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Expert recommendations and research findings

10
tips to boost your webinar

10 tips to boost your webinar. Expert recommendations and research findings

Various types of virtual events, such as webinars and online meetings, are a regular part of our lives. We value them above all for their convenience, intuitiveness, and ability to transfer knowledge regardless of the circumstances. Modern platforms make organizing and managing them increasingly easy.

If you happen to perform the role of a presenter or host, you surely know that a successful event requires, above all, good preparation and certain skills. This is especially important at the beginning of your webinar adventure.

Whether you are just starting out or already have some experience, it is worthwhile to work on your skills as a presenter continuously. No worries! Learning does not have to involve extra expenses and time.

In this guide, we present 10 effective tips that you can easily put into practice. This will make your next events even more engaging and appreciated by your audience. We also took into account the results of a survey we carried out in June 2022 among 500 participants of online events.

At the end of this guide, you will find a checklist that will help you take full control of your webinar.

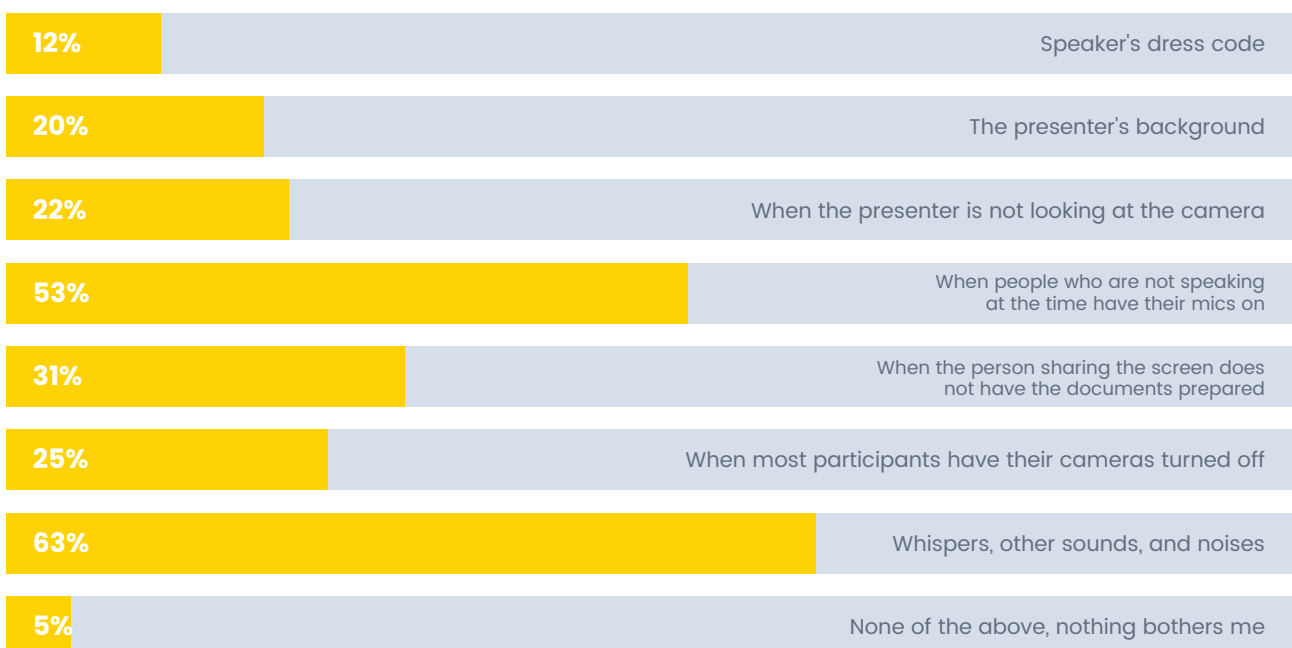Enjoy your reading!
The ClickMeeting Team

01 Get to know your attendees' perspective

Attendee satisfaction is key regardless of the type of event you're creating or the industry you're in.

So when designing your event, pay attention to their expectations and factors that make it difficult for them to participate actively. This will help you avoid mistakes and create an attractive environment from their perspective, making the learning process much easier.

We asked our study participants to indicate the three things that distract them most during online events. Pay attention to these aspects and try to eliminate them.

What particularly distracts you during online events?

12%	Speaker's dress code
20%	The presenter's background
22%	When the presenter is not looking at the camera
53%	When people who are not speaking at the time have their mics on
31%	When the person sharing the screen does not have the documents prepared
25%	When most participants have their cameras turned off
63%	Whispers, other sounds, and noises
5%	None of the above, nothing bothers me

As you can see, many potential problems can be avoided by focusing on good manners, preparation for the event, and introducing clear rules of behavior for the participants as well. But, of course, not everything can be predicted - in such situations, a bit of understanding and the ability to improvise will come in handy.

Already at the preparation stage, it is worth getting to know the target group. The more you learn about them, and the better you understand their needs, the more satisfying events you'll be able to create.

02 Familiarize yourself with the platform

A webinar and online meeting platform is simply a tool that allows you to share your knowledge and connect with your audience. And just like any other tool, you need to learn how to use it.

Nothing irritates an audience more than an unprepared presenter. This applies not only to content-related issues but also to certain technical skills.

Lack of familiarity with the platform significantly affects the reception of the event and undermines trust in the speaker. However, this can be easily overcome. Just take some time to explore the most important features and have a look at the event room.

There are plenty of resources at your disposal, such as video tutorials, knowledge base articles, and blog posts. This will help you quickly master not only the basics but also understand more advanced features.

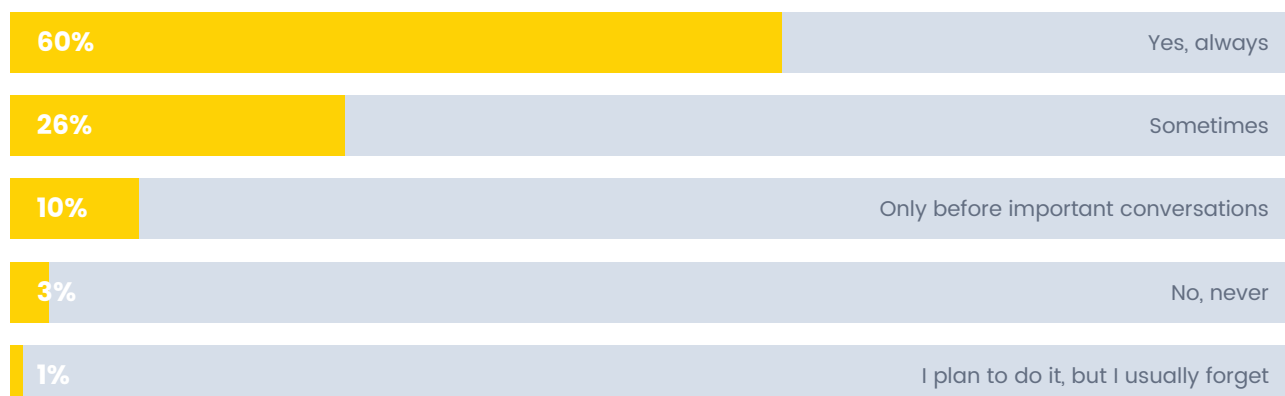# 03 Ensure audio and video quality

A huge advantage of online events is, of course, the ability to see and hear other people. Technical problems can ruin even the best-prepared webinar.

Fortunately, many of them can be avoided in a relatively simple way. You don't need to invest in professional equipment. Initially, a camera on your laptop and headphones with a microphone are enough. However, a lot depends on the way you use them. Here are some proven tips that will positively affect your audience's experience.

- **Take care of the lighting:** the light source illuminating your face should be placed behind the camera. A regular daylight window will work great in this role. You can also think about getting a ring light or just use a desk lamp that you already have.

- **Choose the right light tone:** If the room you are holding the webinar in has multiple light sources, make sure they are the same color. The standard warm yellow light used in homes will not always guarantee a good effect.

- **Sit at an appropriate distance:** During an online event, your face should be the main focus, of course. However, don't sit too close to the camera. To get the perfect shot, put your arm out in front of you - that should be the distance between you and the camera.

- **Use the AV Tester:** ClickMeeting allows you to check that your devices are working correctly before the event starts. The AV test takes a few moments but lets you know that everything is working as it should.

- **Check your camera view:** during a webinar or online meeting, you can check your camera view from time to time. This will help you make sure everything is going according to plan.

How many people check their equipment before the event starts? It turns out that most of us at least try to do it!

Do you verify that your equipment is working properly before the event begins?

60%	Yes, always
26%	Sometimes
10%	Only before important conversations
3%	No, never
1%	I plan to do it, but I usually forget

04 Prepare all the necessary files

Being adequately organized is vital for creating effective online events. Whether you are hosting a webinar or moderating your team meeting, prepare all the necessary files and materials, you intend to share some time in advance. This will save a lot of time and allow participants to focus on the content. Also, try to choose the most attractive and engaging ways of presenting the information. Modern platforms give you many possibilities, so it's worth testing them before the event and finding ways to deliver knowledge even more effectively.

According to our survey, as many as 31% of respondents find the lack of prepared materials by the presenter distracting. Especially if they are using screen sharing mode; while you're at it, pay close attention to the files you're showing to others.

With ClickMeeting, you can easily point to a specific window, so you don't have to worry about attendees gaining access to confidential documents, for example. If you're sharing an entire screen, keep your files organized - chaos, even on your hard drive, may not reflect well on your professionalism.

At the same time, it turns out that the vast majority of participants of online events prepare files before they start. However, one-fifth admit that they have had their meeting disrupted by searching for a lost file.

Do you prepare notes and files that you will need during the meeting before the event?

70%	Yes
8%	No
22%	Sometimes

05 Pay attention to what takes place before and after the event

When organizing a webinar or online meeting, we often focus only on the event itself. In the rush of responsibilities, it is easy to forget about what should precede and follow the event. In many cases, however, the ultimate success depends on these activities. A well-thought-out strategy will allow you to increase the number of attendees and build a long-term relationship with them. It is worth thinking about, first of all:

- Preparing the invitation carefully
- Sending reminder emails about the event
- Preparing an attractive waiting room
- Creating a thank you page
- Sending thank you emails and webinar recordings to attendees and registrants
- Sending follow-up emails
- Sending invitations for future events.

All these actions can be conveniently automated, saving you a lot of work and time. Most importantly: this communication simply works.

06 Take care of the content quality

Taking care of the content quality is one of the most important elements of creating an online image, but we often forget about it. This applies not only to the presentation itself or the materials demonstrated to attendees, but also to the extremely important marketing content and communication. The principle is unchangeable: fine feathers make fine birds. And the way you take care of your piece of the virtual space says a lot about your professionalism.

Make sure your emails and posts are linguistically correct and carefully formatted. Address participants in a way they expect you to. Directness online is common and desirable, but it will be better to keep a little more distance in some situations. It is also good practice to share materials with attendees (e.g.,

recordings or additional content). This will give them a pleasant surprise, build a strong expert position and enable them to learn even more effectively.

07 Interact with participants and use different modes

Many uncomfortable situations and communication problems can be avoided if you offer your participants convenient forms of contact. During webinars, you should think about:

- **Q&A session** - attendees will be able to ask their questions, but you will decide when is the best time to display them and give answers.
- **Chat moderation** - especially during big events, it is easy to lose control over the content that appears in the chat window. You can, of course, block this option, but a better solution would be to moderate the chat and authorize the comments that are displayed there.
- **Direct contact with the participant** - a good way to answer, e.g., organizational questions, is direct contact with the participant via a private chat window.
- **Allowing participants to speak** - you can also choose which users are allowed to give their opinion or ask questions. This will make the webinar more interactive but not chaotic.

Of course, the general rule for online events is simple: the more interactive and engaging they are, the higher the satisfaction of your attendees. It will also be much easier to transfer knowledge. Therefore, already at the stage of creating the event scenario, think about the tools you will use. Apart from the presentation

mode, there are many interesting solutions available. It is also worth thinking about forms of activation and relaxation, which will help to maintain focus.

08 Manage crisis situations

During an online meeting - just as during an offline event - unpredictable crisis situations can happen, which cannot be prevented. These include, for example, the sound of construction work, a dog barking, a baby crying, or noise coming from the street. Of course, they can affect attendees, presenters, or hosts. In each case, above all, good manners would prove indispensable. It would be best if you also remained calm, especially since the vast majority of participants do not take crises into account when evaluating events. However, the presenter must know how to behave professionally.

How do you respond when unexpected situations disrupt the event?

6%	I pretend nothing is happening, I don't react
70%	I smile and apologize
7%	Without a word, I get up and go to "fix" the problem
17%	It has never happened to me

Of course, the participants' behavior can also be a problem. Then, the crisis solution also depends largely on the actions taken by the organizer. It is worth choosing a platform that allows, among other things, to mute the user who

disturbs others in the knowledge acquisition (in special cases, you can also reach for logging out from the event).

09 Record events and inform participants about that

Platforms like ClickMeeting enable simple event recording. This is an extremely important feature that allows you to make several benefits at the same time. First and foremost, attendees themselves expect to receive an email after the event with a recording or summary of the event. For many of them, the recording is more important than the live event itself. Thanks to it, they are able to view the content at any time. So you can reach your audience even if the timing of the webinar is not to their liking for some reason.

At the same time, your audience needs to be aware that you are recording the event. As many as **96% expect the organizer to communicate this fact.** It's also an easy way to protect yourself from potential liability associated with the unlawful use of their image.

In all cases, be sure to inform attendees that the meeting is being recorded to ensure that they can make a conscious decision regarding their privacy, e.g. whether to disclose their image, and you will avoid potential problems related to the unlawful use of such images.

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Recording your event gives you other benefits. You can send the acquired content to participants and people who registered but did not attend the event. However, you can use it in many other ways. A good idea would be to post it on your company's YouTube channel or social media, for example. Basing on the recording, you will also prepare an extensive text report, which will work great as a blogpost. Remember that a live webinar recording can be the source of an automated webinar or an on-demand webinar.

10 Take advantage of automation

Many people associate webinars with live events that involve a presenter (or multiple presenters) meeting directly with attendees. This formula, however, has evolved significantly in recent years with evolving technology and user habits.

More and more participants prefer on-demand events. They can attend at any time and under any circumstances, for example, listen to a lecture while walking or view content while jogging. This is equally convenient for you as a presenter. You just need to record the content once and then configure it properly. This doesn't mean that you have to lose contact with your audience. On the contrary, they will be able to leave messages (e.g., questions) that you can answer at any time.

Or you can set up an automated webinar. In this case, too, the base is a previously prepared recording. However, the event will take place at a specific time, and your audience doesn't even have to realize that they are not participating in a live webinar. Of course, there's no need for you to be present during it, but - if you wish - you can log into the room to, for example, answer questions that appear in the chat window.

Automation doesn't stop at the events themselves!
It covers almost everything you need to do before and after the webinar to achieve your goals. With the right software, you'll save much work and will be able to focus on what matters, that is, sharing your knowledge.
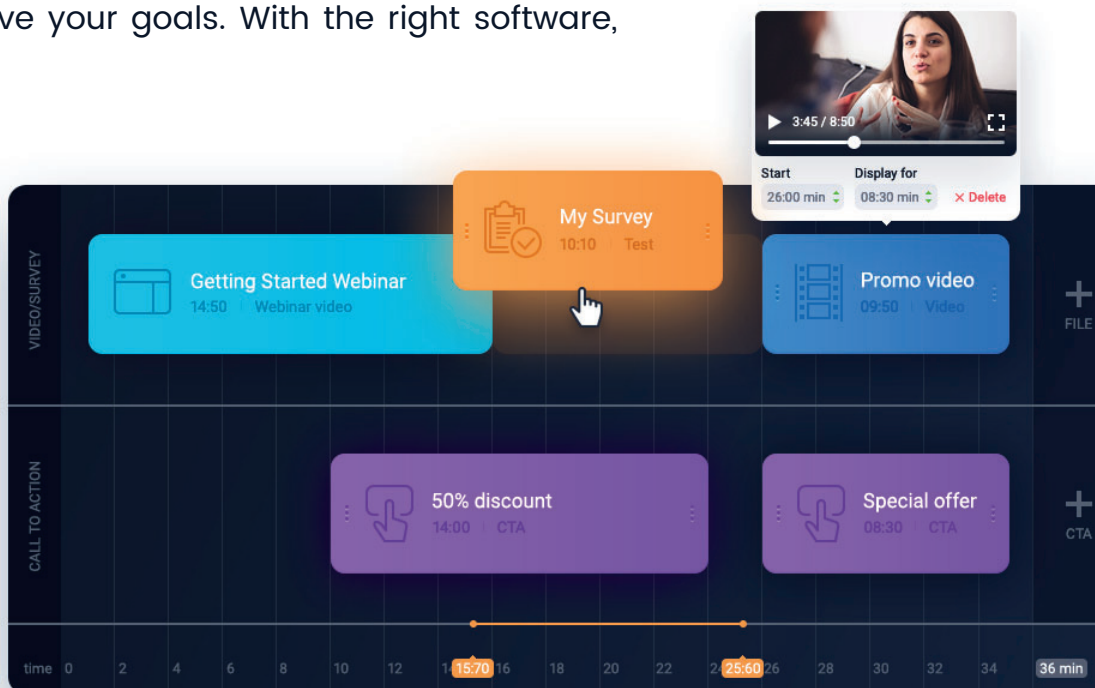
Here are the most important activities that you can easily automate:

- Sending out messages with invitations and event reminders
- Stream the event on social media
- Publishing the event on your profile page
- Starting a recording of the event
- Publishing the recording on YouTube
- Thank you message
- Follow-up message
- Invitations to upcoming events
- Acquire leads through integration with other tools.

Checklist for the presenter

Preparation

- ☑ **Make sure your webinar settings are correct.** Check the date and time and the security methods.
- ☑ **Send invitations to all attendees well in advance.**
- ☑ **Upload the presentation and the files you want to share before the event begins.** The files must be converted, which takes a few moments. This will spare your attendees from waiting for files to load during the meeting.
- ☑ **Do a trial run of the event to see how it will look like.** You can test your presentation in several ways and see what style will work for your audience.
- ☑ **Set a neutral wallpaper on your computer so it won't distract your event attendees when sharing your desktop.** Remember that you can decide which window to share with attendees.
- ☑ **Turn off instant messaging** and other applications that use notifications.
- ☑ **Close unnecessary programs** that use the Internet or overload your computer's processor.
- ☑ **Minimize background noise.** Microphones are quite sensitive devices and will detect all kinds of noises such as coughing or whispering.
- ☑ **Check your equipment.** Test the microphone and headphones and make sure they will work during your presentation.
- ☑ **Customize the look of the event room** by changing its logo and color scheme. Log in to your account and modify the appropriate settings.
- ☑ **Watch the time.** Live meetings are most effective if they last between 45 and 60 minutes. If you need more time, divide the content into parts and present it in several consecutive webinars.

Giving the presentation

☑ **Introduce the agenda for the event.** As you begin the webinar, greet participants and provide an agenda. For long events, plan breaks.

☑ **Do not prolong the introduction unnecessarily.** Go to the core of the presentation to avoid losing the interest and engagement of participants.

☑ **A Q&A session is a great way to engage participants** and gain valuable feedback. If you're giving a presentation, you may want to find someone to take care of answering questions in the chat room or managing polls.

☑ **Avoid Silence.** Don't take excessively long pauses when speaking. This will allow you to maintain the rhythm of the event.

☑ **Don't focus on mistakes.** Mistakes happen to everyone: sometimes the equipment fails you, sometimes you get "stuck" during the presentation. Don't be stressed about it, and keep going. If you don't worry too much about the imperfections of your presentation, your audience won't pay much attention to them either.

Concluding

☑ **Summarize and say goodbye.** When you are coming to the end of your presentation, say it clearly. Don't forget to thank your audience for attending. If there are any questions, answer them.

☑ **Gather feedback.** Collect feedback after each webinar. Analyze the responses and think about using them to improve future presentations.

☑ **Sum up.** Consider whether everything went according to your plan, the participants were interested in the topic, and the equipment and tools did not let you down.

Good luck!

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