Leveraging Your Web Conferencing Solution to Produce Webinars

White Paper

www.ConferTel.net

866-930-4500

Introduction

Conferencing solutions, whether audio or web-based, continue to prove their value as cost effective, productivity enhancing, and easy-to-use tools that achieve diverse goals within any organization. With the emergence of webinars, organizations are now able to directly profit from the use of conferencing technologies. Combining the proven effectiveness of conferencing with the revenue-generating capability of a webinar makes a powerful case for the decision to produce such an event.

The graphic element of adding web conferencing to a regular conference call has proven to greatly increase the opportunity to capture audience attention, while also providing an interactive platform that encourages feedback and audience participation.

Most organizations deploy web conferencing throughout their businesses as a means of improving productivity, cutting costs, and achieving a rapid return on investment. Realizing the true ROI of web conferencing is often a complex task that can be difficult to measure. Specific measurements, such as travel expenses, can be tracked to develop a picture of an organization's ROI, but do not show the complete value web conferencing brings. Most users see the inherent benefits to web conferencing but have difficulty equating those benefits to tangible numbers.

What is a web conference and how does it work?

Web conferencing is an Internet-based application that allows you to present PowerPoint ™ slides, share any application on your PC, annotate a white board or slide, or chat with the conference audience along with many more collaborative features. The lack of complexity in using web conferencing tools has allowed the technology use to grow at a staggering pace. Easy-to-use features allow for a short adoption cycle for any organization.

Web conferencing requires only a PC and an Internet connection, while a separate phone line is used to dial into the audio conference. The conference audience simply logs on to a website through their browser to view what the host wishes to present. The host can display a slideshow to the audience; show an application, or even poll the audience on a particular topic. Web Conferencing is a truly interactive platform that maximizes the delivery and reception of your message.

What exactly is a Webinar?

A webinar is viewed as being slightly different from what most typically consider to be a Web conference. Most Web conferences are based on several parties sharing and participating in a focused, and more private, collaborative session. Webinars seek to capture a broad audience that shares a common interest in a particular topic. For this type of presentation a registration fee may be charged. Depending on the audience size you seek, most webinars will have varying degrees of interaction and collaboration.

Webinars also often involve the use of a professional speaker presenting a topic of interest to your audience. A great deal of effort must also be put into the external marketing of the event and the management of audience participation. An online registration product is the easiest, and most cost efficient way to manage your webinar from beginning to end. A good online registration product will incorporate data management, email invitations, confirmations and reminders, and process webinar payments.

Sample Webinar ROI Calculation

From a profit standpoint, your event ROI can be easily calculated in terms of event production costs and the registration revenue you generate.

Here is a brief example of how you obtain a profit calculation for a 60-minute event:

Number of Attendees	75	
Attendance Fee	$60	
Cost of Event per Attendee	$24	
Net Revenue		**$2,400**

Selecting a Technology Provider

Your provider should offer a complete solution, not just the web conferencing technology, to ensure a fit for your organization.

If you were to compare most web conferencing products that are available today, you would see that many features are common to all. So, it is critical that you request a demonstration of a particular screen sharing tool to determine just how easy it is to use. Make sure you learn about the product's functionality not only from a host's perspective, but also from a participant's perspective. Most presenters will not want to spend time learning how to use a web conferencing tool for a single presentation therefore it may be important that your provider handle the technical aspects of the presentation.

Be sure to find out if the vendor requires contracts, set-up fees, or any other "hidden" fees. Do they charge for training? Ask questions that help you determine the level of client support you will get from a vendor and compare it to what you anticipate you will need when conducting your webinar. Client support varies greatly from vendor to vendor, so be sure to investigate just how supportive they are willing to be before, during and after your event. Does the vendor simply offer pre-conference support and training? Or, do they offer "real-time" support during the hours you would need it most? And always, always ask questions.

Many organizations have a clear picture of what they want to present but lack the technical and conferencing subject matter expertise to determine how best to deliver that message to their virtual audience. This is where selecting a vendor who can cater to your specific event is essential. By simply providing your vendor with such details as estimated audience size, level of desired interactivity, types of applications to be presented, and other general presentation information, your vendor should be able to recommend the best solution for your webinar.

Conclusion

Looking at web conferencing as more than a cost reduction tool provides the opportunity to use it as a revenue generator. Viewing web conferencing from this standpoint opens up a myriad of opportunities to reach a broad spectrum of vendors, prospects, or members, who are willing to pay a premium for the message you present.

After determining whether or not you have a compelling reason to produce a webinar and evaluating all of the vendor options available, you can begin taking the steps required to produce successful and profitable webinars.

About ConferTel

ConferTel is a leading provider of fully managed webinar services, delivering educational programming, training and lead generation webinars for corporations, associations, government agencies and non-profits. In addition, ConferTel is a software developer of IVR and web-based information services and communications solutions. Providing a range of event driven communications applications, including telephone, web and video conferencing, on demand record/replay, voice/fax broadcast, teleseminars, webinars, webcasting, online training, e-commerce, event management services, and other custom IVR and web-based applications.

ConferTel's innovative products and application development capabilities have helped thousands of clients save costs, generate income and increase productivity. We offer a consultative approach to assist you in developing the right solutions for your specific application and budget.

A Fully Managed Solution

Web-based Application - Access service from any computer with Internet access, no software to install.

Publishing Microsoft® PowerPoint®, Word, Excel and PDF Documents - No download for participants to view published files, store multiple presentations in your account for quick and easy presenting.

Multiple Presenters/Control Passing – Share presenting responsibilities with other participants.

Application and Desktop Sharing – Share an application or document with meeting participants in real time, optionally choose to share select documents and applications or entire desktop.

Online Registration - Bearing your company logo and accessible from your web site or email invitation, ConferTel will handle the event registration process.

Payment Processing - ConferTel securely processes credit card charges through our merchant account. Our per-registrant fee includes all fees associated with participant payment up to $100.

Verified Admission - Attendees are verified by a ConferTel operator to protect against unauthorized participants.

Registration Reminders - Each registrant receives reminder emails to enhance attendance.

Branded Greeting - Attendees are greeted with a pre-recorded greeting before being placed into the e-Learning seminar.

Professional Host – Each call will be handled by a courteous and professional meeting specialist who understands the importance of your e-Learning seminar.

Q&A and Polling - With interactive question and answer sessions and participant polling you can gain immediate feedback from your attendees. Polling can also be used as an attention monitor.

Recording and Archiving - Digitally record your and available to those who missed it live or for those who want to hear important content again.