

The Definitive Webinar Marketing eGuide

A Quantum Leap Marketing eGuide

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The Tale of Two Big Webinars

Consider the following stories about two big Webinars that helped propel their companies to great success.

A Small Technology Company Grows Sales 70% with the Help of a Single Webinar

Nearing the end of their year, a small technology company with a limited marketing budget wanted to make a big impact on their database and lead flow for the following year.

So they set out to hold the event of the year in their market.

They decided on a topic most likely to be a must-see Webinar, recruited an outside speaker, and found 5 co-sponsors to help promote the Webinar (who paid a fee to participate and mutually benefit).

The results were astonishing. Over 2,000 people registered, and about half attended. The event was well received and included a "commercial" for the host firm to all the attendees at the end of the event.

The host company positioned itself as a leader in the market, over a thousand new names were added to the sales database, and sales increased 70% in the next 12 months.

**They walked away from the experience convinced that
"Webinars can help drive the growth of our business."**

A Services Webinar That Helped Increase Sales by 22%

A small services company wanted to launch one of its core services into a new target market.

They had a small budget but were able to recruit a well-known speaker to talk about a topic of high importance to their target market. In addition, they were able to invite the speaker's contact list along with their own opt-in email list.

By combining the two lists, a compelling topic and a known speaker, they achieved a highly successful event. Eighty-four prospects registered and 61 people attended or watched the archived Webinar. And, because of a well-planned lead conversion strategy, two proposals were generated within 48 hours of the event.

**The success of this Webinar fueled an increase in overall
fees of 22% over the next 12 months.**

The Definitive Webinar Marketing eGuide

In virtually any industry Webinars can successfully:

- Generate sales leads.
- Reach and influence decision makers.
- Launch a new product or service, or market an existing one to a new market.
- Position your firm in the marketplace ahead of the competition, regardless of your size.
- Up-sell or re-sell existing clients.

Webinars have leveled the playing field so that any firm can appear to be the market leader.

Step by step, this guide:

- Takes you back to basics to ground you in successful lead-generation principles.
- Helps you avoid the three biggest mistakes that can sabotage your Webinar marketing plan.
- Details the core Webinar marketing strategies for your plan.
- Outlines the benefits of leveraging OPM (Other People's Marketing) resources.
- Calls you to action with 9 easy strategies.
- Offers more resources, including a Webinar marketing plan and invitation templates in the appendices.

By following these proven guidelines, your company may also experience sales increases of as much as 70% or more in a single year, driven by big Webinars.

Two notes for the reader before we get started.

First, we have provided examples of marketing Webinars throughout the text. Webinars, and the strategies to get more registrants to your Webinars, can be used for many other objectives such as selling and training. For simplicity we chose to focus on marketing events.

Second, one of the many benefits of Webinars is their ability to be easily recorded and marketed online through email, your Web site and Web marketing. Take advantage of this potential asset for months, or even years, after the live Webinar, and your organization could generate 20% or more viewers. Here we are focusing on the promotion of live Webinars, but, obviously, most of the principles are also useful for the promotion of recorded Webinars.

Back to Basics: How to Generate Leads

Today we live in a "Permission Marketing" culture.

Buyers of products and services are more in charge of the purchasing process than ever before. They want to control what information they consume, which firms to engage, and when and how they buy products and services.

Webinars are a great way to get "permission" from potential prospects to assertively market and sell to them. They can be powerful and cost effective because they reach your prospects at their home or office, can be interactive and intimate, take advantage of digital media, and are marketed through email, online, and social media marketing.

All the great marketing and sales benefits that can be accomplished with Webinars, though, will go to waste if your firm does not generate registrants in the numbers that you want.

In short, this means being able to create "leads," and lots of them. So before we get to Webinar-specific marketing, let's first discuss best practices for lead generation.

A lead could be someone who responds to a meeting or free trial request, a white paper or report download, a free newsletter subscription offer, or an event invitation. Or, if you're lucky, a lead could call or email you for information on their own.

Generally, companies have many ways of generating leads on both a passive and active basis. Marketers or firms that are good at generating leads in general are usually good at getting a lot of attendance at their Webinars.

Here are some key aspects of lead generation which have important application for Webinars.

Successful Lead Generation Often Has Little to Do with Your Firm or Product/Service

A common saying in marketing is, "He who has the best offer, often wins."

Your free or low-cost marketing offer can attract and place your organization ahead of the competition.

The potential power of Webinars can be found in the fact that prospects will judge the merits of the event on its own terms, largely independent of the sponsoring firm or its products or services. In this way, virtually any firm can appear to be the market leader or use a Webinar to out-market larger or more established competition.

Remember to Call on the Fundamental Principles of Direct Response Marketing

Lead generation falls under the category of marketing called direct response. Simply, it is marketing which asks for a response.

"List, List, List, Headline, Offer"

There is a saying in direct response marketing that the 5 key factors contributing to the success of any direct marketing or lead generation effort are "List, List, List, Headline, Offer." You can substitute the word media for list in this saying.

This stems from the fact that you want to target potential buyers for your lead generation efforts, those who will be likely to respond to your lead generation campaign, and then follow through and buy. Generally, the more potential buyers who see your offer, the more likely you are to increase leads. And, if you can create a compelling headline (an ad for an ad) for your offer, many more will spend time investigating the benefits of responding to your offer.

For Webinars, the invitation list or media selected will always be the biggest factor in getting more registrants to your next event. And the vast majority of registrants will come from your own in-house email list or a co-sponsor's list you access for the event.

Secondly, Webinar titles and the summary of the perceived value of the event (what attendees will learn from the content) will drive those who hear about your Webinar to register.

The More You Test, the More Leads You Generate

Many marketers or marketing teams are afraid to try new things or innovate to find new ways of outperforming current or past efforts. Over time, marketing campaigns by those who are not afraid to try new things will do better than those who are reluctant to do so.

Why? Direct response marketing involves knowing the market. How do you know what marketing media, offer, or headline will work for your organization? The only way to know is to put the vote to the marketplace. In short, to take a small portion of your resources and conduct a test. Let the market decide what is most appealing.

Webinars give marketers almost unlimited opportunities to test different lists/media, headlines or Webinar titles, or "Offers," which in this case means the content presented at the Webinar. Take advantage of these as well as view each new Webinar as an opportunity for learning over time.

5 Simple Steps to Lead Generation Success, Regardless of the Type of Offer

A simple and effective way of building a big Webinar event or program is to act on the following 5 steps, investigated in more detail throughout this eGuide.

1. Define the topic/problem your prospects will respond to.
2. Decide on the type of offer and create that offer.
3. Create leads by executing your marketing plan for your offer.
4. Convert your offer to meetings, clients, customers or sales.
5. Repeat what works best and improve where possible.

Bigger is generally better when it comes to Webinars. Essentially, it takes the same effort and cost to deliver a Webinar with 10 attendees or 100.

The next section, therefore, will begin to reveal how you can gain more registrants and leads from your services Webinar program.

So You Want to Do a Big Webinar? Three Common Mistakes to Avoid

Webinars, one-to-many online events, can be designed to accomplish a diverse set of marketing objectives.

In order to build a successful Webinar program of big and impactful events (with a series of events and recordings) for your organization, you must first understand the most common pitfalls. They stop the average Webinar from becoming a big Webinar for your organization – one that has the size and impact that can help drive your sales and growth.

These costly errors include:

Trying to Do Too Much with Any Individual Event

Many marketers try to do too much with a single Webinar. They think by having a little something for lots of different audiences they will draw in a bigger crowd.

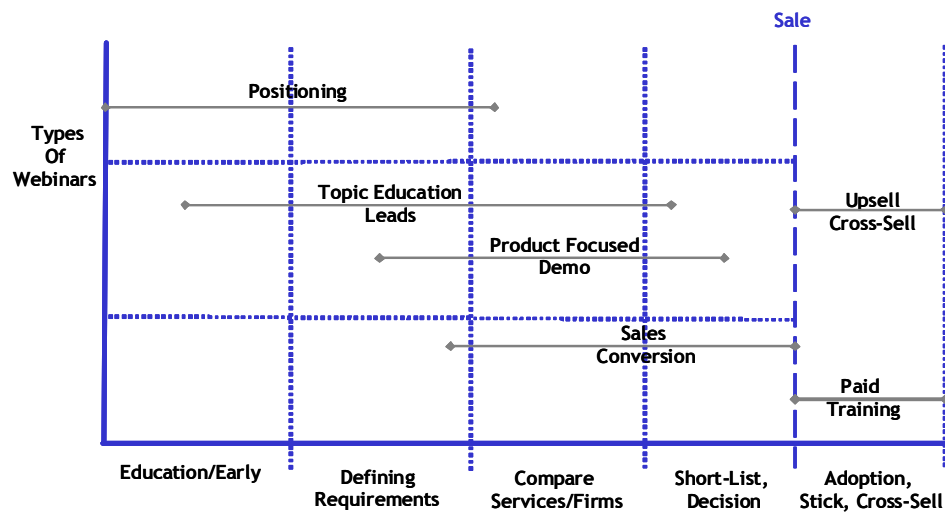
But Webinars are a classic “narrowcasting” medium. This means a relatively small (or narrow) audience is looking for content that specifically addresses their needs.

So in contrast with the way most approach Webinars, generally the more specific the objectives and the more specifically the Webinar, its marketing, and its content are designed to meet a need for that audience, the better the results and bigger the target crowd.

That said, different types of marketing Webinars can be used to match the broad objectives of the company while capturing prospects at various stages of the buying cycle and then moving them to a sale.

They include positioning or awareness Webinars, educational Webinars, sampling or demonstration Webinars, sales conversion Webinars, and post-sale Webinars.

Marketing Webinars in the Buying Process



So select your narrow set of objectives and audience and build your Webinar plan from there.

Failing to Use Your Content as a Webinar Draw

While content may not be “king” with Webinars, it is the main part of your Webinar offer. It encompasses the “what you will get” or “what you will learn” in your Webinar and the perceived credibility of the speaker(s).

Many nascent Webinar producers think fancy demonstrations, charts, or the world's best or most expensive Webinar presenter will guarantee a big crowd, even from a small promotional plan.

Just as the market will judge the effectiveness of a direct response campaign, the members of the market will also be the judge of the value and attractiveness of your content.

The sizzle of a presentation may be good, but it will generally not help you draw a crowd. Why? Because you need to get registrants before the

actual event. And, generally, an audience is asking themselves, "What is in it for me by attending this presentation?"

Therefore, when developing the content outline and speaker list for your Webinar, answer these two questions:

1. What benefits or information has this type of audience responded to in the past?
2. What are they likely to want to see now?

Having a Weak or Non-Existent Marketing Plan

While a 20% response rate to a Webinar invitation sent by email is possible, it is rare.

Yet many Webinar producers think that just because they have good content and a free Webinar, the audience will turn out in droves.

Especially in markets where there are a lot of competing messages, vendors, and Webinars, it will generally be a lot harder than you realize to get registrants for your Webinar.

How to Avoid the Common Tactical Pitfalls with a Winning Marketing Plan

A marketing plan that is well constructed and well executed will give your event the chance to be a big Webinar,

Remember, the combination of a bigger reach (number of people who see your Webinar invitation), and appeal (percentage who register) will mean a larger Webinar.

One technique direct marketers use ahead of the event is to act as if the Webinar has already run and did not achieve the desired results. This helps marketers catch and correct tactical flaws ahead of time.

Here are some usual suspects to make sure you align correctly with your mission. Use these pitfalls as a checklist to review your Webinar strategy and plans BEFORE the presentation.

1. Your Webinar topic did not draw the target market like a magnet.
2. The content of the Webinar did not offer fodder to "sell the sizzle" of the event.
3. Your invitation list was small, or there were few potential buyers on the list.
4. Your registration form/process made it hard to register.

5. The timing of the Webinar, or a weak reminder sequence, lowered attendance.

Avoid these common mistakes and see your Webinar attendance rise!

The next section will cover the critical elements of the Webinar marketing plan to help you gain more registrants and attendees from all your events.

Core Webinar Marketing Strategies for Your Plan

Key pillars in the foundation of a Webinar marketing plan include your selection of media and lists, your communications plan for those lists and media, the Webinar invitation, and getting the tactics right.

Media and List Selection

The Webinar marketing plan starts with identifying the list(s) and/or media that effectively reach your target market. This can include your own in-house and direct mail list, outside direct mail or email lists, partner/speaker/affiliate lists and external media, or Web sites.

A typical Webinar will see 90% or more of its registrants come from an opt-in email list, so the most important part of your marketing plan will be to use, rent, or access email lists likely to be responsive to your Webinar invitation.

Most importantly, the list should contain a high percentage of individuals who are potential buyers or influencers for your products or services.

Resist the temptation to use easily available media or lists when they don't match the target market for your specific Webinar. A little extra investment in list development will pay off in response and attendance.

Successful Webinar marketing plans use three common sources for registrants:

- 1. Your own in-house list.**
- 2. An opt-in email, outside speaker, or a co-sponsor list.**
- 3. A third-party rented list or external ads.**

Five vital questions to ask when developing your list or media strategy are:

1. What internal email lists are available to promote this Webinar?
2. What co-sponsor or outside speaker lists or media can be considered?
3. Where are similar Webinars or events being successfully promoted?

4. What media or lists have been responsive to your company's marketing offers in the past?
5. When evaluating a list or media: What percentage of the list/media can be considered the target audience for this Webinar? Who else is mailing/using the list? What Webinars and promotions have worked best to this list?

After selection of the media and lists, the next foundational element of the marketing plan is the communications plan.

The Webinar Communications Plan

The Webinar communications plan includes which vehicles you select to promote your Webinar, when prospects see your ads and invitations, and how you want them to register.

Select communication vehicles and the timing of the delivery of your messages to maximize the reach and impact with your chosen target list or media.

Seek to get your Webinar invitation in front of as many members of your target audience as possible working within the budget available.

Consider multiple forms of contact outside of emails such as online advertising, social media networks, telemarketing, direct communications from salespeople, or direct mail postcards. The combination of multiple media and contacts can increase your rate of success and awareness of your event.

The general rule is the majority of registrants will respond within 10 days of your Webinar. The heart of a communications plan could include an email to your in-house list 7 days before the Webinar and a reminder 2 days before.

If you have outside speakers or co-sponsors for the event, they could follow this timing as well to their own lists.

And, don't forget to promote links to the live event and recording in newsletters, social networking sites, and on your own Web site, as well as those of your speaker and partner. *Don't be surprised if you get a 20% lift in registrations with by using these simple tactics.*

Finally, many Webinar promoters spend precious little time on the registration form and process.

View the promotional process as a whole. Take the same care to create marketing copy for registration as you do for the invitation copy.

Recognize that capturing a Webinar registrant is a great way to learn more about your prospects, but that asking too many questions of your prospects may increase the number who abandon the registration form before completing it.

The best registration process offers one-click registration or one-click access to a simple registration form which can convert 50% of its traffic to registrants. Requiring two or more steps to register, or making it hard to register for the Webinar, could significantly lower your registrations.

Here are five questions to ask when developing your communications plan.

1. Ideally, when would we like our prospective attendees to receive the invitations/ads?
2. What is the optimal mix of promotional vehicles based on the list/media, budgets, and promotional timelines?
3. Have we made it easy for prospects to register for the Webinar?
4. What flexibility do we have to add an additional or "Last Chance" mailing or promotion to the schedule based on initial results?
5. Are we planning ahead to allow enough time for creative development and review cycles while still meeting the deadlines for ad placements and email drops?

After selection of the media and lists, the next foundational element of the marketing plan is the Webinar invitation.

The Invitation Email

Getting your message out through your Webinar invitation requires writing promotional copy that highlights the title, timing, speaker or speakers, and primary benefits of attending your presentation. A good invitation also calls your prospect to action with some urgency. (For the purposes of this eGuide we will discuss the invitation in terms of being an email invitation.)

When marketing and selling something intangible such as Webinar content, it is especially important to paint a vivid picture of the benefits of attending. When I was running a team of people who marketed and produced 50 Webinars a year for our company with as many as 15,000 total registrants, I would describe the email invitation as "5 Bullet Points and a Dream."

You see, many successful marketers distinguish between the "big benefit" of the Webinar (that is, how will the Webinar attendee's life be better or

different after attending) and the benefits of different parts of the Webinar experience.

The primary or “big benefit” of the Webinar is often summarized in the title of the Webinar. These secondary elements could be what they will learn, what questions will they be able to ask and get answered, what will they see or experience during the Webinar, etc.

1. Subject Line – The Headline

The prime benefit of the Webinar could also be the subject line used for the email invitation.

While one could take an entire course on headline or title writing alone, remember that the subject line of the email is critical because it is your “ad for an ad.”

2. Marketing Copy – Building Up Interest and Desire

As mentioned elsewhere in this eGuide, the purpose of the Webinar invitation is to “sell” the Webinar, and any information included should support, but not detract, from this objective.

Often, one will see much of a Webinar invitation devoted to background information on the company, speaker, or related products or services. This information often does nothing to educate the reader on the benefits of the Webinar, so it should be minimized or avoided.

One model for creating copy which gets response is to remember the AIDA formula: Attention, Interest, Desire, Action. You first get their attention with the subject/headline.

Next, create interest with the initial text of your email. This could be questions, a story or example, or a nagging problem they face.

An effective way to make sure you generate their desire is to summarize the case for your Webinar in 3 to 7 phrases, sentences, or bullet points which are almost entirely focused on benefits.

Now that your invitation has their attention and builds up interest and desire, take them to the next step.

3. The Webinar Offer and Call to Action

The description of the Webinar offer includes the title, timing, speaker or speakers, and any bonuses or extras given as a part of registering or attending the Webinar. The offer also includes whether the Webinar is free or has a cost.

Because Webinar content can be considered the promise of future benefit, including something tangible or immediate, your offer will likely only help increase the response. Tangible bonuses can include writings such as a white paper, checklist or book, a free product, small giveaway, or a small amount of consulting time.

A good invitation also calls your prospect to action with some urgency. Some common strategies are to: limit the number of virtual seats available to ensure personal interaction, articulate the downside of missing out, state that the Webinar is only being offered once this year, or mention that this invitation is a “last chance.”

For online marketing copy, call your prospects to action (urgently) by having them click on a direct link to the registration page, also known as the Web registration form.

Remember – a strong registration form will target 50%+ conversion to registrants. A weak form or cumbersome registration process will net conversion rates as low as 10% or less.

(See Appendix C for a sample e-newsletter promotion and Webinar invitation.)

Finally, many marketers spend much time debating the effectiveness of text versus HTML emails, or on the design or HTML of an invitation.

Caution: Make your layout and design decisions with the goal of getting the maximum response from the invitation. These elements are not an end in themselves, but support the best presentation of the Webinar and its benefits.

Getting the Webinar invitation right can be as simple as constructing a winning headline/title, building up desire for the event through benefits, and articulating your offer and call to action in a way that moves people to register for the Webinar.

Getting the Marketing Tactics Right – Common Questions and Answers for Better Planning

Taking care to ensure the marketing tactics are executed right is vital to maximizing registrations – so much so that it should be considered in the strategy phase of planning your Webinars.

When should you hold your event?

Simply, when your target market is most likely available. For business audiences this is usually mid-week, mid-day. For an audience such as individuals buying financial services this may be early evening, at 7:00 PM.

How long should your marketing event be?

Generally, free marketing Webinars will last between 30 and 60 minutes. Since the average Webinar attendee will tend to join the Webinar about 5 minutes after the start time, plan your content, including questions and answers, for either 25 or 55 minutes.

Should you always record the live Webinar?

Yes. And, make sure your Webinar recording is available to all registrants 12 to 24 hours after the event.

Also, consider promoting the availability of the recording to your entire invitation list the week after the live Webinar to take advantage of awareness built up before the live event.

What is the best reminder sequence to turn registrants to attendees?

Use an auto-responder email which sends a confirmation email at the time of registration, and at a minimum 24 and 3 hours before the Webinar.

(See Appendix B for a sample Webinar marketing plan.)

Now, in these tough times it can be challenging to do many big Webinars without going beyond your own marketing resources. Next, we will discuss OPM, Other People's Marketing resources.

Leveraging OPM: Other People's Marketing Resources

Some of the greatest successes with Webinars and marketing events that I have seen in almost 20 years of direct marketing is when a new event is introduced to a responsive, trusting list.

It goes something like this: One firm has a proven event which drives leads and sales and partners with a complementary firm with a customer and prospect list matching the first firm's ideal customer profile. The event is promoted to the list and magic happens.

For example, informational marketer Tony Robbins promoted marketing guru Jay Abraham's seminars to his seminar attendee list, creating many thousands of leads and around a thousand customers.

A financial products company promoted a marketing services company to its list of financial advisors and 18% registered, totaling many hundreds of registrants with 7 becoming customers within 48 hours of the Webinar.

What are some effective strategies for working with others to get more registrants from your existing marketing resources?

Add OPM Lists to Your Webinar Marketing Plan

"A buyer is a buyer is a buyer."
Dan Kennedy, Marketing Guru

One of the surest ways to recruit buyers to your Webinar is to recruit a friendly partner for your Webinar who has a relationship with many of your likely customers.

Whether your firm partners with a media firm, recruits a co-sponsor for the Webinar, or builds a formal affiliate network, variations on this theme are the surest way to go beyond your in-house email list for more registrants.

Gain Wider Reach with Outside Speakers and Their Lists

Outside speakers can bring many gifts to your Webinar party. They can lend content and credibility that help draw in your audience. They can also offer their lists to help promote the Webinar.

Don't be bashful about asking your outside speaker to promote the Webinar to their list.

For example, in many marketing Webinars, the outside speaker can lead the presentation with an overview of issues or best practices, and then your speaker follows with specific tactics to solve a problem and introduces the product or service.

Call In Marketing Dollars or Resources from Firms with an Interest in Seeing Your Company and Webinar Succeed

Marketing resources come in many forms. They can include time, people, money and ideas around a Webinar.

If you are a distributor of another's products, they may offer an expert speaker on the products' usage, money to help promote the event, or lists of potential customers.

Understand what core competencies, resources, and strengths your company brings to a Webinar and partner with others to help fill in the gaps.

Offer It in Writing – Provide a Report, White Paper, or Checklist as a Bonus for Registering for Your Webinar or Webinar Recording

You may be able to call on high perceived value, low-cost bonuses provided by third-parties.

Bundling a bonus with Webinar registration or attendance can offer a minor lift to your numbers.

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For example, a free consultation or evaluation from a services provider or a free trial of a software product would both be potential bonuses to consider for your Webinar.

Here are five ways of leveraging OPM as part of your Webinar program.

1. Email or post to “friendly” lists.
2. Use outside speakers, and access their lists.
3. Get marketing dollars or resources from resellers, distributors, complementary sellers, wholesalers, etc.
4. Use a third-party firm's report, article, or checklist to bump up perceived value, and registrations.
5. Provide a free offer of high perceived value from a third-party firm.

Take these steps to leverage OPM, Other People's Marketing resources, and watch your registrants and results soar!

The next section will highlight key recommendations to put the ideas shared in this eGuide into practice. These tips will help you get more leads and sales from your next services Webinar.

Your Action Guide: 9 Easy Strategies for More Attendance at All Your Webinars

After thousands of our own and client events, we have boiled down the Webinar Marketing Plan for Success into 9 core strategies.

Webinar Marketing Plan for Success		
Wide Promotional Plan	Specific Audience, Objectives	Marketing Highlights Benefits
In-house, Friendly Lists	Title, Content Draw Target	Effective Registration Page
Multiple Touches	Compelling Webinar Invitation	Auto Reminder Sequence

Any one of these 9 methods may boost Webinar registration and attendance; combining many of these techniques can multiply attendance by as much as 2- to 10-fold. Review the list and pick a few to try. You may see immediate results.

1. Define Your Specific Audience and Objectives for the Webinar

Generally, the narrower the objectives for a Webinar, the more likely it is to succeed.

Those businesses that are able to be disciplined about matching their Webinar programs to their objectives and focus on topics and marketing plans that will get the attention of their target audience (potential buyers for their offerings) will greatly increase the odds of success.

2. Create a Topic That Will Serve as a Draw to Your Target Market

It is human nature that we all want to talk about what we want to talk about, not necessarily what others want to hear. ("The enough about you syndrome" is best exemplified by first-time parents who talk about nothing but Junior and his intelligent babble.)

Companies and marketing teams are often guilty of this as well. So if you want to increase Webinar attendance make sure you talk about the issues that the target market cares about, and reflect that in your audience recruitment efforts. (Think WIFM – "what is in it for me" from your prospect's point of view.) That usually means a Webinar on a top pain point or big benefit for your target audience.

The "Must-See Webinar" philosophy goes like this: Make the event educational, newsworthy, topical, and compelling where possible and support your approach with a winning topic.

Here's a list of 11 ideas for winning Webinar topics. Feel free to use this list as a springboard for your own ideas, or adapt one title for your next Webinar.

1. What You Need to Know About <Top Prospect Problem>
2. How to Take Control of <Your Environment>
3. Sneak Peek at <Insert Product Name>
4. How to Make Your <Business Activity> Up to 500% More Effective
5. 7 Secrets of Winning <Business Activities>
6. The 10 Common Mistakes Most <Prospect Job Title> Make and How to Avoid Them
7. The <Book/Report/White Paper Title> Webinar
8. The Truth about <Insert Solution Category>
9. Maximum <Top Prospect Benefit>: Practical Strategies for Results
10. New Breakthroughs in <Big Prospect Problem>
11. How to Evaluate and Choose a <Product Category>

3. Create a Compelling Webinar Invitation

A new invitation for an old or underperforming Webinar can turn an event which may be on the border of retirement into one of your best events. One way to capitalize on testing with little effort is to try out two new subject lines in your email invite, one against another to small portions of your list, then roll out the one that performs best to the entire list.

Actually, I find the best way to deliver what people want in a Webinar is to write the invitation first, trying to offer the maximum benefits to the target

audience. Then, create Webinar content that delivers on the promises made in the invitation. This method maximizes responses to your invitations. Additionally, it pushes you to deliver more value in the Webinar itself.

4. Develop a Wide Media Plan

Many Webinar promoters think of the media plan as the marketing plan. But readers of this report will know this is just one of the primary sections of the plan. Refer to the "Core Webinar Marketing Strategies for Your Plan" section above for further details.

Casting a wider net for your prospective attendees will maximize the chances of a big Webinar.

5. Enlarge Your Email List and Marketing Reach by Inviting a Bigger Population – Use Other People's Lists Where Possible

Email marketing offers a fast, cheap and effective way to reach prospects, clients or influencers. Start with your own internal email list, also known as your in-house file.

Consider a partner list of your target audience where someone respected from the partner company signs the invitation (all for free). Also, list rentals of say 5,000 to 10,000 names, especially when you negotiate for discounted rental rates for first time list renters, can often significantly add to your registrant totals with little additional effort.

6. Reach Your Core, Target Audience Multiple Times

It's simple math – inviting the same population multiple times – will increase attendance. (Obviously, avoid saturating your own list.)

7. Sharpen Your Webinar Marketing to Become More Benefits Oriented

When I was consulting with a client on seminars, we tested 5 lines of features versus 5 lines of benefits in the middle of the direct mail invitation.

Just by changing the 5 lines to be more benefit oriented we got an 18% lift in response. Review your entire invitation or audience recruitment effort and change features to benefits where possible.

8. Send Them Right to a Simple Registration Form

In your ads provide links directly to the Webinar registration form, and make sure the Webinar is the only offer on your marketing piece.

Above all, remember that sending them to your home page will drive home page traffic, not necessarily Webinar attendance.

9. Remind Registrants (with Attendee Information and Links) the Morning of the Event

Consider the use of an auto-responder, which sends a confirmation to the registrant immediately, along with one email 24 hours ahead of the event and another email 3 hours before the event. This sequence can significantly increase your attendance rate.

Optionally, you might want to deploy a reminder phone call or fax within 24 hours of the event.

If you are getting 20-25% attendance from your registration list, a day-of reminder is a must (and a small but very helpful step in your overall sales process).

Deliver on Your Big Promise for Your Event

Finally, don't forget to deliver on the "Big Promise" of your event.

Webinars often fail to achieve their objectives because they don't try to make an impact with the topic and marketing, or because the content fails to match the level of effective marketing. Those Webinars that both *make and deliver on* their "big promise" have the potential to be blockbuster events with both reach and impact, and could lead to repeat attendance at your next event.

There are many, many other ways to drive Webinar registration, attendance, and as a result, company sales. These are a few proven steps which can have immediate impact on your results. Try them for your next event and experience the difference.

Summary

More organizations than ever before are taking advantage of online marketing technologies such as Webinars. Organizations are also increasing the quantity of Webinars they hold.

Webinars are allowing marketers to reach more prospects and deliver more qualified leads to sales.

This eGuide has presented key tips, techniques, and strategies to help you get more registrants, attendees, and sales from each and every Webinar you do.

Try the best practices put forth here and reap the rewards in your own organization!

Appendix A: 21 Ways to Promote a Webinar

Here are 21 ways of promoting your Webinar, plus two bonus ideas.

You will not employ all of these methods for every event, but this list will give you a full range of options to select from for your next event.

As always, act on these ideas by testing new ones and reusing the winning campaigns and elements where possible.

Email Invitations

1. Email Invitations – In-house List – The most common way of inviting prospects to a Webinar. Make sure to link to a dedicated registration form. For many organizations, this is the primary way of drawing an audience to their Webinars.
2. Email Invitations – Rented List – Also a very common way of promoting your event. Usually costs about \$450 per thousand for verified opt-in names. The price of the rental typically includes design and mailing costs. Response rates can vary widely, from negligible to as much as 4 percent or more.
3. Emails from Executives or Salespeople – Can be used to target a small group of individuals and can be very effective at recruiting quality or decision-making names. Marketing will often create a template or mail-out on behalf of individuals in the organization.
4. Emails from Outside Speakers – Many times with joint events your speakers from outside organizations will mail to their list as well. This is a way to add to your own list. Use your compelling invitation copy to maximize response.
5. Endorsed Emails from Third-Party Organizations – Third-party organizations can be sponsors or equal partners in your Webinar. Mail to their list with your copy coming from someone in their organization whom the market knows and trusts. This email can be even more responsive than your list. A great offer to an endorsed list can be one of your most successful marketing campaigns.

Direct Mail Invitations

6. Direct Mail Invitations – Using a multi-component mailing with an invitation letter along with a response card is more typically found in live seminar marketing campaigns, but is a proven way of recruiting your audience.
7. Direct Mail Postcards – Use similar invitation copy to your email invitation and put it on a two-sided postcard. Direct mail postcards could be part of

any lead generation program, and Webinars make a great offer for this marketing vehicle.

Online Opportunities

8. Web Landing Page on Your Own Site – A great way to convert traffic on your site to Webinar registrants and leads. Small ads and listings would drive prospects to this web page which would have an excellent headline, summary features and benefits, and an easy way to register.

9. Banner Ads on Hub Media – Reach new target prospects and drive them to your web page, which aggressively sells your Webinar and asks for a registration.

10. Banner Ads on Your Own Home Page – Similar to banner ads on third-party sites, the banner can be placed on the highest traffic pages on your site and direct prospects to your web page which sells the Webinar.

11. Ads in Media e-Newsletters – Can replace or supplement your rented email program. Costs and results will probably be a lot less than rented lists. (Many newsletters will not allow stand-alone emails from advertisers.) Watch out for competitor ads being featured in the same newsletter as your ad.

12. Listings in Relevant e-Newsletters – Can be low cost or free because an e-newsletter may be looking for pertinent events and content. This is more commonly used for educational Webinars or Webinars with outside speakers.

13. Listings on Hub Web sites – Small free or paid ads can pay big dividends in lead generation in general, and Webinars could be a great offer to feature.

14. Google Ads – Webinars and Webinar archives can be promoted in your paid search ads. Test a Webinar offer versus a free report offer. This is considered most often to promote archives of educational Webinars.

15. Posting the Webinar on Social Media Tools – There are countless blogs or social media tools like Twitter where you can post your Webinar information and links.

Alternative Promotion

16. Free Standing Insert (FSIs) in Relevant Media – Free standing inserts are one of the hidden gems of marketing, and can be cheaper and more effective than either direct mail or advertising in the media itself. Consider a two-to-four sided letter in an envelope as a creative use of this medium.

17. Press Release/Free Media – Assuming your Webinar is newsworthy, or built for coverage such as a channel or product launch, you may get

mention of your Webinar in certain media. As a potential promotional outlet, consider upcoming event calendars which often promote live events.

18. Fax or Voice Broadcast to Your Own List – For most organizations, these would be considered alternative distribution methods. Typically these are used to target a better segment of your own list, such as your customers. Sometimes they are used for events where you are targeting hard-to-reach decision makers.

19. Ask Prospects or Customers to Forward Your Invitation – I've experienced Webinars where 30% of attendance came from key prospects who forwarded to a list of potential prospects. With direct mail pieces, you can get invitations passed to the right party at target organizations. Usually, it can be prompted by one sentence of encouragement in the invitation.

Telephone Promotion

20. Telemarketing – You can use your own telemarketing team or an outside firm. Typically best done in combination with other media like email or direct mail invitations. Especially effective if you are promoting a paid Webinar.

21. Sales Calls (Lead script or second option) – This can be a good opener for salespeople to use in their outbound calling, especially to relatively cool or cold lists. Also a fallback if the primary sales pitch fails to gain interest. It provides a way of getting groups of email addresses and adding them to a list.

Bonus Ideas

22. Discuss Upcoming Webinars at the Next Webinar, Trade Show or Live Seminar – Especially if you are running a series with a theme, you can discuss your upcoming Webinar in the introduction and as a reminder at the end of the event. Feel free to hand out one-page advertisements for Webinars at live events such as trade shows and live seminars.

23. Repeat Successful Vehicles – If something works, consider repeating it before the event. For example, if an email invitation pulls, send a "Last Chance" email 24 or 48 hours before the event. Also, use successful tactics for future events.

Appendix B: Sample Webinar Marketing Plan Outline

Here's a sample Webinar marketing plan. Every organization and Webinar will have a slightly different plan template and plan.

Sample Webinar Marketing Plan

The sample plan for an “Ultimate Webinar Marketing Plan” Webinar includes:

Webinar Summary and Goals:

The “Ultimate Webinar Marketing Plan” Webinar will reveal key strategies discussed in the companion eGuide with the objective of educating Webinar marketers and those responsible for marketing events on how to get more registrants, attendees, and sales at each and every event. The eGuide's author, Bob Hanson, and one of his clients, Jim Smith, of XYZ Corporation will present the strategies and a case study of two winning Webinars Jim has promoted for his company. The Webinar is co-sponsored by one of Jim's distributors, ABC Corporation, who will invite its other distributors to the event with the goal of having their other 2,000 distributors adopt these winning strategies to help increase their sales 10% this year.

Target Audience:

Business heads, marketers, and sales professionals at the 2,000 distributors for ABC Corporation throughout North America. Two of their key challenges this year are to generate more qualified sales leads and get more sales from a shrinking marketing budget.

Webinar Topic:

How to Increase Sales Now through Online Events with the Ultimate Webinar Marketing Plan on February 17, 200X at 2pm ET, 11am PT.

Webinar Outline:

1. Introduction by the Moderator (Head of Accounts at ABC Corporation,
2. Presentation of Webinars and Webinar Marketing Plans – Bob Hanson,
3. Case Studies of Success with an Effective Webinar Marketing Plan by Jim Smith, Director of Marketing by XYZ Corporation,
4. Live Questions from the Audience,
5. Closing Remarks by the Moderator

Webinar Abstract:

How to Increase Sales Now through Online Events with the Ultimate Webinar Marketing Plan, sponsored by ABC Corporation, will take place on Wednesday, February 17, 200X at 2pm ET, 11am PT. It will feature Webinar expert Bob Hanson and successful distributor Jim Smith of XYZ Corporation. Attendees will learn tips, techniques, and strategies to get more attendees to their online and marketing events and hear how XYZ Corporation increased sales 33% last year despite the recession. A Question and Answer session will be included to help get your top marketing and Webinar questions answered.

Webinar Marketing Tactics:

Two email invitations to its sales/marketing/business contacts at its distributors sent 7 and 2 days before the event, a small ad in the distributor's newsletter the month of the event, a post card to these same contacts which reaches them 7 days before the event, and giving an email and sales script to the distributor's account team.

Webinar Reminder Sequence:

The sponsor uses the Citrix® GoToWebinar® platform and its auto-reminder functionality. It selects an auto-responder on registration, a reminder 24 hours ahead of the event, and 3 hours before the event.

Post-Webinar Marketing:

The sponsor emails an announcement of the recording of the event as well as the follow-up offer 24 hours after the Webinar. It has two follow-up emails with the Offer made at the Webinar 48 and 72 hours after the Webinar. It has each of its Account Managers call all of the attendees within a week of the event to mention the offer and see other ways the distributor can help grow its channel's business.

Webinar Marketing Budget and Metrics:

The budget for the Webinar is \$5,000 including speaker, promotional fees, and Webinar delivery costs. The sponsor is hoping 10% of its distributors register for the Webinar and 50 total try a Webinar selling their products within 6 months of the event to help reach its goal of a 10% sales increase within 12 months through this channel.

Appendix C: Sample Webinar Invitation

Here's a sample Webinar invitation along with a description of the various sections commonly found in invitations. Since we find today that over 90% of Webinar registrants come from an email invitation, we have created model text marketers can use in an email newsletter, as well as text in an email. Since organizations use different formats and email blasting packages, these sample emails are in text only.

For these samples we have used a companion Webinar to this eGuide.

A Sample Webinar Ad in an Email Newsletter

More Leads and Sales from Webinars: The Ultimate Webinar Marketing Plan – Free Webinar

<<Insert Link to Registration Form>>

A Sample Webinar Invitation

Here is how an actual invitation might read including the sections most commonly found in a winning email invitation:

Subject: More Leads and Sales with Webinars

Email Body: Are you frustrated that others are able to hold big Webinars, while you struggle to get a paltry few buyers to your events?

Do you want to get more leads and registrants at your next online event?

Join Bob Hanson, partner in the Client Attraction Marketing System, and author of numerous reports and articles on online marketing, seminars, and Webinars for...

The Ultimate Webinar Marketing Plan: The 7 Step Marketing System

This 45-minute Webinar on Wednesday, February 17, 200X at 1pm ET and 10am PT will introduce you to the power of online marketing, specifically online events like Webinars and web sales meetings.

<<Insert Link to Registration Form>>

Bob's clients have created over \$1.45 billion in client sales opportunities with these strategies. He himself has generated as many as 15,000 online event registrants in a single year, which helped grow that company four-fold in 36 months.

In this fast-paced, 45-minute Webinar, sponsored by Citrix, discover:

- 5 ways you can cut marketing costs, save time, and gain clients with online meetings and events,
- 11 ways to promote your next Webinar for more registrants,
- how one company got 2,250 registrants with no marketing budget,
- the common mistakes most people make in promoting their Webinars and marketing events, and
- key steps in a successful Webinar marketing plan.

<<Insert Link to Registration Form>>

And we'll save a few minutes for your questions. All registrants will get a copy of a Webinar Marketing Plan Template and Sample Marketing Plan.

Register now by clicking below.

<<Insert Link to Registration Form>>

The Definitive Webinar Marketing eGuide

About Citrix Online

Citrix Online, a division of Citrix Systems, Inc., is a leading provider of easy-to-use, on-demand applications for Web conferencing and collaboration. Its award-winning services include GoToMeeting® Corporate, a complete collaboration solution that satisfies all Web conferencing needs ranging from large Webinars to small online meetings.

With GoToMeeting Corporate, organizations of any size can use GoToWebinar® for do-it-yourself Web events and GoToMeeting for smaller, more interactive online meetings.

For a free evaluation of GoToMeeting Corporate, please visit www.gotomeeting.com/TryIt.

About the Author

Bob Hanson is the president of lead generation and conversion consultancy Quantum Leap Marketing and creator of the Must-See Webinars™ success system. He has also published a recent guide to online lead generation, the "What's Working Now in B-to-B Lead Generation Guide: Success with New Media: Webinars and Google Ads."

To get a free chapter of the guide "How to Create an On Demand Webinar Program" or to request a no-obligation consultation on creating successful Webinars, email Bob at bhanson@qlmarketing.com, call 617-901-6886, or go to www.yourcuttingedgemarketingtips.com.

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