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How To Get Started With Webinars

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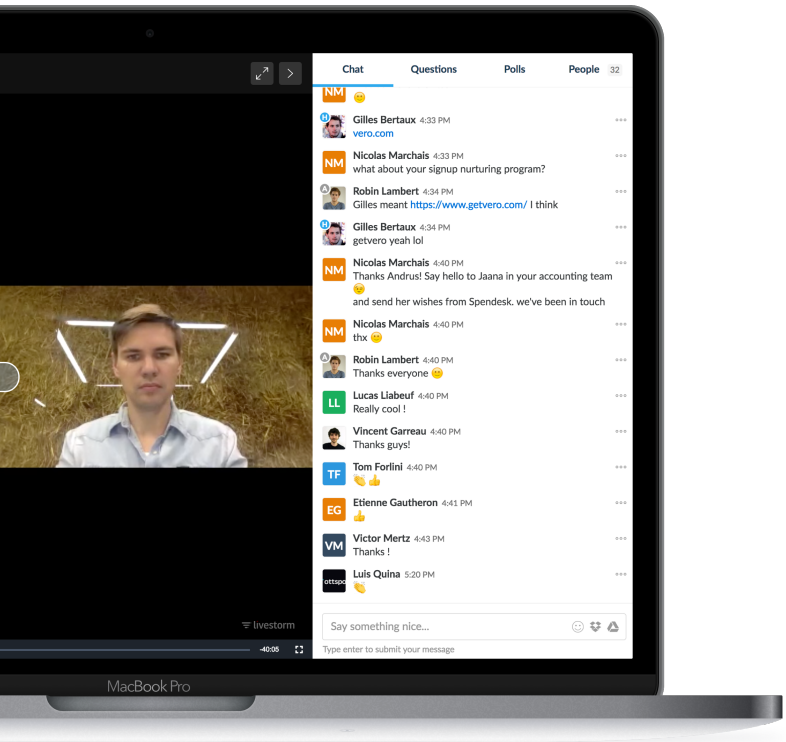
How To Get Started With Webinars

What's a webinar?

The term webinar is short for web-based seminar.

A webinar can be a presentation, lecture, workshop or seminar. There are several ways to call it but, at the end of the day, it consists in transmitting a video conference over the Web.

A key feature of a Webinar is its interactive elements: the ability to give, receive and discuss information in real-time from a small group of presenters (often one or two) to a large audience (up to thousands).



Another characteristic is that, while the presenters are speaking they can share their screen, their webcam or even documents to the audience.

Why webinars

Let me show you how to do webinars to maximize your ROI.

Not every company, small or big, are doing webinars. And that's a shame. Here at Livestorm, we believe that live streaming events (webcasts, webinars, etc.) can have a huge impact on a company's revenue, marketing and visibility.

Yet, it is true that hosting webinars can be tough:

It's time consuming, you have to engage a lot of effort to find a topic, a guest, etc.

Finding great content, something worth talking about, can lead to serious headaches. Without mentioning that you have to create that content afterward (slides, emails, etc).

Webinar promotion may not be efficient enough. Which can impact your registration volume and your conversion rate.

Hosting a presentation is not something everyone is confortable with. Being confortable talking in front of a webcam is hard.

But those aspects can be balanced by other positive effects. Webinars are a great mean to get more leads and/or visibility.

Consider the following:

People actually agree to signup (that is leaving some of their information). They want to watch you talk about your expertise or your product. It means that you already engaged them on a conversion path.

You have a tribune and people paying attention to whatever you have to say. You can speak about whatever topic you find relevant for you.

By reaching out to several people at once you may get a serious gain in time and productivity. You can make more your sales at once. You can avoid doing long painful one-on-one interviews.

Webinars are super easy to scale for small companies. It does not matter if you have a one-person sales team, you'll still be able to reach out to 100, 500, 1000 people at once.

They are a great way to gather more data and qualify your leads. Indeed polls, questions, behavioural data are great for getting to know your audience.

Webinars are great for engaging prospects, generating leads, driving sales and delivering content. All at the same time. Which is a huge gain in productivity.

Good news is that I will walk you through every item mentioned above. That way you will get more done in less time. Webinars should not be a pain.

In this guide we will dive into the essentials:

- Organising webinars
- Giving great presentations
- Activating your audience afterwards
- Measuring your performance
- Finding the right webinar tool

If you would like some feedback on your webinar process, send me an email about it, and I'll share our thoughts!

How to prepare webinars

First, get your business objectives right.

Define your goals. What do you expect from this webinar? This will help you define what kind of presentation you want to give. It will drive the whole content creation process and even the tool you want to use.

Webinars are great for many purposes and not only lead generation. I think you could narrow it down to 3 main use cases:

- **Sales webinar**
- **Content webinar on your expertise**
- **Customer training**

Each case has specific requirements for doing great webinars.

1. Spend time on your headline.

This will be the first attribution factor of conversion in registration process. Great headlines make people want to hear what you have to say and maybe even join the conversation.

Specificity: Is it specific enough to be addressed in 30 minutes?

Clarity: Is it clear enough for everyone? People come to learn something. Often

their initial state is basic knowledge on the topic.

Value: According to this headline, will I get any value from this webinar? (my time is precious, don't waste it).

2. Define success metrics.

How are you going to measure that your webinar was successful or not?

Unfortunately, registrants/attendees is not enough.

Be specific. You want something from this event, otherwise you would not spend so much time on this. Find actionable metrics. Here are a few examples:

- Signups
- Shares / Visibility / Referrals
- Upgrades
- Promocode activation
- Registrations to an event
- Free trial extension
- ...

4. Build up a webinar team

I believe there's a correlation between the size of that team and the webinar tool you're using. The better the tool the less people you'll need.

Either way, you could narrow down your team to those people:

- The **promoter**
- The **host**
- The **moderator**

The promoter will be doing all the promotion heavy-lifting (images, emails, social media, etc.).

The host will be in charge of organizing and presenting the webinar.

The moderator will be in charge of moderating your audience while you speak.

You could do the first two or even the three of them without spending some extra-time. If you're lucky enough to have a good tool ;)

5. Have guests

In every use case it is always great to have guests for many reasons:

Shows **legitimacy** (if the guest is a happy customer)

Shows **expertise** (if the guest is a well-known expert on the topic)

Everything becomes more **dynamic**, it pushes toward focus and interactions with your audience.

Even if it's a team member, let's say a technical profile, it will add value to the conversation.

Two guests max. I found that having more than 2 guests will have negative effects such as:

- Lack of clarity
- Potential digressions
- The audience becomes inactive, passive which impact the focus rate.

Pick a tool that allows many presenters.

As for the process, it depends on the tool, this is how it goes for Livestorm:

Go to “Create webinar" fill the basic information (title, description, date, speakers etc.)

If you want you can customize the registration page, emails reminders but note that we can cover that part ;)

Voilà ! Your landing page is ready and your emails are ready.

How to promote your webinars

Before the webinar

One simple way to promote your webinar is to use your attendees network. Use social shares during registration or during your webinar. You can also suggest email forwards.

In your network:

- Related blog post with a “learn more during our webinar” conclusion
- Blog widget/link/image in a sidebar/ bottom of posts
- Promote it on your homepage (section, top bar, popup...)
- Related Linkedin post with a “learn more during our webinar” conclusion
- Build a twitter list you find relevant beforehand and then reach out to them
- Twitter cards with one click signup (no friction, more conversion)
- Own email database

Outside your network

Here are a few more ideas outside your own network:

- Linkedin groups (but don’t be too “salesy”, try to bring value to the community)
- Slack channels
- Forums or FB groups depending on your industry
- Growthhackers.com Inbound.org (but don’t be too “salesy”, try to bring value to the community)

You can also apply those principles to your guest audience (if you have a guest).

Also try to bring something exclusive to increase conversion (promocode, access to a feature...).

> **Pro tip**: emails are the best way to drive traffic to your registration page. You can go with hand designed HTML emails consistent with your registration page. Also, you could do plain text emails. But then, personalize your emails (template logics to parse your customer data).

During the webinar

This one is simple. Just give a great presentation and **interact** as much as you can with your guest and audience. Here your best promotion lever is your own webinar.

If you’re using a webinar hashtag on Twitter, ask your team to repost your answers or polls on Twitter.

Try to engage on Twitter at the same time to extend your visibility and bring more people in.

After the webinar

Try to deliver a **special attention** to those people at the end of the webinar.

Send the video, the slides, a transcript of the questions, maybe even some data. This way, you ensure more visibility and a better conversion next time.

And pick a tool that handle post-webinar emailing for non-attendees ;)

> **Pro tips:**
>
> Also, consider republishing your webinar to the replay page or your Youtube footage.
>
> Don't hesitate to republish your content on Slideshare, blog posts or even tweetstorms.
>
> Another cool trick is to repost your answers to your question on Twitter. And use your webinar hashtag.

When should I start the promotion?

You should promote your webinar at the beginning of the week.

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday had more pre-registrations.

You're likely to get the best success when you have 3–4 weeks to promote your webinar. But you can go up to **2.5 weeks** for promotions if need be.

Also, 95.4% of pre-registrations happens before the day of your live event.

Pro tip: focus your effort ons the "starting now" email. Usually those emails get a 35–40% CTR!

Giving a great presentation (7 days after)

There's no recipe for doing successful webinars every single time. Yet, there are best practices:

- Keep your slide deck clean, simple, and easy to read
- Avoid jargon, be didactic
- Keep text ratio low, use lots of (beautiful, high-res) images
- One slide, one idea, restrain the use of bullet points.
- Test your equipment. Make sure your have a good microphone and that your video quality is not limited by your webcam. Often, integrated devices on Macbooks are a good standard.
- Turn off every potential distracting noise.
- Lock yourself in a quiet room with a neutral background and natural light.
- Test everything 30 minutes before
- Look as much as you can to the camera
- Smile! Your speech will be less monotonous. You'll bring more energy and people will be more likely to engage with you.

How to create a webinar setup: Never overlook your environment

a. Pick a quiet spot

The environment is the number one factor that people usually overlook. Pick a quiet

meeting room to settle with your team (e.g if they have moderation roles).

Make sure you are comfortable and that you will not be disturbed by external noises, people entering the room, etc.

b. Make sure you have enough light

In video as in photography, **light is everything**.

It will impact how you look, the quality of the video, and how your company looks. The better the light, the more professional it will look.

Also, you don't have to invest in fancy equipment. Just pick a room with enough natural light coming in. Make sure that the source of the light is not behind you to avoid backlighting.

c. Have a branded setting (optional)

If you have a wall behind you with your brand on it (e.g stickers) then it's even better. Your setting is your ally, it will help you promote your brand.

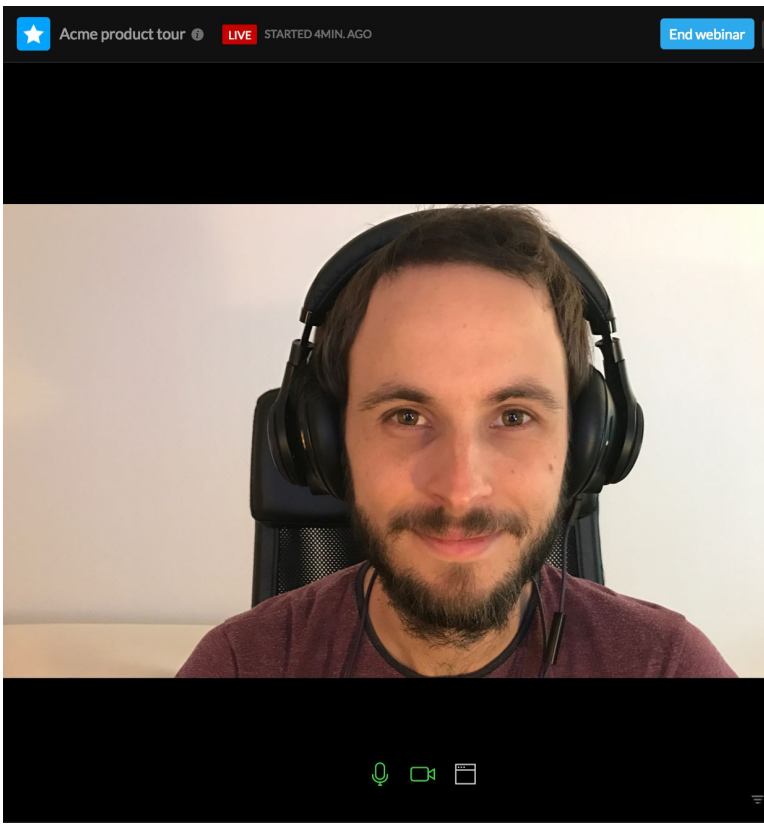
Actually, any piece of advertising behind you can be a plus.

How to create a webinar setup: always check the technical requirements

a. Is your network « webinar compliant »?

This is the most tricky part of the webinar setup. **You should check this parameter early on**.

Sometimes, in some companies, even startups, the network is so secure that it won't let pass specific protocols for live streaming videos.



Ask you IT just in case ;)

b. Is your Internet speed fast / stable enough for a webinar session?

Everybody hates a bad Internet connexion. Especially when you're live streaming!

To prevent any issue:

- Make sure you have at least 5Mbps in download and upload.
- Stop any application on your computer that requires too much bandwidth (torrents, Google Drive app, scripts...).

c. Are you using a modern browser?

There are two scenarios to consider:

You are the host or a co-host:

Then you are probably going to stream either you webcam or your screen (or

both!). Then you need a browser that supports screen-sharing and is WebRTC compliant. Here's the list:

- Google Chrome (safest)
- Opera (safe)
- Firefox (safe, but requires some configuration)
- Safari does not support screen-sharing and many video flux. IE, even Edge, does not support anything.

You are an attendee:

This is the safest place to be, at least on Livestorm.

All browsers will work. Even on mobile. But, again, the safest list is:

- Google Chrome (safest)
- Opera (safe)
- Firefox (safe, does not need configuration here).
- Safari and IE(10+) will work but the video resolution will be downgraded.

d. « 1–2, 1–2, Mic test »

Check your mic and camera. You would not believe how annoying it is to have a beard scratching your EarPods mic!

Just do a quick test using some free video chat tools like Appear.in.

Double check if you are using external mic or camera...

If you change your microphone / webcam settings in Chrome, don't forget to refresh the page!

How to create a webinar setup: Screen setup & Keynote

a. Quick notice

Unfortunately, not all browser and apps behave the same way. Here are a few tips before we start:

You cannot switch between screen-shares, you have to shut your screen sharing off before changing to the next.

You cannot screen-share a keynote app in full screen. Keynote just don't work like that. But we found a trick... **Export it to PDF**.

b. Do you have a PDF AND a demo?

This is a tricky configuration. It forces you to stream your entire screen. As soon as you switch between apps (e.g Keynote, and Chrome), everybody will see your other apps while your transition between apps.

This setup requires two computer screens (e.g laptop + external).

Let's pretend I have a demo and a PDF presentation. Here's what you need:

- One computer screen with your presentation in full screen
- One Chrome window open on your laptop with your demo ready
- And of course, another Chrome window open with Livestorm (or any webinar app)
- (Optional) A third external screen (#nerdAlert) with your notes or your team chat

The rest is pretty straightforward:

Start streaming your presentation app.

Once you're done and you want to move to the demo, switch your screen-sharing off.

It will fallback to your webcam. Make your demo announcement.

Turn it on again, and share your Chrome window with the demo.

That's it. No weird transition. Perfect webinar :)

Avoid awkward moments

Last small checks and you're good to go. Those checks can avoid awkward moments:

- Turn off your **notifications**
- Clean that **browsing history**. You NEVER know. When you do a demo don't let that come in your way.
- **Clean your desktop**. You don't want to look messy.

How and when to host webinars

Creating the webinar

First you need a structure. A path to follow to make sur everyone understand what you're all about.

Here's the structure I use. I almost never change it or maybe just a little bit depending on the content or the guest:

- Title
- Webinar housekeeping (your webinar rules, hashtag, where/when to ask questions, etc.)
- Topic reminder (what are you going to talk about?)
- Company description (what do you do?)
- Speakers (bio + pic)
- Table of content
- What you'll learn (few bullet-points, keep it concise)
- Poll (always cool to start with a small poll to create engagement)
- Your content (do your thing here!)
- Wrapping up (recap what you just said)
- Key takeaways (focus on key points to remember)
- Put in action (optional, but give some actionable items here)
- Q&A
- Thank you (bios, where to find the slides, promo code...)

This structure should not exceed 60min usually it goes like this:

- 1 to 12 in 20–30 minutes
- 13–14 in 15–30 minutes

> Pro tip: Use a Twitter hashtag. People will be able to post on Twitter your content and you will promote and engage outside you webinar.

By the way, we created a free clean webinar template for Keynote (AND Powerpoint!). You can view the webinar template here.

The download link is at the end of the deck.

Create polls (47% participation in avg.) reply to questions, share documents and links, etc. Engage your audience during your webinar. Give as much as you can so that you can receive.

Tuesday to Thursday are the best days to host. To optimise your attendance conversion rates, host your webinars on Tuesdays or Wednesdays. That way you can avoid the peak of presentations on Thursday.

> Pro tip: 8am PST is the most attended time for a webinar.

How to activate after the webinars

I won't spend too much time on the emailing part for the absent or the people that actually showed up.

You should pick a tool that can send emails to the live attendees and registrants that did not show up.

Adapt your message and send the replay (or any document you find relevant) to both.

What I meant is that you should get under the hood, drill down into your audience data and make some sense out of it.

Make it relevant for your own business objectives.

Get to know your webinar audience

Usually, the classic webinar tools offers a basic CSV export of your audience. Download it and once you have the raw data start playing with it. Here's what you should be looking for:

- What user property is more relevant to my lead profile?
- Among them, who has been paying attention?
- Among them, who seem interested?

Send the right message

Once you have a small niche of relevant leads. Reuse that data to create personalized emails. You could do it by hand of course but passed a certain volume you should automate it. Just make sure you have data on everyone and create a template email.

It could go something as simple as:

> Hello {{firstName}}, My name is Gilles, I'm the CEO of Livestorm. I hosted the webinar "{{webinar_name}}". I was drilling into our audience data, and I saw that you answered {{reponseToPollX}} to our poll. After looking up your profile, as a {{jobPosition}}, I'd love to have your feedback. Would you be up for call? Maybe next week?
>
> Let me know,
>
> Gilles

How to measure your performance

This part is quite easy, if you have set your business objectives right beforehand. Then you just have to convert those goals in KPIs and do some research.

In general, my point of view is that the ratio registrants/attendees is not good enough. It only tells you if you did a good job at making the webinar description appealing for your registrant.

But that's only a part of the big picture. You should aim for funnel analysis from visits to deal closing (if that's your goal). You want to know:

- How many people saw your page
- How many of them started their registration
- How many actually registered
- How many showed up
- How many were still here at the end of your webinar
- How many were hot prospects among the audience
- How many of those prospects did you reach out to
- How many of those agreed for a demo, call, whatever
- How many of those closed a deal (thanks to the webinar).

You could say that this is the webinar pyramid scale of values. From the less important information to the most important.

If your translate those to KPIs it goes something like:

Question	KPI
How many people saw your page	Unique visitors
How many of them started their registration	% of visitors who clicked on the email input
How many actually registered	Number of registrations
How many showed up	Number of attendees AND conversion rate
How many were hot prospects among the audience	Number of whatever-criteria-fits-best-your-business
How many of those prospects did you reach out to	Number of calls, emails, etc.
How many of those agreed for a demo, call, whatever	Number of demos AND conversion rate from previous
How many of those closed a deal (thanks to the webinar).	Number of closed deals

How to find the right tool

Here's the answer I gave on Quora a while back.

The best webinar software is the one that will fix the webinar problem.

They are a great business driver. BUT the existing tools are not exploiting the webinar to its full potential.

Here are the main problems:

- Poor UX (extra software to install, old UI...)
- You do not know your audience

- No communication between tools

You should look for a tool that will solve those problems.

At Livestorm we are working on those 3 main issues.

We will provide features to address the webinar problem. You can create a free account here.

Here are our key features:

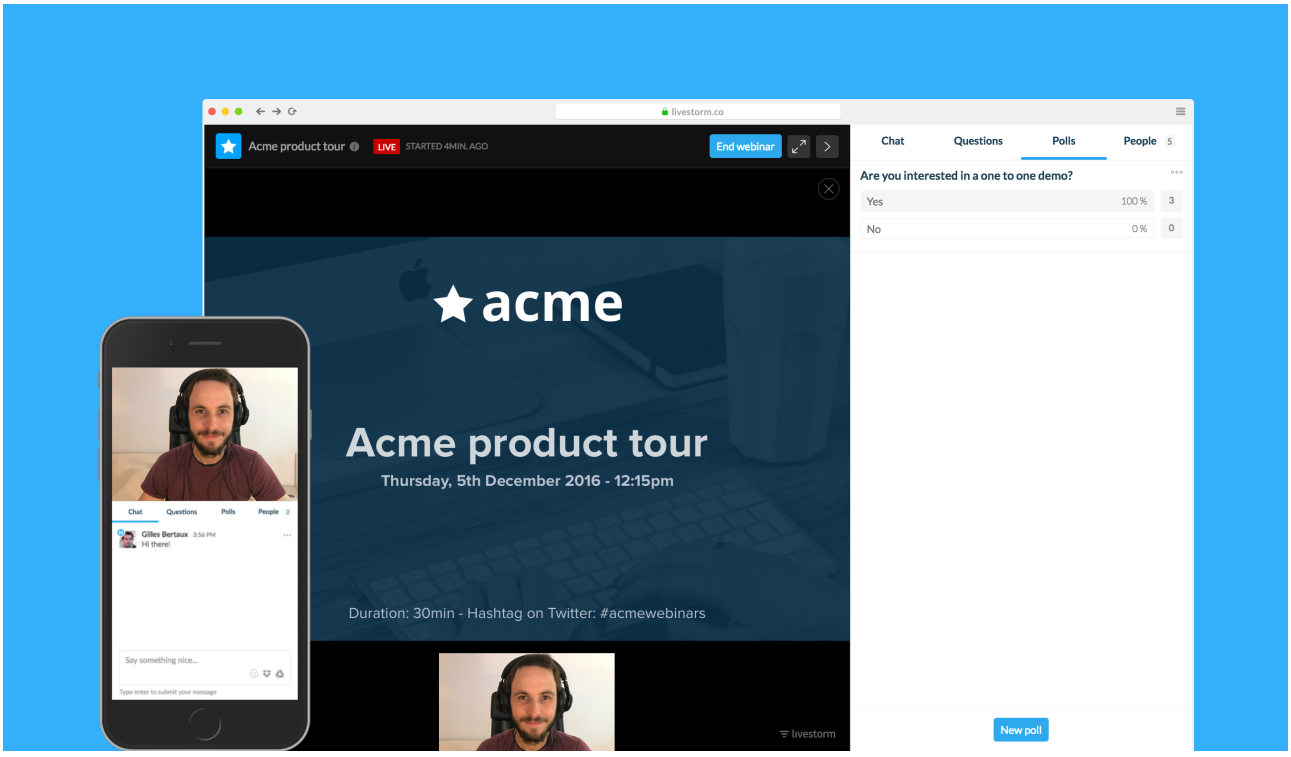
- Some of our key features are: 100% in-the-browser HD webinars with webcam/ screen-sharing
- Automated logistic and custom registration pages
- Deep analytics based on demographical and behavioural data
- Advanced audience segmentation
- CRM integrations (Segment, Salesforce, Hubspot...)

Of you course we will provide the basic webinar requirements. We can provide replay, chat, q&a section, polls, multi-presenter etc.

We want to make webinars smarter, simpler and more efficient.

That's it. You've reached the end of this course, great job! Please share your feedbacks at gilles@livestorm.co.

Keep doing great things.

Gilles,

CEO @ Livestorm.