



Webinars, online training and virtual conferencing

This resource gives guidance on digital platforms for delivering seminars, training and conferencing. Whilst people are unable to physically attend venues at this time, there are various solutions that enable activity to be delivered online.

In order to for you or your organisation to programme live events, you will need to use a platform with live streaming capabilities. Here we look at some of the most popular platforms and consider their pros and cons. It is not an extensive list, but gives you a start:

Zoom

Zoom is probably familiar to many of us. It's very reliable but some feel it suffers from a very corporate look that is less customisable than some other options out there.

<https://zoom.us/>

PROS:

- Low cost. Basic free account, with additional features from £15.99 per month.
- Simple but effective platform to produce solid and stable webinars.
- High reliability.
- Ability to record webinars gives you the added benefit of uploading it to YouTube.

CONS:

- Lack of additional sales, marketing or engagement features.
- Not as user friendly as some of the others.

WebinarJam

Webinar Jam offers the best marketing features (ability to email or send text messages to your delegates, sell products, conduct polls and surveys etc) but is aimed more at Sales and Marketing type webinars, which might not be suitable for your audience. They are one of the lowest priced but don't offer a monthly subscription service only upfront.

<https://home.webinarjam.com>

PROS:

- Good at tracking user engagement with segmentation and follow-up marketing, allowing you to see who left early and who stayed to the end.
- Enabled for easy Up-sell, with sales features built-in.
- Strong 'call to actions' that don't distract from the overall webinar.
- Good stream quality.
- Affordable pricing, but you have to pay for full year in advance.

CONS:

- Not as intuitive to set up as some of the others.
- Notification emails occasionally go to the spam folders of some recipients, which may cause for some to miss the live webinar.

BigMarker

A jack of all trades. This one-stop platform has everything from Live Webinars, Webinar Series, Automated Evergreen Webinars and usual video meeting options as found on Zoom or Teams. Competitively priced with monthly subscription options.

<https://www.bigmarker.com/>

PROS:

- Range of features, even automated webinars that appear to be live.
- User interface well designed and intuitive.
- Well designed and customisable landing pages that can be branded to suit.
- Integration and engagement features.

CONS

- Lack of one click sign up for users.
- Pricing higher end of market.
- Pop up offers on screen can be distracting.

CrowdCast

This has more of social network feel than any other and this shows in its ability to have great engagement. It's quick and easy to schedule a live event and the user experience is fantastic. If you are not looking for anything to customisable or flash then this is worth a consideration. Starting from free membership with up to 100 delegates in a webinar.

<https://www.crowdcast.io/>

PROS:

- Quick and easy to schedule and start a live event.
- Tools are simple and effective and probably the easiest user experience of all the other platforms.

- High user engagement with Chat and Q&A during events is easy.
- Easy to sell webinars, including exclusive ones to Patreon supporters.
- Allows “pay-what-you-want” donations during an event.

CONS:

- Less customisation.
- Limited extra marketing tools, apart from a small call to action.
- Focused on community than sales (pro/con depending on what you are using it for).

Further Support:

The Digital Culture Network is here to support you and your organisation. If you need help or would like to chat with us about any of the advice we have covered above, please get in touch by emailing digitalnetwork@artscouncil.org.uk with some background about you, your location and the challenges you're facing, and we will connect you with one of our 9 Tech Champions for 1-2-1 support.

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