

OUR INSIGHTS

Practical advice on common business challenges
direct from our International team of business experts

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3 secrets to great webinars

How do you bottle Covid Speed?" asked a long-standing client.

As our global work from home experiment continues, she, like many of us, is asking herself 'what's next' for her business and how does she best balance the complex commercial and people needs she faces. This balancing act got us thinking about what's really making a difference to her people and her bottom line and, frankly, what isn't.

In particular she was curious about "how much time do we now spend on webinars?". A quick poll revealed two things. Firstly, and not surprisingly, that we are now consuming more webinars than ever. Secondly, as a relatively 'new' medium, the experience can range from the hugely informative and impactful to leaving you feeling like 'I'll never get that hour of my life back again!'.

Having been privileged to work alongside some amazingly talented professionals over recent years and having delivered hundreds of webinars, both at Adobe as we transformed to a 'Digital First' Learning Strategy and elsewhere, what then is the 'secret sauce' of success?

If designing and delivering impactful webinars for your colleagues, customers and partners is a priority for you, I offer three insights that might give you pause for thought.

1. It's not about you!

Let's face it, it's easy to get 'hooked' by content.... never more so than if you are passionate and knowledgeable about what you do. Unfortunately, it's not about what you know, it's about your audience! Before you even start building your webinar, what else can you do to better understand what's really going on for your audience and what will make the biggest difference to them? Informational interviews with friendly audience members? 'Being a secret shopper' of their goods / services'?

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2. Be 'Essential'

Webinars are by their nature short on time and without a tight structure and frequent signposting it's easy to get lost. As a rule of thumb great webinars last 45-60 minutes and have no more than three or four key elements, each with a maximum of three actionable take outs. Asking yourself again and again and again "What else can I remove to make this even more essential?" can be a painful process, but one that invariably pays dividends.

3. 'Play at 10'

Delivering a webinar feels very different. You can end up speaking to hundreds of people with lot's going on (polls, chat, questions, technical issues etc etc) but very little 'live' feedback coming back at you to let you know if you are on the right track, or, if you need to course correct. How then do you ensure that you are physically and mentally ready to 'play at 10' and generate an engaging experience that sustains it's energy and momentum from minute one right to the end? The answer to this critical, (but often overlooked!) question is inherently personal.... but definitely worth challenging yourself with. What worked for me was a judicious shot of caffeine 50 minutes before going live and factoring in 'pre-game' time beforehand to welcome any early arrivals and allow time for me, any co-hosts and the audience to 'warm up'.



Webinars aren't going anywhere anytime soon. As we all settle into new ways of being and working, like many things during these challenging times, they will change, adapt and evolve.

Mat Lowery
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