



# 5 ways to boost marketing ROI with online meetings

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Seven out of 10 business people today prefer meeting online over traveling to meetings, according to the CBS Small Business Pulse.<sup>1</sup> With this overwhelming preference for virtual meetings, it's no wonder that top marketers are using online meetings to boost ROI on their activities.

Specifically, online meetings can help businesses find new and higher-quality leads and market opportunities, strengthen customer relationships, extend marketing efforts through partners, and demonstrate ROI for their initiatives.

This paper explores five ways your business can take advantage of online meetings. You'll get insights and practical tips to help enhance your marketing efforts and demonstrate the ROI to your senior management.

<sup>1</sup> CBS Small Business Pulse. (August 7, 2015). [Infographic], ["Web Conferences Versus In-Person Meetings"](#)

Small and midsize businesses can follow these five best-in-class online meeting practices to achieve their revenue goals:

- 1 Find new and better leads with webinars
- 2 Use online events to follow prospects along the buyer's journey
- 3 Close the sale with online demonstrations
- 4 Create a better customer experience with online events
- 5 Build powerful partnerships by sharing information online



## 1 Find new and better leads with webinars

Two-thirds of B2B content marketers say webinars are an effective marketing strategy.<sup>2</sup> Why do they work? “Webinars are extremely powerful for drawing in and keeping in touch with prospects. They showcase your brand’s expertise in your industry and give your company a human voice, literally,” said Drew Hendricks, contributor at Forbes / Entrepreneur.<sup>3</sup>

No other kind of marketing content offers this live format where prospects and customers get valuable, educational information that helps them make informed business decisions. As noted by Hendricks, webinars also can establish your subject matter experts as thought leaders whom prospects look to and trust for information.

By building engaging webinars presented by your team or industry experts – and incorporating them into strategic marketing demand-generation campaigns – you can attract more and better quality leads.

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<sup>2</sup> eMarketer. (June 5, 2015). [“For B2Bs, Webinars Are a Winning Tactic”](#)

<sup>3</sup> Forbes/Entrepreneurs. (February 19, 2015). [“5 Killer Tips For Marketing With Webinars In 2015”](#)

Here are some tips to maximize the value of your webinars:

- Invite industry leaders from outside your company to increase interest and registrations for your events.
- Make sure you provide information, not a sales pitch. Your prospects can spot the difference immediately. They'll drop off and never come back if you try to sell them something before they're ready to buy.
- Build invitations and reminders into your marketing campaigns to new contacts and existing database prospects.
- Promote your webinars with emails, and then amplify those messages with targeted online advertising, third-party content syndication, list purchases, and social media.

Today's online meeting tools allow you to invite, register, and follow up with your registrants and attendees. You can also upload attendees into your marketing automation and CRM systems to track their progress through the sales pipeline. This gives you the power to measure the ROI of your online events.

Once you've produced an effective webinar, maximize your ROI by offering it as an on-demand presentation in future lead-generation and nurture campaigns.

## 2 Use online events to follow prospects along the buyer's journey

Don't stop with a one-off webinar. B2B buyers are highly engaged with webinar content, with 44% spending 30 or more minutes on a webinar.<sup>4</sup> Take your prospects through the buyer's journey with an integrated series of webinars and online meetings. Your initial webinar will attract new leads that qualify themselves with their interest in your event.

Create follow-up webinars that begin to introduce prospects to your solutions as they enter the evaluation stage of the buyer's journey.

Collaborate with your field marketing team to use video conferencing and application sharing to personally engage with prospects before face-to-face marketing events – or as a follow-up to an onsite field marketing event or trade show.



If you have a marketing automation system, use a lead-scoring model that assigns a score for webinar attendance.

<sup>4</sup> Demand Gen Report. (October 28, 2015), [B2B Marketers Take a Full-Funnel Approach to Webinars](#)

Your marketing and technical teams can meet online with prospects and use online meeting features, such as video conferencing or whiteboarding, to understand prospect needs and collaboratively develop custom solutions.

At each stage of this integrated approach, track prospect interest and, ultimately, hand highly qualified leads to your sales team.

### 3 Close the sale with online demonstrations

Once your prospects are in the consideration phase where they are looking at the various solutions available to them, you can help sales close the deal by providing live and on-demand product demonstrations. To make sure your online demos are successful, here are some helpful tips.

First, ensure your prospects are qualified. BANT qualification is a good basic measure. This means the prospect has B: budget; A: authority to purchase; N: need; and T: a timeline for purchase.

You can offer one-on-one demos or group demos that are scheduled regularly – for instance, every week. For group demos, coordinate as invitation-only events to ensure qualified attendees participate. Keep the groups small so they can be highly interactive and personalized.

If you have a software solution, online meetings are ideally suited to demonstrate it. Make the best use of the online tools by using the following features:

- Use application sharing to give a guided tour of your product.
- Give attendees control so they can actually “test drive” your product.
- Use video conferencing so your attendees can see you as well as the product for a more personal experience.
- Add polls to get feedback as you proceed through your demonstration.
- Use chat and/or audio to address attendee questions.

Have your sales reps follow up with attendees after the demo. They should include some key product collateral that provides additional details on your solutions.



If you don't have a software solution... consider creating an animation or video that shows 360-degree views of your product and points out different features.

If you don't have a software solution, you can still use online meetings for demos. Here are a couple of ideas:

- Consider creating an animation or video that shows 360-degree views of your product and points out different features. Show this video during the online meeting with live or recorded narration followed by a Q&A session.
- Use screen sharing to take attendees to websites, online videos, or other documents to highlight product features, testimonials, case studies, etc.

Record demos so that attendees can review them and share the information with colleagues who may be involved in the final decision-making.

## 4 Create a better customer experience with online events

Your existing customers are your best prospects for purchase of product enhancements or new product offerings. They already know and trust you and your products or services. Creating exclusive online events for them to announce new products will make them feel valued. Make sure you let them know how much you value their trust and reward them by sharing inside information before you make a broad public announcement.

You can also present webinars to customers to educate them on how your other existing products or services can benefit them. Online meetings offer a great way to cross-sell or up-sell your best customers.

Don't stop there in using online meetings to enhance the customer experience. Present special customer events with subject matter experts or industry leaders to help your customers be more successful in their own businesses. Teach them how to become more productive or help them stay on top of future industry trends with exclusive, invitation-only special events.

## 5 Build powerful partnerships by sharing information online

If you have distributors, resellers, or any other partners, online meetings can help you get and keep your partners engaged and help them sell. Online meetings extend your marketing and sales efforts to all your channel partners easily and cost-effectively – without travel time and expenses.

Best-in-class marketers keep partners informed through regular online meetings – quarterly is usually a good frequency to start with. During these interactive meetings, your marketing team can let partners know about upcoming product enhancements or new product launches.

You can also use these quarterly presentations to let partners know about new sales incentive programs, or SPIFFs. If you have partners selling other solutions in addition to your products, this is a great way to keep your solutions top of mind.

When you introduce new products or new features to existing products, conduct training online to save money on business travel, and train all your channel partners (and field sales staff) at once. Make recordings available so partners can go back in later and review what they've learned. Beyond the technical details, include information on how to sell *your* solutions.

It's important to make partners feel that they are a valuable part of your team. Supplement onsite sales meetings with convenient, cost-effective online meetings. Track registration and attendance so you know which partners are motivated to sell.

## Take the next step

Today's top marketing pros use online meetings to provide informative, interactive content that engages people and helps them find solutions to the most pressing business challenges they face every day. From first contact through the sales process and then building stronger relationships with customers and channel partners, marketers are making the most of online meetings to boost their marketing ROI.

## More information

WebEx services scale to your needs, reach wherever you work, and deliver what's next for your business. For more information, visit [webex.com](http://webex.com) or contact sales at **1.877.509.3239**.

For more information on how WebEx services can increase productivity, reduce costs, and enhance engagement across your organization, refer to the following resources:

Consider scheduling quarterly online presentations to partners to tell them about new products and services and sales incentive programs you're offering.

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