

# 20 Strategies to Gain Trust and Credibility Through Mastering Webinar Presentations

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Webinars are nothing new. In the late 1990s, the first true web conferencing capability became available and dozens of other web conferencing venues followed thereafter. In 1998, a trademark for the term "webinar" was registered by Eric Korb. Eleven years later, webinars are proliferating across the internet, yet few presenters truly understand how to get the most out of the technology. The majority of these presenters come across as amateur or under-prepared.

20 years later, it is time for users of this technology to not just be able to log in and start a presentation – we must learn to Master the Webinar Technology.

Sure, you are not a "techie"; you are a marketer, an instructor, an expert in your field; you may feel like you don't have to "master" webinars. As a matter of fact, you've seen several top marketers or distinguished educators give an "off-the-cuff" presentation that seemed *just fine*. The only difference between them and you is that they already have industry credibility and thus have been granted graces by attendees. They have established a name as a professional in their field and have developed a following because of it.

This is one of the major reasons that poor-quality webinars are ubiquitous. Webinar newbies see these presentations and figure that they should just emulate "what these successful people do - faults and all."

The successful person's inability doesn't justify your inability to use the technology in a professional manner. Your attendees are paying to be a part of your webinar - if it is not with their dollars, it is with their minutes. You are developing a name, a brand and are now establishing your credibility with every instance of your name on and off the web. Don't waste attendees' time by looking under-prepared.

The way I have been taught is if you have 10 people attending a presentation and you experience "technical difficulties" or are slow to deliver the content for even five minutes, you have just wasted 50 minutes of time. Respect the fact that attendees are there to learn and give them a presentation of substance within an experience of quality and high value.

How many times have you attended a webinar and found "quality" issues such as the following:

- They are preparing their presentation last-minute "live" for every attendee to see
- The presenter has 150 icons on his desk top
- You see every program and plug in he runs on his machine
- She receives Skype calls and IMs during her presentation
- You see that he loves SpongeBob because of his desktop background
- He is closing Windows security or program update pop-ups
- Programs are running in the background slowing their machine
- You can't hear them very well. There is dropout, echo or room noise
- They don't know where they are going with their presentation
- They don't keep track of time

Implement the following strategies and I promise you, you will come across more professional, more credible and trustworthy to your attendees, students, customers or prospects right from your very first presentation.

## So here are the strategies:

### STRATEGY 1: Create Another Windows User Name or Account

It's best to start from scratch and build upon a blank slate. You will add the elements that you will need for your presentation

HOW TO: (Windows)

- a. START
- b. CONTROL PANEL
- c. USER ACCOUNTS
- d. CREATE NEW ACCOUNT

I named mine "Presentation."

### STRATEGY 2: Change Screen Resolution to 1024x768 or 800x600

If you have an ultra-high-resolution monitor like I do, It will not translate as well when presenting to those who have a lower resolution monitor. 800x600 is still the most compatible with every computer across the world. Plus, larger images will take longer to load and use more bandwidth.

### STRATEGY 3: Turn off Screen Saver

Select "(None)" for Screen saver

### STRATEGY 4: Set a Desktop/Background Image

If you have a company or website, create a simple graphic for it. Make a .jpg and set it as a "desktop image". Keep it simple, you don't need it to be a billboard, just a brand. You may add your web address or email address in the graphic which will allow people to visit or contact you later.

If you don't care to create a background, stick with a neutral color background. What ever you do, don't let your background distract from your message.

### STRATEGY 5: Turn Off Desktop Icons/Shortcuts

I would equate desktop icons in a webinar to those faded streaks of marker on a whiteboard or smeared chalk on a blackboard. It's just junk on the presentation surface that will distract from your presentation. Keep it clean. The Idea behind many of these strategies is to cut out distraction from your message.

HOW TO: (Windows)

- a. On your desktop, Right Click on your mouse
- b. ARRANGE ICONS BY
- c. deselect SHOW DESKTOP ICONS

### STRATEGY 6: Turn OFF or Delete Any IM or VoIP Services that you won't be using for this webinar

IM services or VoIP (VoIP - Voice over Internet. e.g. Skype, ooVoo, etc.) slow down your computer, demands bandwidth, and could be a nuisance or embarrassment to you when you are in the midst of your presentation. It may also compete with your webinar bandwidth usage. The last thing you want is for your webinar to disconnect or end unexpectedly. Remember, your friends or coworkers can IM *any text* to you if they see you are "available". Some may even do it BECAUSE they know you are giving a presentation! You may also be inadvertently divulging the screen names, nicknames or workplace shenanigans of people who you closely associate with.

### STRATEGY 7: Acquire, Test and Use a Headset Microphone

I have attended (and paid a lot of money for) too many webinars where the presenter or the guest uses their laptop mic or they weren't prepared to speak and didn't have a proper mic. Purchase a decent mic at Best Buy, Radio Shack, newegg.com or eBay. They run from \$10 on up and are key to having great audio for your presentation. Lousy audio will turn off your attendees and will decimate your webinar quality. (Always choose USB mic over standard)

### STRATEGY 8: Know Where You are Going

This is as easy as writing down a few key points to discuss. People may be paying for this webinar. Even if it is \$1, don't give them a \$1's worth of *value!* The famous marketer Yanik Silver has said to give people 10 times to 100 times the value of what they paid for. **You are giving them a taste of the quality of your work, training, or product.** Have an outline on paper next to your computer. Tape it to the frame of your screen if you like. Do not put it on your Desktop in Notepad or similar word processor where attendees may see it.

## STRATEGY 9: Respect People's Time

Along with having a road map of what you want to cover, be sure that you and your guest keep track of time. Over delivering is great, but it is always better to "leave them wanting more" than have them wonder how long you are going to babble on. **If you want to over-deliver, do it with quality.** Keep it brief and leave enough time for questions and answers if necessary. People are carving time out of their day to listen to you. And for attendees in some parts of the world, it is an extremely inconvenient time, yet they care enough to be there to listen to what you have to say.

Going Long WILL bite you back. If you go on and on you'll not only lose people's interest in you, but they may not stick around to hear what you were going to promote at the end of your presentation.

## STRATEGY 10: Know The Software & The Processes. Get a Dry Run In Before the "Live" Presentation

There is a difference between being live and recording a presentation. Mentally you know if it is recorded, you can make 50 mistakes and start over and waste a lot of your time. But, if you are "live" you have one shot - even if this is "Recorded Live" (giving the feel to the attendee that it is a "real-time" presentation). You are bound to have mistakes. It is best to learn from them and move on. Set a time to start and start on time. Not 5 minutes late.

Find a couple friends or associates that can be available for 10 minutes or so and have them be in on your webinar. Make sure you try all of the functions that you may use during your presentation.

## STRATEGY 11: DON'T GO LIVE if You Are Not Ready

Don't make everyone (who is on time) see you arrange your desktop, fix typos, and close programs. Be ready with your desktop On "LIVE" 5-10 Minutes before start and don't broadcast your preparation.

## STRATEGY 12: Prepare A Pre-Webinar Slide or Slide Show

Be ready 15-20 minutes early. Have a slide or a few slides rotate while people wait to begin. Here are some ideas:

- Cover a few of your key (hot) products or services available to attendees for discount
- Edify guest or yourself by displaying brief bios with photos
- Have "commercials" or ad-space available to a JV partner
- Rotate simple affiliate links for related products
  - have a page you host where you have links to what you affiliate  
example [www.mydomain.com/webinar-special](http://www.mydomain.com/webinar-special)

## STRATEGY 13: Check for Security or Windows Updates

Don't allow windows system pop-ups to distract your attendees from your presentation. Check your system for updates a day or two before your presentation. Be sure that your computer will not go into "disk defrag" or other scheduled processes either. I've had a blogtalkradioshow get turned off because Windows decided to shut down and do its Windows update during my show.

## STRATEGY 14: Clear Cash For Your Browser

Clear the cache of your browsers **before you prepare** for your presentation. Why? Many browsers have "auto complete" features that as you type will bring up past phrase searches or URLs that you were inputted in the past. It is just another opportunity for distraction. I have seen some strange and amazing things pop into view and to say the least... it was a distraction.

Clear the Following before you prepare:

- Browsing History
- Saved Form info
- Cache
- Cookies
- Offline Website Data
- Saved Passwords
- Authenticated Sessions

### **STRATEGY 15: Log In to Secure Sites You Will Display in Your Presentation**

After clearing the cache, log into the secure sites that you would have to input your username and password. Choose to save this login information within your browser. This will keep you from wasting time for everyone while you recall and input the passwords of sites you will be demonstrating. Even better, login right before the webinar and attendees won't even see your username. This is not only a time saver, but a matter of login/password security as well.

### **STRATEGY 16: Send out 1-day reminder**

Be sure to remind everyone of the date and time and any login information 1 day prior your presentation. Many webinar software may do this automatically. In general, people are busy and even though they are truly excited about attending your webinar, distractions come up and people forget. Give them one last reminder. Better yet, make the date "Gmail, iCal or MS Outlook-readable". Those who use Gmail, iCal or outlook will be able to add the date and time to their calendars easily.

### **STRATEGY 17: Record Every Webinar Presentation**

Why? The biggest reason is that you need to learn to repurpose everything. You will also have several people who wanted to attend, but they couldn't because of schedule conflicts or time zone difference. You will want to make it available for those who couldn't make the live presentation. What about people paying for access to this information in the future?

Many top marketers record webinars and make it into a product in which they use later to sell or give as an incentive in purchasing another product. Also, you can use every webinar you record in a membership site or video blog site. This content took a lot of time to put together and it cost some money marketing the fact you were putting the webinar on. Make it pay you back over and over by having the recording available for future playback.

### **STRATEGY 18. Bookmark/Preload Sites You Will Be Covering**

Visit the sites you will presenting before the webinar, log in if necessary and set them up as bookmarks in the "Bookmark Toolbar" or set as Tabs in your browser. This will save time in going from one site to another. Be sure to arrange them linearly in the order of your presentation.

### **STRATEGY 19: Present from a Hard-Wired Connection When Possible**

Even though Wi-Fi technology is quite advanced, wireless connections are still easily interrupted. I have seen signal interruptions from cell phones, cordless phones, wire or metal waste baskets or even people walking between the wireless router and the receiver on the back of my computer. Have a reliable CAT-5 (internet) cable between your router and your computer to maintain the strongest signal possible.

### **STRATEGY 20: Clear the Area of Distracting Noises**

I have heard cell phone calls, employees asking questions, babies crying, children whining and dogs barking. Sure we all live in the real world and these things are bound to happen from time to time, but when you want to come off as competent and credible, you must turn off the phones and tell everyone you will be unavailable and need quiet while presenting.

Adopt these strategies in your next presentation and you will be amazed at the level of credibility you will reach with your attendees, students or customers.

Best to You,

Matthew Peters

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