



# A Guide to Better Webinars

## *Lights ... Camera ... Action*

Webinars or web-based seminars as they sometimes are called, are a great marketing tool to convey a message, educate your audience, or sell something. Along with a great presentation and content you might want to consider the equipment you need to host a great webinar. It's not just about using your built-in camera or sharing PowerPoint slides with your audience. But it's about engaging your audience. With just a few inexpensive pieces of equipment, you will be able to give a stellar performance at your next webinar.

I know, I know, you think you already have everything you need to create a successful webinar. Just use your built-in computer camera and microphone and plug in some ear buds and you're set. Right? Wrong! Well, it depends on how professional you want your webinar to be. And I think most of us would want our customers and webinar viewers to have a great impression of our companies and content. Depending upon the age of your computer, your camera may not be up to date with HD requirements and give you high quality video. Your microphone may make you sound like you are in a well or in an echo chamber. If you don't use headphones or a headset, sometimes you can get an echo if another speaker is online at the same time you are speaking due to delays. The sound may come out of your computer's speakers and create an echo effect.

To that end, I've developed a resource for you that will provide a few necessary items you should buy before you put on your next webinar. All of these items are fairly inexpensive and you'll be surprised what a difference they make, especially when you view the replay of your webinar. So, let's get started and learn how you can set up your own webinar studio.

## Microphone

Yes, you can use your built-in microphone on your computer but it is much better to use a stand-alone microphone that offers higher sound quality and voice clarity. Built-in microphones have a tendency to pick up ambient noise, which is not good for your webinar, especially if you are in a noisy area at work or at home where there might be lots of activity.

There are several different types of microphones. You might want to get a lavalier type or sometimes called a lapel microphone. It is small and clips on to the lapel of your jacket or shirt. You'll see news anchors many times with lavalier microphones.

But the other type of microphone, which I prefer is a desktop on a tabletop stand or an articulating arm. Blue Yeti seems to get the highest marks and is compatible with both Mac and PC. I've seen it for under \$130. But I also like the Audio-Technica AT2020 USB Microphone. I've seen the microphone going for about \$99.00.

Just make sure whichever microphone you choose that it is USB-based and is compatible with your computer whether laptop or desktop or PC or Mac.

## Webcam

Again, you may be asking do I really need a separate webcam? The answer is yes if you want high quality video. External webcams have newer technology and some cool features like zoom, pan and auto focus. Plus it's easier to update an external webcam as technology changes than the cost to upgrade your computer. Another reason to purchase a webcam is that some webinar platforms like WebinarJam require you to have an external webcam. Check out your webinar platform's requirements.

From my research it seems that Logitech 900 series seems to be the clear winner. Again, you're looking for a webcam that is compatible with Mac and PC.

Many of the webcams on the market today do have built-in microphones but I still recommend getting a separate microphone for optimal clarity. The Logitech C922x Pro Stream Webcam I've seen for under \$80; however there are other lower budget webcams for about \$35 like the Logitech C615. Most of these can be found on Amazon.com.

## Lighting

Depending upon the location you are using for your webinar, you may want to get a lighting package just to ensure you look your best on camera. Again, most lighting packages are fairly inexpensive. Check out the CowboyStudio Photography & Video Portrait Umbrella Continuous Triple Lighting Kit. If you want a warmer tone fluorescent lighting you can switch out the lights. I've seen pricing on Amazon for under \$80. It's always good to set up a studio at work or at your home if you plan on streaming webinars on a regular basis. You may also need a lighting package if you plan to use a green screen.

## Headset

While you can use a set of headphones to minimize feedback audio, you the presenter may prefer to have a headset without the need for an extra microphone.

Many of the headsets use Bluetooth instead of USB to connect to your computer, so be sure you charge it up before you go live.

Again, these headsets can be fairly inexpensive. The Mpow V4.1 Bluetooth Headset is under \$25.00. Your voice is optimized and if there are other presenters that you need to hear, their voices are also

optimized. Your webinar attendees will hear you crystal clear without any background noise since this headset has 4X noise-cancelling microphone.

Logitech H800 Bluetooth Headset also comes in under \$65. However it is not compatible for Mac users.

Another headset is the Sennheiser SC 60 USB CTRL that is under \$50. It also blocks out surrounding noise and has a noise-cancelling microphone to filter out any ambient noise. This one is USB-based.

## Green Screen

While a green screen is not a necessity it is a nice-to-have piece of equipment for webinars. If the room you are recording in has unsightly walls or furniture in the background, you might want to invest in a green screen backdrop background. Fancierstudio has a 6' x9' Chromakey Green Screen for less than \$20. Make sure you purchase a stand unless you plan to hang it from the ceiling. Some of these come with the green screen only so make sure you get all of the items with the kit.

With a green screen, you can literally be anywhere in the world by using an image of another location, or even an image of your company logo behind you. Many of the webinar companies like Zoom have a feature whereby you can upload your image to their platform. But you do need a green screen in order for this to work.

If you do use a green screen then this is where your lighting package will come in handy. The lighting in the background needs to be evenly lit or you might

have a difficult time replacing the background. Typically you should use three-point lighting with one on light each side and one in the front to light the subject which is you, the speaker.

So whichever webinar equipment you decide fits your budget you'll be glad that you went ahead and purchased these items for your next webinar. You'll have increased the quality of your live streaming webinars tenfold. Your attendees will appreciate this extra effort.

## Special Offer

We're offering a **FREE** one-to-one 30-minute consultation to help you develop your next webinar. Just complete the short questionnaire at the following link:

<https://kiwi-comm.com/marketing-transformation-session/>

and we'll contact you to schedule your personal session. Spaces are limited so sign up today.

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