

Generate Qualified Leads



with Webinars

Why marketers should use webinars
in their content marketing strategy

Are you adding webinars to your content marketing strategy?

Explore how to develop your content, promote your webinar and produce fantastic lead results

Lead generation is often regarded as the most challenging and costly aspect of an organization's marketing efforts. It is critical to reach large and targeted audiences, but you also need to capture invaluable information about those leads to qualify them and give your sales team something solid to work with. How do you do that?

THE ANSWER IS WEBINARS

Not only are webinars a brand-building vehicle to reach a large and dispersed audience, they are extremely effective at generating qualified leads. In fact, according to analyst firm Forrester, webinars were found to be the number one source of lead generation for B2B businesses.

Not only that, but webinars give you the most bang for your buck. According to BusinessWeek, a webinar can slash up to 80% of the cost to host a live event in-person. In 2015, webinars were used by more than 60% of content marketers, according to research by the Content Marketing Institute (CMI) and MarketingProfs.

So how can you make webinars a successful part of your content marketing strategy? How can you use webinars to develop more qualified sales leads? In this whitepaper, we will look at the process of building a webinar, including selecting a topic, and finding the perfect speakers and panelists. We will also look at how you can promote your event to strategically capture leads.



Successful content marketers are truly expanding the use of webinars for all aspects of the buyer's journey."

- Robert Rose, Chief Strategy Officer,
Content Marketing Institute



WHY MARKETERS SHOULD USE WEBINARS

If you are looking for an effective way to generate more leads, you need to use webinars. A webinar is the most effective way to engage authentically with your audience.

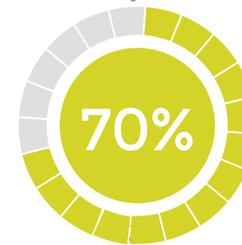
Through webinars, marketers can more successfully and efficiently generate leads by reaching a wide audience at a low cost. Consider these main reasons for why marketers should use webinars:

- **Audience Interaction to Engage Attendees:** Today's platforms allow you to send poll questions, ask and answer questions, or get participants to raise their hand throughout your presentation. This two-way communication feels more like a personal interaction than just reading a blog post or white paper.
- **Allows a more interactive call to action:** You can further the discussion started in a webinar by a free trial sign-up or offering a white paper to download.
- **Qualified Lead Generation at a Low Cost:** You can gain more contact details and engage with potential clients at a relatively low cost.
- **Leverage the recording:** Webinars can have a long life for the time investment. You can share the recording with those who couldn't attend and/or archive it on your website.

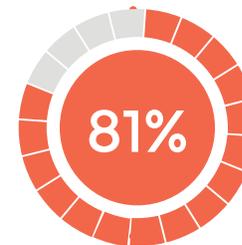
As webinars become the norm for B2B marketers, the question becomes not whether you should create webinars in the first place but, rather, how you can create this interactive and dynamic content to develop new leads and engage customers.



Compared to a typical email campaign, **59% of GoToWebinar customers** find they can greatly expand their reach with webinars



A survey by MarketingProfs found that **70% of marketers** view webinars as effective or very effective at generating qualified leads



Webinars also have a bigger audience and a longer shelf life than in-person events, **81% of customers** use recordings to reach even more attendees



And finally, don't forget that just **one webinar** is a true content marketing hub for customers to use as recorded events

HOW TO DEVELOP YOUR CONTENT

According to 2015 research by CMI, the biggest challenge for marketers interested in doing a webinar is developing the content.

Television executives know that if you don't engage the audience, the audience will change the channel. It's the same for marketers looking to produce webinars. So how do you find great content and worthwhile speakers for your webinar?

Start by remembering that a webinar should not be about pitching or selling.

"Webinars are not about selling," says Mike Agron, a webinar demand generation expert and co-founder of WebAttract. "They are about stimulating someone's intellectual curiosity, teaching them something and inspiring them to want to have a conversation. Then you can determine how you can help them and convert them from a prospect into a customer."

As marketers, you should find a topic that interests your audience and ties to your brand, similar to how you seek subject matter for a content marketing blog post.

If finding the time to create the content still proves to be a challenge, you can always leverage the resources of those that offer to build webinars on your behalf. That's why Cahaba Media Group has launched Cahaba Content Marketing. This natural extension of services, allows businesses in the markets we serve to leverage industry experts and creative professionals to write the content and design the components for maximum impact.

TAKE THE CREATIVE PROCESS UP A NOTCH

Don't Go It Alone

Hold a brainstorming session with your sales team, and bring in people from different departments who can spark new and fresh ideas. Brainstorming sessions can help you to see different perspectives and what will resonate most with your audience.

A good starting point for finding topics for your webinars is:

- **Existing marketing content:** Look at a subject that has already resonated
- **Social media:** Watch what topics are trending on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn
- **Industry newsletters:** Subscribe to those that cover your industry. Check content on your competitors' websites for inspiration



Be Your Audience

Another tip is to ask yourself: What would an audience be eager to hear? Your webinar content should aim to appeal to a targeted audience. Keep in mind that people are always interested in hearing tips, lessons learned or new ways to improve a business.

Tell a Great Story

Your aim is to present content that will deliver relevant information, which will teach your audience something, inspire them and stimulate their curiosity. One way to accomplish this is using a case study to drive your webinar.

Consider offering continuing education credits (CEUs). Many professionals are encouraged to complete CEUs as part of their job, to keep certifications, or for advancements. CEUs is a great way to attract more attendees, improve engagement and gain brand equity.

While coming up with a topic is important – deciding how it is presented is equally critical.

Delivering the Story

Research by CMI in 2015 found the most successful B2B webinars were those with expert speakers. Getting someone else to tell your story can be extremely powerful. Use thought leaders, storytellers and experienced panelists to be part of your webinar to not only establish credibility, but keep your audience engaged.

The most captivating webinars are those that bring in experts who can add varied perspectives and engage the audience if possible. Think about how many people would be needed to create a lively discussion within your allotted time, without feeling too crowded. Adding one or two additional panelists can spark interesting conversation.

To determine who would make a good panelist, have a clear goal of what you want to achieve from the webinar. If quantity of lead generation is your number one aim,

Creative webinar formats to try

- **Q&A panel discussion:** A speaker or panel can invite questions from the audience. This is a great format to automatically command audience interactions and could generate some lively debate. Questions can be submitted before the webinar or posed during the event.
- **Interview:** This can be an engaging way to conduct a webinar. The interview between one or more participants can be done by video, over the phone or via a screen share. It is particularly effective when you have a highly animated interviewee or someone who rarely gives interviews.
- **Reveal Insider Information:** Shh! It's a secret. Host a webinar to reveal new products or solutions. During the presentation, host a Q&A about the new innovations or process.
- **Less is more:** The late Steve Jobs was a powerful communicator. One of his rules was that the average PowerPoint slide must not have more than 40 words. For example, when he was unveiling the iPhone, the first three minutes of his presentation used just 19 words across 12 slides. Job's presentation philosophy of simplicity had enormous impact – creating immediate buzz.
- **Target Pain Points:** Consider conducting a series of webinars to educate your audience with tips and best practices. Many webinar series have and can create a strong following.
- **Have a Star Host:** Consider searching for speakers who have participated in other webinars or conferences, or client or industry experts you may have seen speak at a conference and who have impressed you with their ability to captivate an audience.

Create a Plan to Capture Leads

Ready To Get Started?

you may want to recruit a panelist who can help attract a larger audience.

While a webinar is a great medium to attract a targeted audience, the real jackpot is the data you collect from attendees. The biggest challenge B2B marketers face with lead gen is generating high-quality leads. So how do you effectively capture leads and convert them to sales?

COLLECT AND SHARE DATA

Marketing and sales should work as a team when it comes to planning a webinar lead gen strategy. This helps determine what information they would like to glean from the registration landing page. The objective is to learn about those who are registering without being too invasive. A best practice, depending on your audience, is to capture the following information:

- **Full name, email, phone number**
- **Organization, job title, industry**
- **State or province, zip code, country**

This enables your sales team to quickly establish whether it makes sense for them to target the registrant further.

Additional information that could be helpful to your sales team includes:

- **Add Poll Questions** - ask questions during the webinar and track results - most technology can track results and associate them with the attendee with a downloadable report at the end of the webinar. What would your sales team like to learn from the attendees of this webinar? This helps your sales team know how to categorize the leads and helps you create compelling content for the event.
- **Enable Questions and Comments** - always check this optional field as it allows people to ask for follow-up before the webinar.
- **Survey at the End:** Making sure your attendees received value is important - but using this as a time to ask one or two more questions is a great consolidated touch point from an engaged participant that stuck with you to the end of your presentation.



of marketers found generating high-quality leads an enormous hurdle.

BUILD AN EFFECTIVE LANDING PAGE

You have five seconds to convince a person to read your email, so make sure your event landing page grabs their attention too. Essential components of a landing page should include:

- **A captivating headline, with the title of the webinar**
- **A set of three to five bullet points, including the date, time and highlights**
- **A clear focus on what your audience will learn from attending**

To avoid individuals from abandoning the registration process midway through, optimize your sign-up flow by creating a powerful landing page.

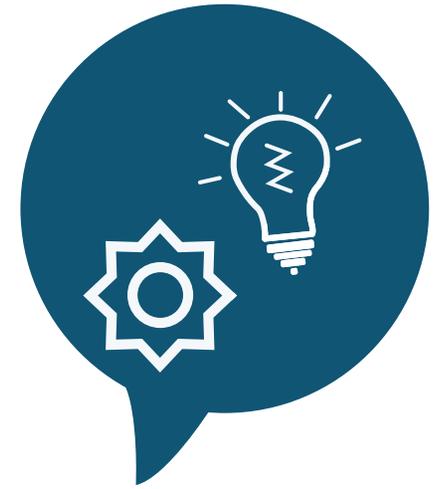
MAXIMIZE YOUR DATABASE

Take an 'audience development' approach and integrate webinars into more stages of the buyer's journey. Webinar registration info will improve the quality of your marketing database.

How to Promote Your Webinar to Attract the Biggest Audience

To maximize attendance and generate more qualified leads, it's essential to plan your communication strategy. One best practice is to invite prospects who have expressed interest in your topic or have downloaded related content from your website. The webinar is an opportunity to take those who have expressed interest and invite them to evolve from a prospect to someone who is willing to engage with your brand.

While the webinar may not be the best time to sell, it can give you a starting point for a later dialogue with those potential clients. Your in-house prospect list isn't the only vital asset in targeting potential attendees. Consider inviting existing clients in your



Key strategies for building an audience:

- **Highlight the unique selling proposition:** Tell your potential audience what they will learn from the webinar
- **Include a hero shot and testimonial:** A photo and short bio of the speaker will pique people's interest, it also makes it more personal
- **Provide giveaways:** Entice people with a free gift, such as an excerpt from the presenter's new book, or a yet to be released white paper
- **Explain benefits:** Add short, sharp and powerful copy that outlines what your audience will gain by attending the webinar
- **Offer a call to action:** Create a clear call to action that directs potential attendees to register

database to register for the event. Those existing clients can help increase vitality of the webinar, increasing the odds of greater lead generation.

Congratulations!

You're now ready to start setting up your first webinar. Yes, it can be a bit daunting, but it is an investment worth making to boost your lead generation and expand your audience reach.

And once you are ready to promote that webinar - we hope you will consider hosting it with us through one of our media brands as sponsored content.

- **Construction Business Owner** - Construction business owners and their key team members in the office and in the field.
- **Pumps & Systems** - End users of pumps and related equipment in the process industries worldwide.
- **HomeCare** - Homecare business audiences including agencies, home medical equipment, durable medical equipment, aging-in-place, long-term care and more.



Webinars are a critical, proven lead generation tactic that can fuel your pipeline with buyers across all stages.”

- Lauren Collopy,
Salesforce Webinar Lead Corporate Campaigns

Boost Your Webinar Audience

- 1. Use social media as your ally:** By tweeting about your webinar with a sign-up link, a follower may retweet that message.
- 2. Ask panelists to promote it:** Speakers can spread the word through their own social networks or company newsletters.
- 3. Get repeat attendees:** At the conclusion of the webinar, have your attendees take an exit survey. They can then opt in to attend future events.
- 4. Encourage your sales team to promote to prospects:** Alert your sales team to your webinar and ask them to reach out to any prospects.
- 5. Include in newsletters:** Promote your webinar in your company newsletter or an email blast.