



Speaking and Online Presentation Guidelines and Best Practices

These simple steps will ultimately make your online presentation run more smoothly and limit potential points of concern. More than anything, remember EBAA members are a tight-knit, and caring, community of like-minded professionals. We are in this together and will all support each other in this virtual meeting endeavor.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW!

When presenting a live virtual speech, a recorded virtual speech/webinar, or serving on a panel, the success of your online presentation is truly based on your dedication and investment. Whether you are a seasoned online public speaker, used to a live audience, or this is your first online speaking engagement, please read over these best practices to assist you before and during your online presentation.

Virtual Audience Engagement Tips for Speakers

Engaging your audience during a virtual session is important! There are many aspects of a virtual presentation that can be difficult to navigate including a large number distractions that can take a virtual audience member's attention away from your session, a virtual audience tends to be more vocal than the face-to-face audience and the presentation has a wider reach "in the moment." Therefore, it is up to you as a speaker to engage the virtual audience just as you would engage the face-to-face audience.

Here are 6 things you can do to ensure that your virtual audience feels like an active participant:

1. **Design** your session in smaller chunks of learning with interspersed interactions to ensure that your virtual audience is constantly involved and never gets bored or antsy. Create engaging slides that do not have too many words on each slide and have images and graphics that support what is presented.
2. **Connect.** Use the conference themed slide template which includes the #EBAA2020 and invite the attendees to connect with you on social or via email following the presentation.
3. **Get to know your team.** Make friends with the event producer and technical support staff to ensure that everything is running smoothly with the audio and visual aspects of your presentation.
4. **Set the tone.** Welcome your virtual audience at the beginning of the session and thank them for participating at the end of the session to acknowledge them and show your appreciation for their participation.
5. **Eye contact.** Look at the camera as if it is another person in the room to ensure that your virtual audience does not feel ignored, neglected, or isolated.
6. **Engage** with the audience and ask for participation through the Question box or the polling feature. Ask questions of the virtual audience and allow them enough time to answer to ensure that their voice is heard, they feel like a welcomed part of your audience, and the human element again takes center stage.

Even though you cannot see your virtual audience, you must actively engage them to ensure that they feel connected to your session.

Setup & Planning

The initial steps required to set-up an online presentation are often the most important. The more time you allow for preparation, the more successful your presentation will be.

Technology Requirements

Use the following recommended equipment and network connections.

- **Computer:** Internet enabled computer (PC/MAC – Laptop or Desktop) with camera
 - If presenting June 19-20 via the CommPartners platform, you will be presenting by sharing your screen and advancing your slides.
 - If presenting June 18, 22-26, via Zoom Webinar, you will advance the slides through the platform.
- **Internet:** Strong internet connection- hard-wired is preferred, but if using wireless, try to be as close to the modem as possible.
- **Audio:**
 - If using a phone for audio, hard-wired lines are best. If using the computer audio, may be smart to have a phone close by as a back-up.
 - If using the computer microphone, earpods/headphones with a microphone may be a good option as they will drown out any nearby noises.
- **Web-Camera:** Test out before presentation.

Speaking Environment

Room Set-up and Location

- Internet Connection: Make sure the Internet connection is strong
- Secure the area: Make sure this area has a door you can close to eliminate outside distractions/interruptions
- Leading up to your presentation, consider the location of your webcam and the light that room receives during the time of day you will be presenting.
- Be cautious of placing the camera by windows or under skylights.
- Ensure your background is tidy and not distracting - whatever you can see on the camera, the audience will also see.
- Make sure you are presenting in a private area. Try to present from a separate room and post a note on your door that you are conducting a live presentation to discourage interruptions.
- Have space around you to have printed materials, a place to write down notes, etc.
- Have a glass or bottle of water nearby
- If possible, have a solid colored background behind you that is not distracting. A Black or Navy Blue backdrop usually are the best.

Eliminate Distractions and Prevent Interruptions

- Turn your cell phone on vibrate or silent
- Notify the people around you that you will be presenting a live recorded event
- Turn off all email/instant messaging/social network notifications

Screen-sharing

- Change your computer's desktop background to a solid neutral color.
- Remove anything that you don't want participants to see.
- Test the websites/documents you will be sharing to make sure they are working.

Developing Your Presentation

PowerPoint Slides

- Use the Annual Meeting template when possible.
- When creating the PPT file, set font sizes, colors and styles using the slide master. This method ensures consistency, saves time when adding slides and making global changes to your presentation later.
- Slides should include text talking points as well as graphic images if possible. Try to maintain a balance between white space and text.
- All images should be embedded into the PowerPoint file (using Insert Picture function) NOT copy/pasted from another application or links to other websites.
- Video files should be uploaded with the presentation.
- All text should be Windows standard fonts without serifs (such as Arial) for readability.

Practice/Rehearse

- If you are the only one speaking on an event, practice your presentation.
- Time yourself, then decide if you need to add or remove any content to meet the allotted time you have available including Q&A and Polling.
- If you are presenting with others, practice together, rehearse who is speaking when and who will handle questions, audience interaction, etc.
- Familiarize yourself with the webinar technology and make every effort to attend the speaker overview and practice sessions.

Practice Session to Test the Platform

If you will be presenting live, EBAA staff members will set up a time for you either the week or a couple of days before your presentation for you to test out the platform and test your microphone, webcam, and ability for changing slides. During this practice you will be given instructions for how to log in on the day of your presentation and how to present.

The Day of Your Presentation

Before Your Presentation

Make sure you complete the following tasks the day of your event recording.

- Reboot your computer. Before entering the Web conference, restart your computer. Once it's back up, do not open any other applications other than what you will use during your presentation.
- Make sure you were sent login instructions. Log on/call in early. Plan to dial-in and login 15 - 30 minutes prior to the start of your session. This allows time to enter the session and prepare for your presentation.
- Take a deep breath and relax. Even if you're a little nervous, once the program starts, and you begin to talk to the audience, you'll find everything will flow smoothly. You are presenting to industry colleagues and friends and we are all new to this world.

During Your Presentation

- Be conversational. Just speak to the participants as if they're in the room with you.
- If presenting on June 19-20 via the CommPartners platform, you will be presenting by sharing your screen and advancing your slides. If presenting on June 18, 22-26, via Zoom Webinar, you will provide your slides to be uploaded into the platform and will advance the slides through the platform.
- Project your voice. There's no need to yell, but speak in a clear, concise tone everyone can hear. Make sure that your voice does not trail off at the end of a sentence or point.
- Stay on Time. Occasionally check your watch or clock. Attendees will appreciate it if you stay on schedule.
- Mute yourself if you are not presenting.

- Turn off your cell phone. Please turn your phone or other devices on silent during your presentation.
- Try to minimize ambient noise. Coughing, throat-clearing and paper shuffling can often be reduced simply by awareness (and the Mute feature).
- Avoid “dead air.”
- Be polite. If co-presenting with others, don’t talk over others or advance or annotate slides while someone else is presenting.
- Keep it in perspective. If you make a mistake or lose your place, it’s OK. Don’t over-apologize or sound defeated. The less attention you draw to a mistake, the quicker your audience will forget about it.

Pitfalls to Avoid

- Just as in a live face-to-face presentation, avoid just reading the content on your PowerPoint slides, attendees won’t benefit from your depth of knowledge on the subject and will likely lose attention.
- Having no interaction planned. A lively, Q&A interactive session will be memorable for attendees.
- While in a multi-Panelist session, talking over others. Be patient and identify yourself when you start speaking again, especially if you are part of an expert panel.
- Rushing through the end of your presentation or running out of time (too much content). Plan to spend 1-3 minutes per slide (on average)
- Poor graphics or visuals. Slides that are too text heavy.
- Poor audio.

Web Cam Clothing Presentation Tips

The following are tips, and recommendations, on how to best dress for a webcam presentation. Please use this as a general guideline and feel free to interject your own personal style as well!

RECOMMENDED:

Suggested Attire: Business Casual

- Blue, beige, off-white, pastels
- Darker colors and solid colors are most flattering and less distracting
- Solid colors are most flattering and less distracting
- For dress shirts - avoid bright white. If you do choose to wear a bright white shirt or blouse, make sure to wear a darker jacket over it.

AVOID:

- Small patterns (i.e. Checks, pin stripes, geometric/chevron shapes, prints, etc.) They tend to appear in motion when on camera
- Overly Bold patterns
- Jewelry - watch out for jewelry that reflects light or makes noise, like bangles. Additionally, avoid jewelry you may fidget with if you get nervous
- Eyeglasses - avoid wearing glasses if possible. If you do need them to see adjust the placement of the camera to help minimize any glare.

Still have questions/concerns? Contact [Genevieve Casaceli](#)