HOW TO ALIGN YOUR SALES TEAM WITH MARKETING WEBINARS

to generate deals and close more business

HubSpot

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Why Webinars Work

Who doesn't love a webinar? According to the Content Marketing Institute's 2016 Benchmark report, 66% of B2B marketers identify webinars as the most effective digital content tactic. Only in-person events ranked higher as an effective B2B marketing tactic.

It's easy to see why. The cost to produce and promote a webinar is significantly less than an in-person event, while providing a wealth more of information about the attendees exactly because it's a digital event. A webinar also is a re-usable content asset for continuing your lead generation efforts.

Plus, you gather far more intel on more prospects. The registration form and the data can tell you things such as how long they stayed on the webinar, and what questions they asked. Their registration also lets you track their other relevant online activity, which helps marketing and sales accurately identify where a prospect is in their buying journey — fast.

How to Use this Ebook

For a webinar to achieve maximum effectiveness, marketers should work with the sales team during the creation process and after a webinar runs. This ensures that it's delivering the most relevant and useful content to these prospects, and that Sales is well-prepared to leverage the broadcast to accelerate the sales process.

In this ebook, we'll give you detailed tactics and tools to benefit from Sales' expertise as you develop the webinar, and to create workflows and resources for Sales to use to nurture and close more business after a webinar broadcast.

We'll cover:

- Aligning the webinar's content with Sales' input on what prospects want to know and care about
- Pre and post- webinar communication plans that guide sales reps how to best use a webinar in their follow-up efforts with prospects
- Collateral content that Marketing can provide for Sales to use when following up with their prospects who attended a webinar
- How to empower sales reps to be pro-active about using upcoming webinars with their active prospects

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2. Content Preparation: It Takes a Team

The power of the webinar lies in its format. People are more willing to give you 45 minutes of their time to listen to you and ask questions in a chat pane rather than spend that same 45 minutes reading your written materials. As a result, webinars have the time to provide all the really meaty information prospects yearn for.

The audio/visual mix of a webinar provides the means to communicate the same information in different ways at the same time. That way, the webinar is effectively delivering its message to each attendee, regardless of their aural or visual learning preferences.

Sales Reps Give You the Inside Scoop

With Sales' input, your webinar can address the high priority pain points and concerns prospects have right now. Sales can also give Marketing insight into which solutions and responses are the most effective in moving a prospect further along in their buying cycle.

Having that second set of eyes go over a webinar outline will highlight any gaps the webinar isn't addressing, or correct any faulty logic in your presentation. It's easy for all of us to fall so in love with our own assumptions that we don't even realize they're assumptions anymore.

Feedback is the Breakfast of Champions

Sales reps, key customers, or external partners can all provide feedback that improves the relevancy of our webinar content for prospects. Here are key checkpoints for Sales' feedback when crafting the webinar:

- Working with Marketing to Identify where gaps in your lead gen process are. Ask, "where are prospects currently falling out of the funnel?" or, "how can this be repaired?"
- Selecting the hottest topics from your potential webinar topic list – or suggesting a topic that's not yet on it.
- Having a short (20-minute) talk with a few sales reps to get their list of top objections, concerns, and effective responses relevant to the topic.
- Asking some sales reps to review and provide feedback on the webinar outline.
- Asking other sales reps to review and provide feedback on the webinar slides and script. (Don't make them sit through an hour-long webinar. Just send them the slides and script to review.)

Don't ask the same sales reps to participate in each stage. First, you want a broad range of feedback. Second, that would take more time than any specific sales rep would likely want to give.

3. It's All About Sales

Sales reps are in a constant state of urgency. They need to have a short attention span for anything that can't directly link back to supporting their sales quotas. As a marketer, it's important for any marketing effort to plug-in seamlessly into Sales' world so they stay as efficient and effective as possible.

Webinars require a certain amount of commitment from the prospect, even if the prospect doesn't attend the live webinar (keep in mind, some people prefer to replay recorded webinars at a more convenient time for them). People who show interest in and consume a webinar (live or on demand) are demonstrating a high level of interest and as a result, are a valuable opportunity for sales.

They're also providing your company with valuable behavioral intel you can that can help aid a sales rep in a follow-up discussion.

When Marketing uses the content and proper software tools available, Sales can access a wide range of automated and ad hoc engagement tactics that can help them close more business.

Integrated Success

Want to automate the process of informing your sales team about webinar activity?

HubSpot's free CRM tool and GoToWebinar's webinar software can seamlessly integrate to pass relevant data between your marketing and sales teams.

Webinar Collateral for Your Sales Team

In this section, we're providing you with:

- Pre- and post-webinar checklists to ensure Marketing is creating supporting content that Sales can use to maximize the effectiveness of a webinar.
- Internal notifications emails that keep the Sales team in the loop as to what webinars are coming and what resources are available to enhance their follow-up engagement.
- Content we recommend to be made easily available in a central webinar depository, so both Marketing and Sales have access to the most up-to-date webinar content and collateral.

Prepping Sales for Success

Make sure that the sales team has the following pre-webinar materials before you start promoting the webinar. If the webinar ads and emails start rolling out four weeks prior to the event, you want the sales team to have these materials a week or two earlier than that.

Promotion Pro-Tip

HubSpot research has found that more than one-third of webinar registrants sign up more than a week before the webinar is scheduled.

In fact, 9% of registrants sign up as far out as three weeks!

This way they can field questions from their customers and prospects, and identify more invitees that may not be on Marketing's original email list. Keep in mind that most of the following tasks rely on you having both webinar and marketing/CRM software! Most steps you can do manually, but the software makes the process much easier.

Pre-Webinar Checklist

Two weeks before promoting the webinar, create a webinar "Cheat Sheet" that you'll send to sales. Here's what to include:

- ☐ Create a brief synopsis of the webinar for sales. In less than 500 words tell them:
  - ☐ The webinar's purpose
  - ☐ Identify the targeted persona / stage of buyer's journey
  - ☐ Outline key points delivered in the webinar
  - ☐ The CTA that will be delivered at the end of the webinar
  - ☐ The logistics
    - ☐ Date/time of broadcast
    - ☐ Name and title of host and any speakers
- ☐ Send each sales rep an accurate list of their customers and prospects to be invited.*

***Promotion Pro-Tip**

If you're a HubSpot CRM user, you can do this automatically once you've integrated your webinar campaign with GoToWebinar. That way you don't have to remember to send out lists to your reps.

Pre-Webinar Checklist (Cont'd)

Create the following emails and share them with Sales so they can quickly and easily help promote the webinar.

☐ Automated Invite Reminder: If you have marketing software, create an automated email under each sales rep's name sent to any of their customers or prospects on the invitation list who hasn't yet registered. This should go out a few days before the webinar broadcast.

☐ Manual Invite Reminders: Create multiple emails with different CTA angles asking customers or prospects to register for the webinar. Sales reps can then pick which ones to use in their one-on-one communication with prospects.

☐ Sales Rep Notification Emails: If you have marketing software, set-up automated email notices to go out to each sales rep whenever one of their customers or prospects has registered for the webinar.

☐ Webinar Reminder Emails: These should be a series of emails sent automatically at scheduled intervals for recipients who haven't yet registered. You can use your marketing automation or webinar software to send invitation emails at the 28-, 21-, 15-, 7-, 3-, and same-day marks. Especially don't overlook sending a same-day invitation to people who haven't signed up!

Post-Webinar Checklist

After the webinar concludes, there is a lot to to do in order to ensure your sales team is following up correctly with the leads involved in the campaign. We recommend executing these steps after the webinar concludes, but creating most of the assets 1-2 weeks prior to the broadcast so you're not scrambling! Here's what you'll want to create a:

☐ An automated email sent to sales reps after the webinar concludes that has links to lists of their leads that:

- Attended the entire webinar
- Attended, but left early
- Registered, but didn't attend
- Never registered.

☐ Templated emails sales can use to send to leads based on their attendance (outlined above)

☐ A lead nurture email series for sales to follow up with new leads who now qualify as SQLs after post-webinar lead scores are updated.

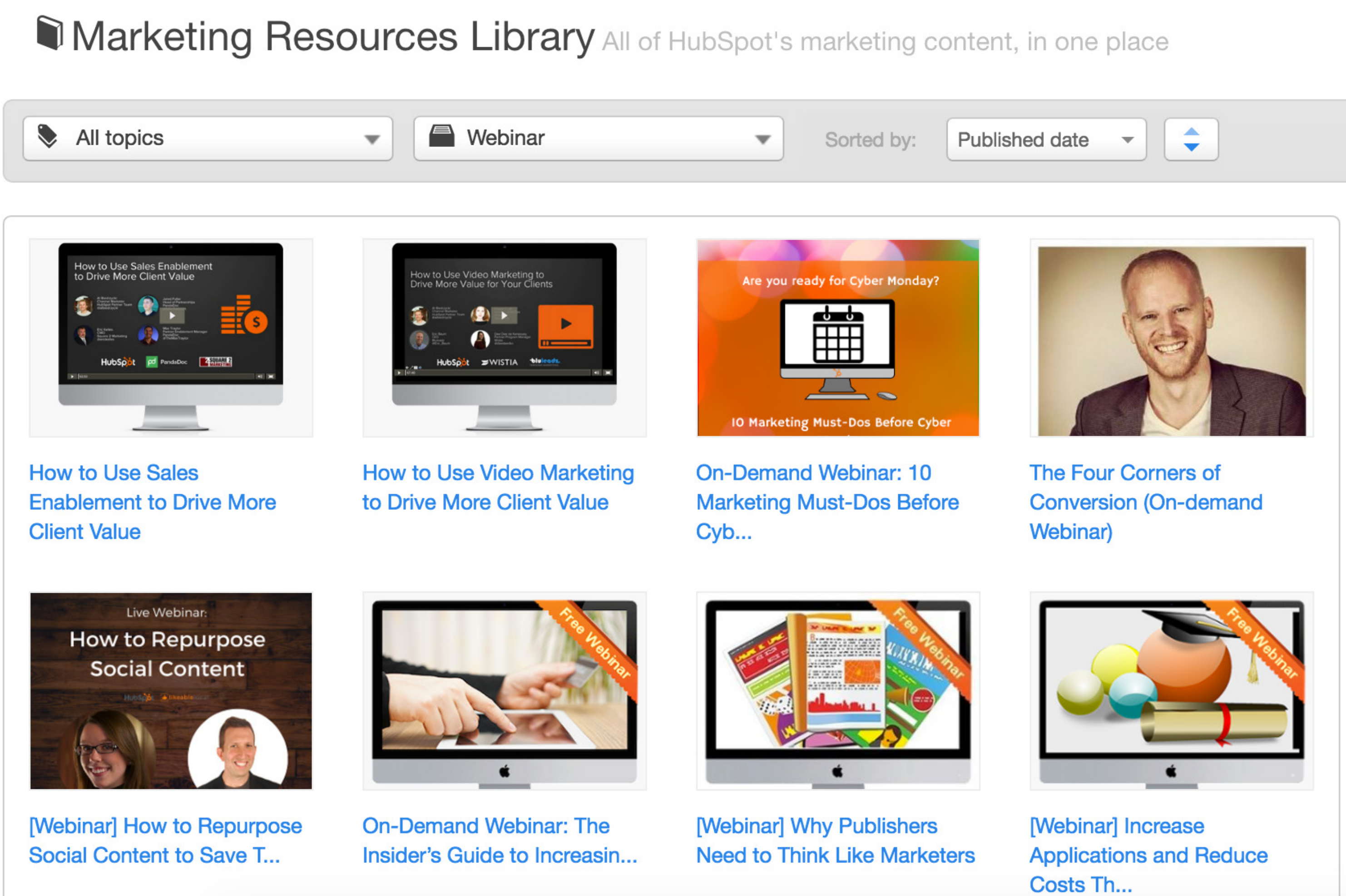
☐ A list of questions asked by attendees that you can send to specific sales reps so they can be aware of their engaged leads

Note: The email series outlined here only cover those that Marketing should create about the webinar for the sales team. These checklists don't include the other automated emails you'll want, such as mass follow-up emails to attendees and non-attendees.

4. Creating a "Webinar Central"

Your "Webinar Central" is a resource for the sales team to find all sorts of webinar-related information. It's part depository and part workflow. The depository needs to centralize all the valuable documentation and collateral around the webinars.

The workflow is the series of updates Marketing should send to the sales team so they're current with the full webinar strategy Marketing is implementing. We'll discuss each in detail in the following sections.



Webinar Central Workflow

These are the email workflows we recommend you put in place to keep the sales team current on all recent and upcoming webinars. Send the sales team:

☐ Reminder emails the day of, and the day after, a webinar broadcast.

☐ A weekly email that:

- Lists which webinars are scheduled for that week,
- Which webinars are coming in up in the next few weeks,.
- Which webinars ran the week before.

(Note: This doesn't have to be a weekly email if your webinar schedule isn't that crowded. Just make sure this email comes out on a regular schedule so the sales team learns when to expect it.)

☐ A periodic email that provides an updated cross-reference table of all your webinars showing the persona, buyer stage, and key problems/objections addressed.

(Note: You should send this out each time a new webinar is added. If you haven't run a webinar in over a month, send out the current list in an email that reminds Sales of these resources. Go ahead and solicit suggestions for new webinar topics from them as well. Sales is always full of good ideas.)

Promotion Pro-Tip

HubSpot CRM users can set these up as automated, internal email notifications.

Integrate your GoToWebinar webinar into your HubSpot CRM, so all the broadcast dates and attendee information get shared across both platforms.

Webinar Central Depository

Your Webinar Central could be a sophisticated dashboard and portal. Or it could be a well-organized file share or Trello board or Samepage. Let the volume of webinars you produce be your guide. If you only roll out one new webinar a quarter, developing a sophisticated online portal may not be the best use of resources.

However, if Marketing is consistently producing new webinars for different personas and different offerings each month, then it's probably worthwhile to invest in creating a full portal that's easy for Sales (and Marketing) to use. The depository should include:

- On Demand recordings of all webinars.
- Current broadcast schedule that includes both past and future webinars.
- All the cheat sheets created for each webinar.
- The email libraries created for each webinar.
- Library of lead nurturing webinar emails, which sales reps can select and personalize. For example, a sales rep can customize the email and send invitations to a select pool of their prospects. This way, a sales rep can host a rebroadcast of any webinar on demand, and be there to answer any questions attendees have during the webinar.
- Collection of graphic and text CTAs sales reps can drop into their communications.
- Mechanism to collect suggestions from sales reps where they can:
    - Request new webinar topics.
    - Send feedback to Marketing about webinars they've seen.
    - Share feedback about how their prospects and customers are responding to a webinar.

5. Wrapping it Up

Webinars aren't just effective marketing tools. They're also effective sales tools – if Sales has the information, content, and tools to use them to move prospects down the funnel and close deals. That translates into shorter sales processes and increased productivity out of your sales team.

Fortunately, Marketing has the tools to create this content and automate its distribution to the sales team.

Sales can also support Marketing by closing the feedback on loop on what webinar topics resonate with prospects and customers, and which topics are ripe for a webinar not yet created. Marketing can use this data from Sales to develop webinars that are even more effective in attracting the right kind of prospect.

A well-executed webinar strategy thinks beyond any one webinar. It brings Marketing and Sales together to broadcast webinars that positively impact every stage of the buyer's journey and the sales funnel. That means this Sales/Marketing alignment results in higher ROI on your company's webinar strategy and ultimately, a lower cost of customer acquisition.

PUT SOME SALES MUSCLE BEHIND YOUR WEBINAR STRATEGY.

Integrate GoToWebinar and HubSpot's CRM to help your sales team take business action with your marketing webinars.

Bring your webinar and sales world together in one, powerful, integrated system.

Gain visibility into all of a contacts' interactions with your company, pre and post webinar.

Inform your sales team of a lead's webinar attendance data so they can be better prepared to close more business.