**RUSA Webinar Speaker and Host Guides**

**Before and During Your Presentation ~ and Other Tips to Presenting a Successful Webinar**

***Before Your Presentation:***

* Create a compelling title.
* Build an outline that focuses on your key points.
* Create interesting and attention-getting marketing information for your client’s use.
* Develop your content based on the timeframe of the webinar. Know your objectives and build around those.
* Incorporate the most important information into the middle of the program so that latecomers or those who have to leave right on time do not miss the core concepts.
* Consider all learning styles (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) when preparing your presentation.
* Consider what questions might be asked and prepare your content to answer those questions.
* Provide an agenda/list of learning objectives or goals at the beginning of the session.
* Be aware of font color/background combinations that do and don’t work well online (example: white text on black background is difficult to read for an extended period).
* Practice your presentation to determine timing.
* Do a live run-through a few days in advance with the host to address any technical or timing issues that might occur. Consider scheduling the practice session at the same time of day as the actual webinar.
* If co-presenting, make sure the speakers practice together to ensure ease of “handing the platform over” to each other.
* Use caution when including videos, external websites, animations, etc. in your content. Not only do they require extra bandwidth, they may also slow down the computers and create technical glitches during the program.
* Use common fonts to avoid compatibility issues.
* Provide a welcome slide that includes instructions on how to interact with the speaker.
* Consider including a picture of yourself on the welcome slide to personalize the webinar.
* Determine what questions might be asked and prepare your content to address them.
* Decide if you want to use any of the “platform tools” such as polls, Q & A, etc. and practice incorporating those into your presentation.
* Proofread and check for “flow.”
* Incorporate facts and figures when appropriate, but do not build the entire presentation on facts, figures, data, or statistics.
* Use stories, situations, examples, case studies, anecdotes, scenarios, and pictures to create interest and keep attendees engaged with your content.
* Review your content to ensure that it is appealing, fast-paced, interesting, and engaging.
* Be sure you are in a quiet room with the door closed.
* If a webcam is required, test to see what the participants will see behind you.
* Use a high-quality headset with an in-line mute to keep noise to a minimum.
* Turn off cell phones, mobile devices, and land lines (unless you are connecting through one of those methods).
* Close all unnecessary computer applications including email and instant messaging outside the presentation platform.
* Place a bottle of water nearby before you begin.
* Use a wired connection if possible.
* Hang a sign on your door that informs potential visitors that a webinar is in progress and you are not to be disturbed. If working from a home office, put the sign over the doorbell.
* Lock your office door if necessary to eliminate the possibility of interruptions.
* Start on time (or have a good reason not to).

***During Your Presentation:***

* Engage your audience as quickly as possible. Consider using an opening slide with an eye- catching quote, photo, or statistic.
* Encourage ad-hoc responses and discussions, but retain control of the flow of the presentation.
* Consider allowing attendees to ask questions during the webinar, rather than at the end. This will allow the questions to add richness to the current topic and may uncover areas of confusion or concern.
* Use “mark-up capabilities” within the platform being used to draw attention to key points.
* Monitor the chat with the assistance of the host.
* When using polls or Q & A tools, be sure the questions asked are relevant and close the polls in a timely manner so that attendees do not lose interest while waiting.
* If you are using an online demonstration, practice it thoroughly to make sure it works.
* Ask for volunteers to share their “takeaways” in the chat box.
* Develop a few key phrases to encourage useful discussions. “When have you experienced...”; “What else might happen if...”; “Why do you think...”
* Interact with attendees frequently through questions, polls, Q & A, etc.
* Simulate a real classroom by calling on attendees by name.
* Be spontaneous. Know your material inside out, but allow time to tell a story you just remembered, interject something that just came to mind, answer deeper questions, etc.
* Consider pausing occasionally to check understanding and interest level.
* Type a reminder to ask questions in chat.
* If you aren’t getting any response from the attendees, periodically ask them to respond, even if it’s just to “raise their hands” to indicate they are still connected.
* When screen-sharing, check in with the audience or host to make sure they are following.
* Mute your own line when you are waiting for responses to polls, etc.
* Provide your contact information.
* End with a summary slide that encourages any additional questions.
* Close the session with a slide that includes a call to action. Leave the attendees knowing what they need to do next.
* End on time (or have a good reason not to).

***Tips to Help You Present a Successful Webinar:***

* Review how the session went. Note what worked and what didn’t and adjust future presentations.
* Make sure your presentation had a takeaway message that attendees can apply immediately.
* For larger groups, understand that extensive audience participation and/or questions may be unrealistic.
* With larger groups, the host may select questions for speakers to answer at the end.
* Be aware of your vocal variety when presenting online. Attendees have no other reference of your interest level (such as body language or facial expressions), so your voice needs to be animated, upbeat, and engaging. Be conversational, as if they are in the room with you.
* Don’t memorize your presentation or use fully-scripted remarks, which allow no spontaneity and are usually boring for attendees.
* If you will be sharing the screen, start “screen sharing” at the beginning.
* Be aware of any noises that might carry through your microphone – clicking a pen, tapping on your desk, taking a drink of water, etc.
* If you plan to poll your attendees, use the poll function of your platform. Be careful of polling through the chat – it’s difficult to determine how many attendees vote for each selection.

***Please Note: If you will not have a Host for the Program, Please take note of the additional Responsibilities shown on the following page***

**RUSA Webinar Host Guide**

* Do a live run-through a few days in advance with the speaker to address any technical or timing issues that might occur. Consider scheduling the practice session at the same time of day as the actual webinar.
* If there will be more than one speaker, make sure the speakers practice together to ensure ease of “handing the platform over” to each other.
* Consider using “music on hold” while attendees are waiting for the presentation to begin.
* Be sure you are in a quiet room with the door closed.
* Use a high-quality headset with an in-line mute to keep noise to a minimum.
* Turn off cell phones, mobile devices, and land lines (unless you are connecting through one of those methods).
* Close all unnecessary computer applications including email and instant messaging outside the presentation platform.
* Use a wired connection if possible.
* Hang a sign on your door that informs potential visitors that a webinar is in progress and you are not to be disturbed. If working from a home office, put the sign over the doorbell.
* Lock your office door if necessary to eliminate the possibility of interruptions.
* Provide a “chat” and verbal welcome 10 minutes and 5 minutes before beginning.
* Announce a “2-minute warning” before the session begins.
* Determine amount of lead time for starting the broadcast.
* Open the lines early with title slide so people know they are in the right place.
* Conduct a brief explanation of how the technology works.
* Mute participants when the program begins and un-mute them as appropriate.
* Provide phone number and email address for technical support.
* Introduce the speaker to add credibility and allow latecomers to arrive.
* Start on time (or have a good reason not to).
* Assist the speaker in monitoring the chat.
* Mute the lines of speakers who are not actively presenting at the time.
* Review how the session went. Note what worked and what didn’t and adjust future presentations.
* With larger groups, the speaker may request that you select questions for them to answer at the end.