



# The Costs of Putting Together a Webinar

White Paper

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## Introduction

Small businesses, sole proprietors, independent consultants and trainers have many choices when it comes to hosting webinars. They can run it themselves to save money or they can hire someone to manage the process. The reason for hosting a webinar almost always stems from one of two scenarios: Lead generation and marketing presentations to help raise awareness and find potential clients, or moving educational classes online to cut costs and reach a wider geographic audience. Invariably the first question asked is, "How much does it cost to do a webinar?"

The three primary areas where money will be spent on a webinar are: Technology, Services, and Promotion. Each has a wide range of options and costs.

## Technology

Free web conferencing services are available, but in almost every case, they don't allow for large meeting attendance. Some cap their free rooms at three participants, some at 10 and some at 20. Fees are based on either a monthly or yearly charge that allows the host to hold as many sessions as they choose, each one limited at a certain audience size. Some companies hold firm to the limit, while others charge an "overage", usually at a hefty additional charge.

Audio costs should also be considered. Telephone conferencing options vary as much as web conferencing does. In the U.S., "free" conference calling is available, which is actually charged as long distance charges to each attendee when they dial a toll number. Additionally, if attendees dial a toll free dial-in number, the host pay per person, per minute. Costs range from 5 cents to 25 cents per person, per minute. With higher rates, additional capabilities including operator assistance, pre-conference rooms, and recording features are included.

## Services

Potential webinar hosts should consider how "hands on" they want to be and the amount of time they are willing to invest in learning new technologies and best practices. Some service providers offer a turnkey solution, managing everything from start to finish. This includes handling online registration, payment processing, sending out participant reminders, presenter training, phone and web presence, post-seminar surveys and creating a presentation archive. A fully managed solution generally has fixed costs of \$1500 or more plus a per participant cost starting at \$20. Another option is to choose a semi-managed solution which allows companies to control many of the teleconferencing functions that have traditionally been reserved for operator-assisted calls. These features include the ability to keep the event speakers and organizers in a private sub-conference where they can speak with each other without the audience hearing them and operating a question queue without an operator. This option typically ranges between \$15 and \$20.

## Promotion

Marketing costs money, and there are lots of ways to spend it. The 2 most effective ways to market webinars is via email (emailing to a list) or through promotion through social media sites. Secondary methods such as search ads, press releases, banner ads, newsletter sponsorships, email/postal invitations are just a few examples of marketing activities that can also be used to promote webinars- but they are less effective. This cost is probably no different from the promotional costs spent to let people know about physical in-person offerings, but if potential webinar hosts are searching for new prospects, the costs can go as high as the budget allows. Promotional budgets can range from \$100 to \$30,000, depending on the prospective audience, length of time given to promote the event and total list size.

**Conclusion**

So, back to “How much does a webinar cost?” Certainly good, capable web conferencing software on the less expensive side is available and potential webinar hosts can learn how to use it themselves, manage everything in-house and invite people already on their own list. The total out-of-pocket cost may be \$500. A good mid-range overall budget might be somewhere in the \$2000-\$4000 range, which would buy solid web and audio technology, real support behind-the-scenes and some marketing/promotion expenditures. Obviously every company’s situation is different, but this gives a starting point for considering whether or not hosting and presenting a webinar is reasonable expenditure.

**About ConferTel**

ConferTel is a leading provider of fully managed webinar services, delivering educational programming, training and lead generation webinars for corporations, associations, government agencies and non-profits. In addition, ConferTel is a software developer of IVR and web-based information services and communications solutions. Providing a range of event driven communications applications, including telephone, web and video conferencing, on demand record/replay, voice/fax broadcast, teleseminars, webinars, webcasting, online training, e-commerce, event management services, and other custom IVR and web-based applications.

ConferTel’s innovative products and application development capabilities have helped thousands of clients save costs, generate income and increase productivity. We offer a consultative approach to assist you in developing the right solutions for your specific application and budget.