bond with potential buyers and your existing customer base

## 2. What's the focus of your webinar?

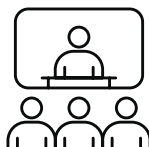
Once your objectives are set it's time to think about the focus of your webinar and how best to present it. Don't try to cover everything in one webinar, choose a topic that is focused and aligns to your objectives. If your webinar is focused around a particular product application or technology the more likely you'll be to meet your goals.

Be specific, but, more importantly, you want it to appeal to your audience. Talk to product managers and your sales departments what are their customers telling them? Look at your web traffic are there any key word searches that are standing out?

A Webinar might also be the perfect opportunity to team up with a partner company or expert in industry. Co-hosting shares the responsibilities provides a unique and rich level of content for the audience and offers additional information that might increase sign up registrations. Both will benefit from the additional exposure.

## 3. Timing

As we all know time is precious and it's often the case that the people you need to provide your webinar content are often the people in highest demand within the company. Getting them to commit to delivering content and then to also present the content and engage with an audience might take some time, so don't commit to hosting something until you know that all deadlines have been agreed and there is a commitment to deliver content on time.



### Types of webinar content

| Objective                                | Type                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Brand Awareness                          | Thought Leadership/Panel discussion.<br>Expert Interview<br>General Over view of technologies |
| Develop Prospects                        | "How to" series<br>Virtual workshops<br>Ask the expert/Q&A                                    |
| Improve close rates                      | Product demos<br>Customer success stories                                                     |
| Increase customer retention and adoption | Product tutorials/updates<br>Virtual customer conference                                      |

### If you want to create a successful webinar you'll need to ensure you:

|                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| assign roles                                     | Who's pulling the content together, who's presenting, moderating, marketing your event?                                                                           |
| have good quality content                        | What's interesting about it?                                                                                                                                      |
| promote it                                       | This doesn't mean just promoting it on your own website or to your own email database. If you want results then you'll need to invest in some targeted promotion. |
| have the software/hardware to deliver a webinar  | What platform will you use? Does everyone have a webcam/mic/broadband that is up to the task?                                                                     |
| have the ability to follow up on potential leads | If not then it's time and money wasted.                                                                                                                           |

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

| Content Creation                                                                                                                                                                             | Promotion                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Marketing Operations                                                                                                                                       | Event Execution                                                                                                      | Follow-Up                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose webinar topic</li> <li>Find expert panelists</li> <li>Design slides</li> <li>Gather/create relevant handouts and follow-up material</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create email invitations</li> <li>Draft social promotional posts</li> <li>Engage on social channels during and after the webinar</li> <li>Write promotional and recap blog posts</li> <li>Build website banners</li> <li>Buy paid advertising</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create landing pages</li> <li>Send invitations and reminders</li> <li>Integrate marketing automation/CRM</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present/moderate</li> <li>Launch polls</li> <li>Respond to Q&amp;A</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Score leads</li> <li>Send follow-up communication</li> <li>Measure success</li> </ul> |

## 5. Create a timeline

Don't over commit to too many webinars or you'll run yourself into the ground. On the other hand too few and you won't build up a dedicated following or develop your skills as a webinar provider. The minimum should be about 1 per 3 months. The average timescale per webinar is between 6 - 8 weeks from inception to completion. Once you have established your team and your roles you'll be able to speed up the process.

### Webinar Planning Schedule

| Weeks to go 8                                                                                                                                                              | Weeks to go 6                                                                                                                                                       | Weeks to go 4                                                                                                                                                   | Weeks to go 2                                                                                                                                           | Weeks to go 1                                                                                                                             | Webinar day!                                                                                                                                                                                              | Post Webinar                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify team</li> <li>Pick a topic</li> <li>Draft a focus/presentation opportunity</li> <li>Identify potential partners</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirm partner participants</li> <li>Confirm webinar date</li> <li>Create landing page and promotional materials</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set up your webinar in your chosen webinar platform</li> <li>Start promotions and begin crafting presentation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check registrations and optimise your promos</li> <li>Review content, build webinar polls and surveys</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise content</li> <li>Do dress rehearsal</li> <li>Keep promoting up to the big day!</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start your webinar early in the "waiting room" to do last minute checks</li> <li>Start broadcast</li> <li>Record</li> <li>Encourage audience engagement</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow up with all registrants</li> <li>Distribute recording, evaluate performance</li> <li>Make sure registrants are in appropriate nurture tracks</li> </ul> |

## 6. Rehearsal

Here's a simple check list to make sure you have everything you need for your rehearsal.

- Make sure panelists and organizers have their join link.
- Send out a final copy of the slides to participants.
- Have all webinar speakers test their audio setup.
- Make sure webinar organizers know how to start the webinar, pass presenter controls and moderate questions.
- Get presenters comfortable muting and unmuting, controlling slides and passing presenter roles.
- Prepare for the curve ball, plan for the unexpected! You want to create a backup plan whenever possible.
- Print the presentation. If for some reason you can't see it on your screen, you can wing it with a printed version of the slideshow.
- Write down the phone number to rejoin. You can continue to contribute to the webinar over the phone; just make sure the phone number is written somewhere other than your computer.
- Have a backup presenter. Practice screen sharing and keyboard/mouse control and make sure someone can take over the presentation if something goes wrong.
- Make another panelist an organizer. Take some pressure off the organizer and make sure the webinar can continue even if the main organizer goes offline.

## Things to remember

| Strategize                                                                                                              | Plan ahead                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Promotion tricks that work                                                                                                                                                              | Engage your audience                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Measure success                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Record your live webinar!                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Set webinar objectives</li> <li>● Focus on topic, one audience type</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Your webinar planning schedule should start at least eight weeks prior to the event</li> <li>● Don't forget the dress rehearsal! This is what makes a live event run smoothly</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Promote on Tuesdays, mornings and one week prior to the event</li> <li>● Email is king and makes up more than half of registrations</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Get your audience's attention with a compelling webinar title</li> <li>● Keep their attention with great design</li> <li>● The first 24 to 48 hours after a webinar is a crucial time to nurture your attendees</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Common webinar KPIs are registrations, attendance rate and attendee engagement score</li> <li>● Tie webinar success to overall marketing goals including leads generated, CRM database development and sales closed</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● You can use the video for countless other content and marketing pieces</li> </ul> |

