



How can you make
sure your video
presentations have
the maximum
impact and effect?

A complete guide to
presenting and
hosting online



www.tenandahalf.co.uk
info@tenandahalf.co.uk



Video meetings, webinars and a range of other online formats now play a central role in our working week and pivotal role in our marketing and business development.

Although our return to the office has started, having seen the efficiency, reach and economics of presenting and meeting online, it is highly likely meeting and presenting online will remain a permanent fixture.

However, one thing we've learned (or at least confirmed over the last year) is presenting online is *harder* than presenting in person.

This is why we have brought together what we've learned over the last few months and share:

- Practical tips that will help you engage your audience online
- The difference between webinars and video meetings and how to prepare for both
- A video checklist you can follow to make sure you have everything in place to deliver the perfect online presentation

And of course, if this special report raises any questions regarding presenting or hosting online (or about anything else related to your marketing or business development) please email us at info@tenandahalf.co.uk.

What are the main things to think about when you're presenting online?

This was probably your first thought when we were told hosting in person wouldn't be an option for a while. However, as we got into the world of virtual presentations it soon became very apparent that there was a whole host of new things to think about to make sure your virtual presentations have the required impact.

[The first is you can't simply dust down the slides you used for your last seminar and present them the same way via video.](#)

This is because influencing your audience hinges on your ability to engage your audience. The tricky bit is that your ability to build the required rapport and connection immediately reduces when you're online.

This means you have to adapt your approach so here are a few tips that will help you successfully make the switch:

- Share your materials in advance to make it easier for people to prepare, ask questions and interact on the day.
- As people are less comfortable joining in on video, it is your job as a presenter to coax, cajole and encourage them to speak up. To do this, you need to start your dialogue with your audience before the event.
- Concentrate on facilitating a conversation not delivering a lecture.
- People have more limited attention spans and more distractions when logged in virtually so focusing on engagement is even more crucial.

- Be mindful of time and try to stick to a maximum of 60 minutes (or break longer sessions up with a break to put the kettle on and/or practical exercises).
- Learn your tech. Where do you need to angle the camera? Can you record your session so you can extract a few tasters and edit them together to market future sessions?

Another way to get more out of your online events is to collaborate; you don't need to host your own online events alone.

[Collaboration has become one of the rising watchwords in professional services marketing since March 2020.](#)

Your referrers and contacts need to stay visible too and, like you, they are trying to find more interesting and innovative ways to grab their audience's attention.

Why not ask your contacts if you can participate in their webinars, videos, round tables, podcasts and panels? It'll get you in front of their audience and, better still, they'll be responsible for all the organising!

What can you do to maximise your audience's engagement while you're presenting online?

Whenever and however you're presenting, you know your number one objective is to engage your audience.

Presenting via video is even more difficult than presenting in person so how do you engage your audience during video meetings on Zoom, Teams or Skype?

Firstly, if you think presenting virtually is the same as in person or easier you are getting it wrong!

Engaging your audience is always going to be harder. Your audience is likely to be more passive. They'll have more potential distractions from partners, children, animals and deliveries.

So, what practical things can you do to really engage your audience during video meetings?

1. Share your content in advance

This not only creates positive anticipation before the event, it also enables participants to get comfortable with material. This means they are more likely to ask and answer questions on the day.

2. Warm people up

Use the 5 minutes between dialling in and starting your talk to warm your audience up. Be confident, make everyone feel comfortable and focus on building rapport. If you can find a connection with different audience members before you start, they'll be on your side before you begin and your event is more likely to go well.

3. Appoint (and manage) a chairperson

A good chairperson will set the tone by introducing you warmly and enthusiastically. They'll also add structure by managing the Q&A professionally, sparing everyone the unedifying spectacle of you sitting silently squinting at your screen.

3. Set expectations

Know exactly how you want to manage your conference meeting or webinar. This is more than sharing agenda items, it means succinctly explaining what you'll cover, how you'll cover it and how you'd like to handle questions.

4. Break it up you

The best sessions are interactive. Practice asking questions and, just as importantly, the art of gently coaxing people to answer these questions. Here are a few tips that will make this easier:

- If there are a few empty seconds silence after you've asked your question, resist the temptation to fill the silence
- Direct your question to part of your audience, not to the whole room. This avoids embarrassing an individual whilst focusing on a specific group of participants. It will also reduce the likelihood of certain people talking over one another
- Ask for an answer from a specific office, practice or department

Prepare for the right format!

Not every online meeting is a webinar just as webinars are not the only format available to you.

When you're planning your events calendar, it is always a good idea to mix things up and present your audience with a variety of options so there's something that will appeal to everyone.

You can run virtual roundtables, offer downloadable videos, move your content into podcasts or run more informal 'ask the expert' sessions.

While we have learned an awful lot from facilitating more than 200 virtual events over the last 12 months, the main thing is that the success of your event hinges on you making absolutely sure that when you're planning an event, you are completely clear on the format.

If it's a meeting say it's a meeting. If it's a webinar, say it's a webinar. This is essential because:

- Your audience must understand what their role is before the event
- You can meet your desired outcome and set next steps to work towards
- You can communicate with more impact which will ensure you showcase your expertise to maximum effect

What is the difference between a meeting and a webinar?

Meetings make for more interactive sessions.

You can encourage lots of audience participation or break your session into smaller groups.

The type of events that lend themselves to a meeting set up are 1on1s, informal conversations, business planning, panel conversations and workshops ...

... as long as everyone has their video on!

Webinars are geared for larger audiences. Typically, attendees don't interact with one another and cannot be viewed, and one or two people will do all the speaking although the audience can engage via the chat function.

How can you get the best possible results from a meeting or webinar?

To get the best possible outcomes from your virtual event here are some practical tips that will help with your planning, delivery and follow up:

Planning

Planning a successful online event requires 5 key ingredients:

1. Knowing your audience. What are their needs? What is their current level of understanding? What format - meeting or webinar - will work best for this group?
2. Setting SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely) objectives at the outset.
3. Choosing the right video platform and format. For example, if you are not using a slide-deck Teams might be preferable to Zoom. Or if you're planning a large event (100 plus) and want your guests to interact,

Remo would be preferable to Zoom. Or if a panel discussion involving a number of experts is the best option, try using the 'meeting' mode on Zoom or Teams.

4. Share your materials in advance. This makes engagement easier as your attendees will know what will be covered on the day and can plan their questions in advance.

5. Promote your event on social media and, more widely, using Eventbrite. Your success will be dependent on grabbing your audience's attention so choose an engaging title, articulate the benefits of attending and be clear who the event is aimed at.

Delivery

When it comes to delivery, the 5 key factors are:

1. Know your tech and invest in a professional set up

The key areas to focus on here are the quality of your audio and camera, the lighting and your clothing (colours work best and avoid green if you are using a green screen).

Corporate branding looks more professional. When using Zoom you will need a green screen to avoid a psychedelic appearance! Teams has an inbuilt green screen but will reverse your logo so Zoom is better if branding is important.

2. Engage, engage, engage

Irrespective of your audience's prior knowledge, make sure your slides are visually engaging. Cut out the bullet points and replace them with images, schematics, photographs and words in boxes.

Live polls and asking questions also help but when you ask a question, be patient and wait for a response. Avoid the temptation to fill the silence as silence conveys authority and confidence.

Asking people to switch on their videos at the beginning will also help your engagement levels.

3. Develop a voice for radio

Getting and holding your audiences' attention online is difficult. As we've said you will have to compete with more distractions than you would in person.

This means you need to come across as enthusiastic, warm, interesting, confident and authoritative which requires relaxed vocal cords and a friendly tone of voice.

Your ultimate goal is to make the audience feel as though you are only talking to them. Ignore the size of the audience and imagine you are having a conversation with one person. If you do, you will find your delivery is warmer, less scripted and you will naturally use words like 'you', 'your' 'you know when...' and 'what I do is...'

4. Appoint a chair

A chairperson will not only introduce you and facilitate the Q&A, they will also increase your gravitas and manage the chat facility during your talk so you're not distracted.

5. Keep to the allotted time

People won't thank you for running over and no one will ever complain because your webinar didn't go on long enough!

Follow up

Online events are a very efficient and effective way to promote your expertise, but they are unlikely to deliver the results you want if you don't follow up.

Get in the habit of recording webinars and sharing the recordings with:

- The people who attended the webinar
- Those who were down to attend but didn't
- Targets who didn't sign up but you would've liked them to

You can also edit your recording down to a 1 minute taster for social media.

Tenandahalf's video checklist

So that you are 100% ready to give a presentation or host a meeting via video we'd suggest you tick off the following:

- Face towards natural light
- Check the lighting on your desk and behind you
- Test your audio to make sure it is clear and you're at the right volume
- Check your webcam is positioned so your line of vision is horizontal with the lens
- Check your Wi-Fi connection is working and, if possible, that you have a fallback option (for example a '4G dongle')
- If you want to use a corporate background when using Zoom, check your green screen is set up and working
- Make sure your washing or any other unsightly props are not in view of the camera
- Warm-up your voice; don't go in cold and croaky
- Standing is always preferable as it'll add a bit more dynamism and authority to your performance
- Check your top doesn't clash with your green screen or branded background (plain colours are preferable)
- Dial in a few minutes before the scheduled start time to check everything is set up and you can go straight into your slides
- Set up your slides so people are greeted by your title slide when they enter the virtual room
- Build rapport with the chairperson and confirm who is doing what
- Put your audience at ease with small talk
- Start strongly and on time
- Over practice your first 2 slides so you start confidently; a shaky start will lose a percentage of your audience before you get to your first key point



What next?

If you'd like to discuss an upcoming video presentation (or have any other questions relating to marketing or BD) please email us at info@tenandahalf.co.uk and we'll find a convenient time to talk.



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