

Diversity, equality, & inclusion tactics for webinars

Four simple things to consider.
Two free tools to use.



With hybrid and work-from-home arrangements normalizing virtual meetings of all kinds, savvy presenters are looking to improve Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in their webinars. Not sure where to start? Here are four simple steps.

1. Words matter

A picture may be worth 1,000 words, but words matter to webinar attendees; make sure yours can be heard, listened to, and understood.



Quality: 101 tips (quiet location, high-quality headset, etc.) become 101 for a reason. Follow them to make sure you are producing crystal-clear sound.



Access: Who and where is your audience? If reliable, high-speed internet access could be a concern, make sure to provide a telephone dial-in option. (If your webinar platform doesn't include this option, use third-party teleconferencing.)



Language: Webinar audiences are as diverse as webinar topics. That's why most webinar platforms now enable simultaneous interpretation. Just hire your interpreter, enable a few settings and voila! If your webinar recording will be accessed by global audiences, don't forget recording or transcript translation.



Accessibility: Whether you choose an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter or use a Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) provider, make sure your live webinar is accessible to deaf, deafened, and hard of hearing participants. Oh, and don't forget to ensure your webinar recording is accessible, too.

What about AI-based live transcription – is it the same thing? No. While live transcription does convert audio to text, captioning does so in a timed manner (for precise sync to audio), includes non-speech contextual audio (e.g. “laughter”), and is the more accurate choice. But as a no-cost option AI-based live transcription can help to make more webinars more accessible to more participants.

2. See the big picture... literally

Font: Maybe you won't hit Guy Kawasaki's 30-point font recommendation, but you can take a hard look at your font size. Never mind that your audience doesn't want to be read to and will likely read ahead – that 10-point font isn't going to be clear in your webinar interface, and it doesn't consider low-vision and blind participants. (PS, mobile participants won't thank you either!)

Color & contrast: Once you've right sized your fonts, make sure contrast is high and color choices consider both adaptive technology and participants with a color vision deficiency. (Hint: if you're relying on a 'red-green-yellow' scheme to convey meaningful information, you may be failing some of your participants.)

Graphics: Charts and graphs can be a great way to present information – but if they're too dense for the medium, viewers won't see the detail. Look for ways to simplify and then be sure to use your webinar platform's pointer tool to direct viewers' attention to specific data points. With images, consider their value relative to their size – high-quality photos may take more bandwidth and time to display. And, of course, don't forget to include alt-text for all images!

[Adobe's](#) and [Microsoft's](#) native accessibility checkers are free and incredibly easy to use.

3. One-size-fits-all doesn't fit all webinar participation

Considering audio and visuals covers what you have to say to your audience. But what about hearing from and engaging with them – whoever and wherever they are, in whatever way they are able or prefer? Unfortunately, there's no quick and easy checker here – this one takes a little thinking, planning, and flexibility.

Want to poll your audience but know that many will be phone-only? You'll need to design a polling question that accommodates a simpler, or even binary response so that webinar- and telephone-connected participants are represented equally. Want to hear (literally) from your global audience? You'll need your language and/or ASL interpreter's assistance – and to have pre-configured your webinar technology to support these resources, and adjusted your live webinar settings to make ASL and language interpretation clearly visible to those in need.

4. Webinar participants are people first

If you're thinking about DEI, you may be thinking about anything from representation to pronouns. Considering the popular tactic of 'planting' a comment or 'calling on' a participant to amplify a specific voice? You can also use the technology to spotlight their face. Need to ensure that different groups receive equal 'air time' on a topic? Think about adding a label to help you manage the floor equitably. From capturing to gathering information on needed accommodations, with a little forethought, your webinar technology can support both your participants and your DEI priorities.

Ready to move your webinar from DIY to DEI? Talk to Intellor.

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