"The 5 P's of a Successful Webinar":
5 Best Practices for Webinar Marketing

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Marketing Your Business Successfully with Webinars

Have you considered adding Webinars (Internet-based seminars) to your marketing strategy? If so, you are not alone. In ever-increasing numbers (up 68% since 2011), companies of all sizes in many industries are viewing Webinars as cost-effective marketing tools for reaching their target market and generating sales opportunities.

If your company needs to educate your market to create demand, then a Webinar could be a very effective part of your company's marketing mix.

Is a Webinar right for our target market?

If your target market is any of the following, a Webinar could be the perfect venue:

- Geographically dispersed
- New for your organization
- A niche market that your competitors are not targeting
- A market that most of your competitors are targeting, but are not educating via the Internet
- Decision makers in this market typically do not have time/prefer not to attend in-person events
- Decision makers are Internet-savvy, prefer to research online before making buying decisions

Where do we start?

Once you've decided that a Webinar is right for educating your target market, the next step is putting together the Webinar. However, there are some common pitfalls many businesses face due to inexperience with Webinars, including:

1. Choosing an interesting topic and creating content
2. Choosing engaging presenters
3. Promoting the event adequately to achieve desired attendance
4. Technical difficulties with the presentation (most can be prevented with practice)
5. Planning for adequate follow-up after the event

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The Five "P's" of a Successful Webinar

In our experience of working with dozens of companies over the years in putting together Webinars, we have identified five key elements (we call them "The 5 P's") that are critical to Webinar success. They include:

1. **Preparation**
2. **Promotion**
3. **Presentation**
4. **Practice**
5. **Post-Webinar Follow-up**

Let's take a brief look into how each of the above is critical to your company's Webinar marketing success.

1. Preparation

Preparing for a Webinar requires a significant investment of time and energy, and should start <u>at least 4-6 weeks before</u> the scheduled "live" event.

The first step is **choosing a topic** that will capture the attention of your target audience and falls within your area of expertise. Think how you can provide a unique insight or angle on the material that will intrigue your audience enough to register. If you can pick a theme that will allow you to develop a series of Webinars, even better!

Some tips for picking a topic:

- Use Google to find your topic by searching with key words and viewing search counts (ex: Use topics like "How First Time Home Buyers Can Take Advantage of the XX Real Estate Market" instead of "How Mortgages Work")
- Look at what competitors' Websites are using for key words and compare in www.spyfu.com to get ideas

Once you've determined the concept for the Webinar, the next step is determining the **format** of the presentation. A typical format includes 40-45 minutes of presentation by a primary speaker, followed by 10-15 minutes of Q&A conducted by a moderator. However, you can mix things up a bit by trying some of the following alternative formats:

- Use more than one presenter (from the same or different companies)
- Have customers "guest star" to share their testimonials and lend credibility to your company as the experts
- Conduct a Web-based roundtable discussion with a panel of experts.
- Think about what other company you can partner with to deliver a joint presentation. By teaming together, you can pool resources to develop and promote the Webinar <u>and</u> increase the "pull" of attendees from each of your respective networks. We *highly* recommend our clients look for a Webinar partner to increase effectiveness.

The last step is **choosing a date and time** that works for all parties involved. The majority of Webinars take place on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays from 9am-4pm, with the most common times centering around lunchtime (11am-1pm).

Key Elements of Preparation:
- Concept / Theme
- Audience
- Format
- Presenters
- Date/Time

2. Promotion

Without an audience, your carefully prepared Webinar content is useless. **Active promotion** is critical to building an audience large enough to justify the time and effort required to put on a Webinar.

Promotion can be done via multiple channels, including:
- Email campaigns to your opt-in database
- Social Media, blogging, etc.
- Banner ads/Pay-per-click
- SEO/Organic search traffic to your Website
- Telemarketing
- Personal distribution at networking events

A combination of some or all of the above is the most effective strategy in driving attendees to your Webinar. Let's take a closer look at each of the tactics above:

Email: Send promotional emails to your in-house contact database. Opt-in email lists are critical these days. The first promotion should begin <u>3 weeks before</u> the event, with <u>at least 2 more</u> subsequent touch-points. Your emails should be visually interesting, give enough information on the topic to generate interest, and compelling enough for the recipient to register. Make the registration landing page as simple as possible. Just ask for the basics: name, company name and email. Ask a question or two if you want to learn more about your target audience, but keep them brief and optional. If you are partnering with another company for the presentation, be sure they are inviting their database via email as well.

Telemarketing: Track your email invitations carefully; if contacts are clicking to visit your registration page, but are not yet registered, give them a call! See if you can register them for the session right there on the phone. Some of our clients have seen Webinar registrations increase by 25% or more by using this follow-up strategy.

Social media: Get your online communities involved by promoting your Webinar prominently in your LinkedIn status and groups, on your company LinkedIn and/or Facebook page, on Twitter, and on your Website/blog.

Advertising: Purchase banner ads and pay-per-click ads that you can aim at your target demographic market and focus on keywords unique to your Webinar topic. We have found LinkedIn Ads and Facebook Ads to be particularly effective.

Key Elements of Promotion:
- Promote early and often
- Target list building
- Email template and registration landing page design
- Social media posts and updates
- Use multiple channels to increase effectiveness

3. Presentation

When it comes to your actual presentation for the Webinar event, **content is king**. The content should be informative, valuable and educational to your audience, NOT a heavy sales push. (You, of course, should be promoting your company's products or services in the course of the presentation, but in a subtle manner.) Use statistics and external

data to back up your opinions and consider having a customer or other third party validate you as a subject matter expert.

Another good practice is to keep the presentation as **interactive** as possible by using poll questions, Q&A sessions, multiple presenters (or at least a presenter and a moderator), and using visually interesting slides. Develop a **script** that clearly outlines all presenters' parts and when the slides will change.

(*Pro Tip*: Don't try to present **and** moderate your own Webinar, especially if you are new to Webinars. We act as moderator for all of our clients presenting Webinars so they can focus on the presentation. If you are a solopreneur, ask a trusted friend to run the show while you are presenting.)

Key Elements of Presentation:

- Content and Slide Show Presentation
- Preparing a Script
- Poll Questions
- "Canned" Q& A Questions (to help get discussion going, "just in case")

4. Practice

As with most things in life, there is no substitute for **practice** when it comes to delivering a professional Webinar. Practice sessions allow all presenters to become comfortable with the technical side of presenting as well as the presentation itself. It's dangerous to assume that you can just "wing it" on the day of the event. The more practiced you are, the better you are able to handle the inevitable glitches that will happen.

We recommend at least 2 practice sessions with all presenters and moderator in attendance.

Key Elements of Practice:
- Technical overview
- Scripting of presentation
- Presentation agenda and flow
- Changing presenters
- Review tone, speed, timing of each presenter

5. Post-Webinar Follow-up

More than any of the other steps above, this step will ultimately determine the ROI you receive from putting on a Webinar event. You have educated your audience on the problems, demonstrated some compelling solutions, and now they consider you an expert. How can you convert this temporarily captive audience into real sales opportunities?

Using a **strong call to action** toward the end of the presentation, you can encourage your audience to interact with you beyond the event. Consider offering a report, assessment, free trial, or another take-away that is valuable to the audience and will offer another opportunity for contact. Be sure to follow-up with all attendees (as well as registered non-attendees) immediately to begin a dialogue and move the sales process forward another step.

Key Elements of Post-Webinar Follow-up:
- Call to Action: Free Report/Assessment/Take-Away
- Attendance reports
- Follow-up email(s)
- Follow-up calls

SUMMARY

Webinars can be a time-consuming process, but also can deliver enormous return on investment for the business-to-business services professional. Making sure to follow the 5 best practices detailed above—including Preparation, Promotion, Presentation, Practice, and Post-Webinar Follow-up—your business can successfully use Webinars to generate sales opportunities.

Want Help In Implementing These 5 Essentials?

Based on the experience of putting together dozens of Webinars for our clients, REV Demand has developed "**Ready to Go Webinars**" to make the Webinar process as simple as possible. By following these five Webinar best practices, combined with our experience and technical know-how, we ensure Webinar success for our clients.

Avoid the pitfalls of a "DIY Webinar" and have your Webinar become a repeatable marketing success for your business. REV Demand offers two "Ready-to-Go Webinar" packages for helping you get started with Webinars:

Webinar Marketing Guide $895

As your Marketing Guide, we will conduct you along the path to Webinar success, providing you with confidence that your Webinar adheres to best practices. The Webinar Marketing Guide package includes the following services for one Webinar:

- Presentation content brainstorming
- Webinar best practices consulting
- Promotional and follow-up strategy consulting
- 1-hour technical training session for GoToWebinar
- Presentation review and practice session (up to 2 hours)

Webinar Marketing Sherpa $1,595

As your Webinar Marketing Sherpa, we will do the heavy lifting to ensure your Webinar's success. We can essentially produce a complete Webinar for you to use in your marketing arsenal, with minimal time commitment on your part.

Keep in mind that **a typical Webinar can take 20-30 hours** to prepare, promote, practice, present, and follow-up—and will likely take more time if you are just getting started with Webinars.

The Webinar Marketing Sherpa package includes the following services (along with estimated time required) for one Webinar:

- Presentation content review (4-6 hours)
    - REV Demand will review and edit your existing PowerPoint slide show for correctness, clarity and effectiveness using presentation best practices *(if presentation does not yet exist, we can work with your team to develop the slide show for an additional fee)*
    - Determine who will be the best presenter(s) for the material
    - Write script for presentation based on presenter notes
    - Determine "call to action" for end of presentation
    - Design poll questions and Q&A prepared questions based on content

- Promotional strategy consulting (2 hours)
    - Defining your Target Audience
    - Building your Audience
    - Determining the marketing media mix to promote Webinar (email/social media/phone calls/PPC ads, etc.)

- Promotional campaign development and delivery (6 hours)
    - Email template design and content (3 email templates)
    - Social media post content (2 per SM channel)
    - Landing/registration page design and content

- Practice sessions (2 hours)
    - Two (2) one-hour practice sessions to review presentation delivery, flow, and timing
    - Practice changing presenters, launching polls, interaction with audience
    - Address any technical concerns or issues

- Webinar Participation (1.5 hours)
    - Emcee (Moderator) services for your Webinar (or Moderator training)
    - Recording of Webinar

- Post-Webinar follow-up activities (2 hours)
    - Prepare attendee and non-attendee reports
    - Follow-up email campaign development and delivery (2 templates)
    - Post Webinar recording to your Website (or other location TBD)

Also included:

   - Technical training for Webinar platform (typically, GoToWebinar)
   - Project Management services for your Webinar
   - *Telemarketing services for pre- and post-Webinar prospecting activities (optional, not included in pricing above)*

ABOUT REV DEMAND

Atlanta-based REV Demand provides lead generation and business development consulting services to B2B (business-to-business) services professionals.   REV's services include both strategic and tactical elements of lead generation and revenue creation. REV Demand has also developed a **"Ready-to-Go Webinar Kit"** to help companies get started with Webinars. For more details, please visit http://revdemand.com/services/ready-to-go-webinars/.