Webinar/Simulcast Roles

For the successful production of a webinar or simulcast event, various roles should be considered that will help the event go smoothly. Even if all these roles are assigned and these recommendations are followed, technical issues may still occur but should be minimized.

We will be using the webinar platform to host both webinars and simulcast events, so throughout this document the term “webinar” may be used to refer to the technology being used to conduct the event (in the case of a simulcast event) or referring to a traditional webinar.

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# ​Webinar/Simulcast Roles and Responsibilities

Chapters should consider having more than just the presenter involved in the production of a webinar or simulcast because it will:

* Split the work among several people.
* Allow the presenter to concentrate on the material they will be teaching.
* Help address attendee questions quickly and efficiently.
* Allow for the recognition and quick resolution of technical issues.

Depending on the specific delivery type, you may want to have the following people in place to help with the event, such as a:

* Host(s)
* Presenter(s)
* Question and Answer/Chat Monitor(s)
* Session Monitor(s)
* Technical Contact

## Host

Whether you’re conducting a simulcast or a webinar, someone should be assigned as the main host for the event. This person(s) will start and run the webinar platform. They may also be the ones that set up the initial webinar and send the applicable links to those participating in the simulcast event (if a chapter is opt in, links may be sent by the national office to the appropriate parties). A host’s responsibilities may include the following (Note: Additional hosts could be used to split some of the responsibilities.):

* Introducing the presenter, including a brief biography or their qualifications to speak on the topic. And also introducing any other people that may speak during the webinar, like the host themselves and the Question and Answer (Q&A) monitor.
* Running the webinar program, which may include:
	+ Assigning roles and handing the presentation over to the presenter.
	+ Monitoring the Q&A and chat features of the webinar and answering questions and/or relaying appropriate questions to the presenter. This may be done either during or after the main presentation as appropriate (this responsibility could also be handled by the Question and Answer Monitor).
	+ Launching interactive features of the webinar (e.g. poll questions).
	+ Depending on the presenter’s comfort with technology, advance the presentation slides.
* Closing the session by thanking the presenter, attendees, and providing any other closing information.
* Running a report on the attendee’s feedback and provide that information to the presenter, the education person in charge of running the event, and potentially the chapter board.

### Additional Host Considerations for Simulcast Events

Since simulcast events cover more than one location, a host should be present at each location to fulfill some or all the responsibilities below, such as:

* Coordinating with the main location to start and end the session.
* Running the webinar program at their location.
* Relaying appropriate questions to the presenter or the main location via voice or the Q&A feature.
* Serve as a backup, if the main location’s webinar connection fails.
* Check registrants in.
* Hand out and collect the sign out sheets at their location (for events that have a Continuing Education (CE) component).

## Presenter/Instructor

The presenter is the instructor or speaker providing information to attendees. Multiple presenters may be used during a presentation, but it would be wise to host a few events with a single presenter before attempting to run one with multiple presenters in multiple locations. A presenter’s responsibilities are as follows:

* Presenting the material in an understandable manner.
* Providing and presenting materials on the topic they are teaching.
* Developing and utilizing interactive facets of their presentation and using the features of the webinar technology (such as asking people to post questions in the Q&A feature and utilizing polling questions).
* The presenter may also be in control of changing their slides, depending on the instructor’s familiarity with the webinar program and how the room is set up.

## Question and Answer Monitor (Q&A Monitor)

In many cases it may be beneficial to have someone monitor the Q&A and chat features of the webinar so the presenter can concentrate on the presentation of the topic while the host monitors, troubleshoots and assists in the presentation of the interactive materials. In some cases, the host may also be the Q&A monitor (as for simulcast events that will have a host at each location). The Q&A monitor’s responsibilities are as follows:

* Monitor the Q&A and chat feature.
* Answer questions via the Q&A or chat feature as appropriate.
* Relay questions to the presenter and/or host as appropriate.
* Work with others monitoring the webinar, like the host and technical person, to make them aware of any technical issues and help troubleshoot them as they arise.

## Session Monitor

Session monitors have a very easy, but extremely important role because they add another level of assurance that the presentation is going smoothly. They simply watch the presentation as a regular attendee would, but their responsibilities in doing this are as follows:

* Monitor the session for technical issues (like sound and visual qualities).
* Contact the host or technical contact if they notice any major issues with sound or visual quality.
	+ They should have an alternate way to reach the host other than through the webinar (like a text number) if the webinar chat is not working.
	+ This person may have to realize that it also could be their own connection that is to blame for the audio and visual quality.

## Technical Contact

Every session done via a webinar platform, whether it’s a simulcast or a webinar, should have a technical contact. The technical contact’s main job is to be familiar with the webinar platform and common issues people have with accessing the webinar platform, whether they are the host or an attendee. They should also be familiar with running a webinar or simulcast so they can provide guidance when issues occur.

Most technical issues will likely revolve around common issues, such as a lost link, logging into the webinar, or accessing the presentation materials. Generally, these are easy issues to resolve. This person should be familiar with where to find information on troubleshooting common problems. ​

Lastly, make sure everyone running the sessions, especially the technical person, has a contact list that is up to date that includes mobile phone numbers and emails, to make contacting people easier during troubleshooting.

# Summary

With the right people in place, webinars and simulcasts can be easy and effective to run. People can fill multiple roles with some experience, minimizing the number of people needed to run each session, but it is advised that you start small gaining familiarity with the roles before taking on more. As with any technology, familiarity with the platform you’ll be using, testing, and performing multiple dry runs, will help ensure a successful event.