

SIETAR USA Session presentation: Sue Shinomiya, April 15, 2010

Webinar: Friend or Foe?

Engaging and connecting through web-based learning in an Intercultural World

Session outline:

- Define: Identify challenges, pitfalls of webinars – what are our shared goals?
- Play: Participate in a 3-D same room “un-webinar”
- Watch (and participate): Observe a demo webinar using Dimdim
- Discuss: Trade examples of webinar techniques
- Take away: Brainstorm best practices for effective and engaging webinars

From our discussion:

Challenges:

- Lack of experience delivering webinars
- How do I keep the audience engaged?
- Interruptions by un-muted participants
- Missing non-verbal communication elements
- Participants not giving full attention, multi-tasking
- Technical issues that prevent getting everyone started on time
- Can't gauge if everyone understands
- Fear of mangling the technology
- Presentation might be boring if I'm not “there”

Webinar Best Practices:

- Use the interactive tools!
- Script out the presentation and practice it – always have your examples ready
- Check in with the participants (pace check, emoticon check, etc.)
- “Cold calling”, meaning calling on attendees by name – always give them a little warning and expect to repeat the question
- Photos of the presenters at the beginning (and maybe at the end too!)
- Graphics: photos, illustrations, diagrams throughout
- Having a co-presenter to have a variety of voices
- Including a “producer” to help facilitate, capture comments, handle noise and technical issues
- Sessions should be about 90 minutes between breaks. Hard to watch a screen for more than 3 hours on one day
- Use breakout sessions to have smaller group or pair discussions
- Think of it as a mini-performance: You get to be the actor, the director and the stage manager

Tools for interactive webinars:

1. Voice / muting / dial-in / call back / regular phone
2. Participant list: Call on people by name. Find out who is “there”

3. Chat: Public / private / Give information / Use for brainstorming / asking additional questions – many platforms can save chat to be used for write up later on
4. Private chat: to find out if someone is having trouble (technical, questions, etc.) / to pass notes in class
5. Participant Panel: designates presenter / panel / participant list. May show excess noise,
6. Participant panel toolbar: some platforms allow for feedback next to your name on the participant list. X, checkmark, question mark, etc. Check for emoticons, which are also useful.
7. Raised hand: One of my favorite tools. Can be used for asking questions, getting in, attendance, attention, polling, agreement, fun
8. Pop quizzes, multiple choice
9. Your own voice! Variation in tone is critical.
10. Greetings, humor, charm, excitement, good/challenging questions, intensity, and all the other stuff we normally use capture and hold people's attention so that we can connect with them.

On –Slide/screen tools:

11. WebEx has a useful pointer tool – the “arrow” has the participant's name on it, so you can call on people by name
12. On screen annotations: webinar leader can enable or disable participants from drawing, writing and otherwise doing graffiti directly on the slide.
13. On screen text, shapes, freehand, highlighter
14. Lines and arrows
15. Color changes
16. Erase functions are different on all platforms. Must be careful to instruct if participants have an “erase all annotations” function.
17. Whiteboard
18. Polling function
19. Your slides: Graphics, photos, color and layout can all add to interactivensess
20. Slide animation is very important. Have movement on the screen!
21. Break out rooms (not my favorite)
22. Video (not recommended, except perhaps for the initial introduction, and very small groups. Videos are not of highest quality, can't really maintain eye contact which creates awkwardness, have to look /dress professional, whatever is behind me has to look professional)

Webinar Platforms:

Note that every web platform has its good points and limitations. Get to know your platform (play around on it) for a least an hour beforehand so you can map out how to maximize its features to interact effectively. Often different pricing structures indicate feature levels and customer support:

- WebEx (Sue used this platform in the webinar demo – commonly used by corporations)
- GoToMeeting (GotoPresentation / GoToWebinar)

- Adobe Connect
- Meeting 1 (Associated with Adobe Connect)
- Live Meeting
- Dimdim (free, but limited features)
- WizIQ
- NetSpoke
- Interwise (May be an earlier version of one of the above)

(Excerpt from the Blogosphere)

Webinar Presentation Tips for Nonprofits and Other Folks

Posted by Britt Bravo, Thursday, October 23, 2008

1. Write the script, then create the PowerPoint. Check out Seth Godin's post **Really Bad Powerpoint**, Guy Kawasaki's the **10/20/30 Rule of PowerPoint**, and Presentation Zen's **What is good PowerPoint Design?** for ideas.
2. Run a practice webinar to work out any technical glitches.
3. Arrive early so you can welcome folks. Your first slide should let people know that the meeting will be starting shortly.
4. Review guidelines, like how people can participate (i.e. chat, raise hands), and how to mute phones.
5. Build rapport by posting your photo while you introduce yourself. If it is a small group, encourage people to make short introductions.
6. Get everyone's attention in the beginning: tell a story, provide a statistic, read a quote, or show a shocking image.
7. Provide a clear outline of everything you are going to cover, and what your learning objectives are.
8. Keep the session interactive by providing places for people to ask and answer questions throughout the presentation whether by virtually raising their hands, chatting online, or having a discussion over the phone.
9. If you know them, use people's names, and include them in examples when appropriate.
10. Share information in short segments.
11. Speak slowly and clearly. Pause frequently to allow people time to absorb the information.
12. Leave plenty of time for questions at the end.