Cornerstone

Webinars

Planning, Hosting & Promoting



Cornerstone International Group Marketing Team

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CIG Webinar Process

On-line meetings and presentations are not new but they have become a primary channel of business development thanks to Covid-19

We are now making good use of a technology that has been there for years and we are more productive for it.

If you are still new to webcasting, this Guide will fill in the gaps to the point where you can host your own webinar.
For those already past this point, we will share the latest trends and tips for staying relevant

Two Types of Webinar

Cornerstone webinars are one of two types, determined by audience:

Internal

These are primarily presentations by Practice Groups for knowledge sharing purposes. They can feature high profile guests but are not normally promoted or streamed outside of CIG. (If they are, they jump categories.)

This document contains ideas and advice to help you organize and host an internal webinar. Marketing does not need to become involved, but we are available and eager to help wherever we can.

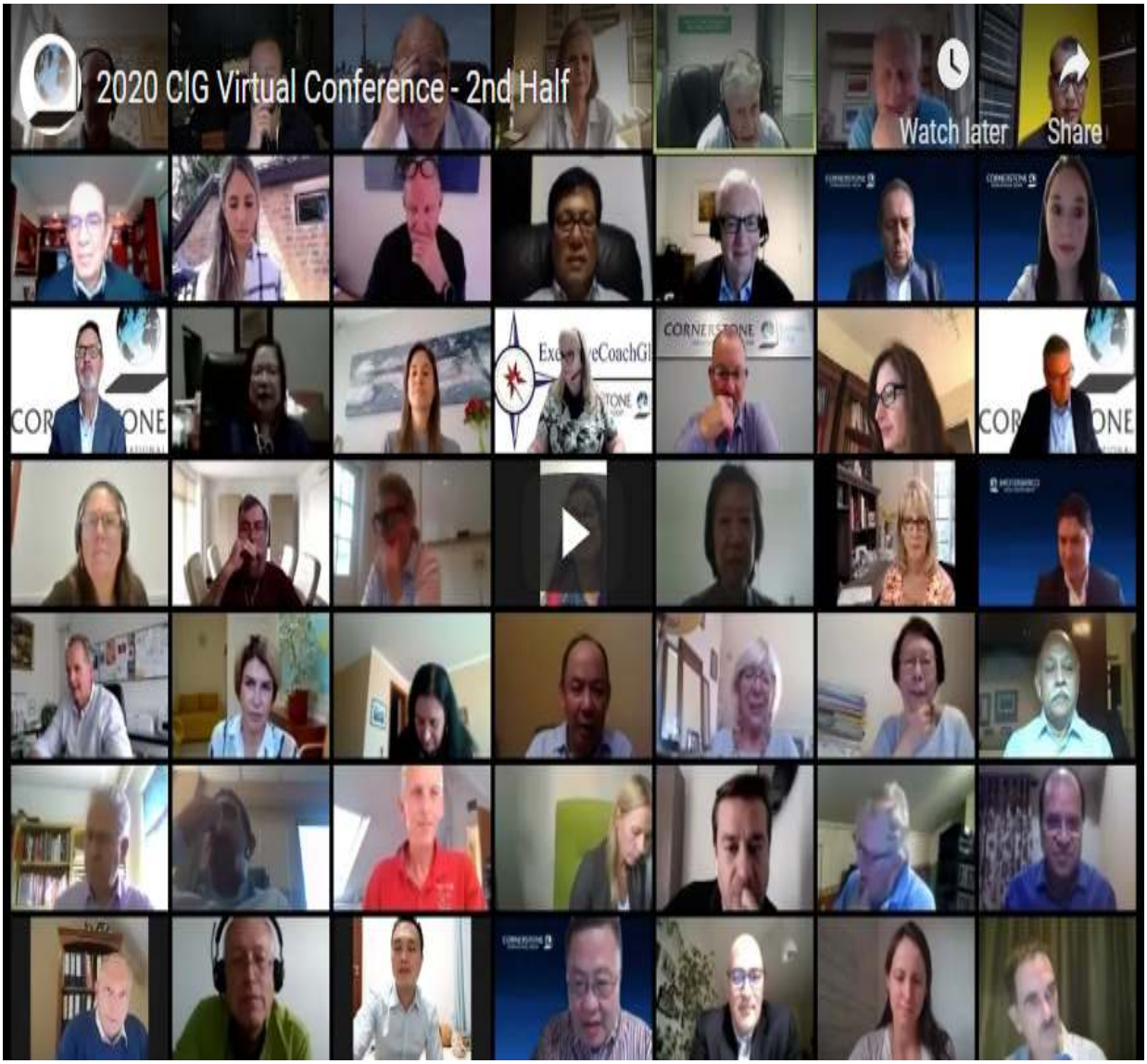
External

Cornerstone is planning for 4-6 bigger, international webinars in 2021 designed to attract a global business audience. To compete in a crowded field these events will have to be topical with high quality content, preferably known and/or high level participants and be heavily marketed.

Because these webinars are representing the CIG brand, Marketing will be active in the staging and promoting of these events as a co-organizer.

This Guide presents the basic steps for staging any webinar. Part Two gives additional information for webinars with an external audience.

PART ONE: Basic Steps



Step 1: Planning

Don't underestimate it.

Webinars are fiddly things with a lot of moving parts, You're not just writing a blog post. Here is a list of the minimum details you will need to assemble

- Webinar Title
- Topic / Subject of the webinar
- Date and Time (with timezone)
- Panelists and speakers (Names, titles, companies, short bios)
- Software selection
- Long and short descriptions of the webinar

In the COVID-era there is burnout from virtual meetings and webinars. You must focus on delivering value - look for ways this can give actionable steps to people or inform them

There's more. If you go here to and fill out our Webinar Submission Form, it will make sure you do not forget anything and we can help you to reach the widest audience: [a]

Step 2: Marketing

The success of a webinar lives and dies
with the content and how well it is promoted.

A webinar on a general topic such as “Human Resources” will not be successful. A slightly narrower topic such as "Diversity & Inclusion" might fare only a little better. But a title such as "Diversity is Pointless without the Inclusion" --- will attract the biggest audience.

The point is, your topic must be specific, attract attention and curiosity.
You must then communicate this in detail in advance to convince a person it is worth his or her time to attend and find out more.

Get the Word Out

For an internal webinar, the organizer (often the Practice Group Leader) will send an invitation by email either to Group members or to all members. The Marketing Group can help to contact all members.

The organizer should also provide time, place and topic to Tami Fitzpatrick, Executive Administrator, at tami-fitzpatrick@cornerstone-group.com. Tami will also advise members and list your event on the Cornerstone calendar in the Member Portal.

Also recommended: LinkedIn, Whatsapp, reminder e-mail.

Go to Page 13 for an example of an appropriate promotional timetable.

Step 3: Hosting the Event

Cornerstone has a premium Zoom account for Webinar hosting that can accommodate up to 500 participants. There are also options to simultaneously livestream using Facebook Live.

You'll need to have a Webinar Coordinator chosen who will monitor the technical set-up, start the webinar, record, and generally keep tabs on chat and the event.

You also need a Moderator responsible for content flow, announcing participants and posing questions as needed. This person may or not be on-screen.

Webinar Coordinator

The person acting as Website Coordinator should:

- Have the names / emails of the panelists in order to add them to have special permissions in Zoom ahead of time
- Be on-hand prior to the event to let the panelists test audio / video and break the ice prior to the event start (we recommend meeting up 15-20 minutes ahead of the event)
- At the event start time click the button to start the webinar and the recording
- End the webinar once the wrap-up / signoffs are completed.
- Have your webinar recorded if you have a post-event program

Panelists / Speakers / Moderators

The speakers should all have good lighting, mics, and internet connections. Some may choose to use an image as a virtual background - we can provide a CIG one.

CAUTION: if the background is too busy the Zoom software has a hard time delivering the virtual backdrop and it will lead to jagged edges around someone's face and strange distortions. In these cases a backdrop like an office wall is preferable.

The Moderator(s) should be prepared to:

- Introduce the topic and what people will get by watching
- Introduce the participants and their expertise
- Keep the flow logical and moving. He/she should have prepared questions.
- Wrap up with a closing statement, thanking the viewers and the panelists, and suggesting any appropriate next steps for reach out / interest in services.

Step 4: Archiving Your Event

In most cases it is a good idea to archive your webinar. The Marketing Group will save it for you on the Member Portal in the section for Practice Group presentations. You can then email your group and give them the link where they can review the webinar any time

Publishing a transcript with the video archive is helpful for viewers, but it requires a clean soundtrack. You will also have to prepare the text e.g. identify the speakers etc. Transcripts are not successful for panel discussions

PART TWO: External Audience





Bigger Webinars Need More Resources

There are important added considerations when a Cornerstone Webinar is produced for clients and potential clients. The bar is high.

Partially due to COVID, there is a flood of webinars online, all seeking viewers. This places a very high premium on the quality of the event – the topic, the speakers and the technical presentation.

The addition of Partnerships helps to mitigate the challenge

Partnerships

CIG Marketing
Because these webinars are branded and represent Cornerstone International Group to the outside world, it is a condition that the CIG Marketing Group participates in, and approves of, the webinar preparation. We will also manage the marketing.

Content Partners
It is also advisable for the CIG team proposing an external event to find a suitable partner who will lend subject credibility and marketing scale.
In 2020, for example, Cornerstone Lima partnered with the alumni association of Procter & Gamble on a presentation of global trends in talent management which drew 900 viewers. You can review **our global webinars here.**

Support Before & After

A global webinar streamed to the general public requires much more work to market and promote in advance. As noted, both CIG Marketing and your content partner will play an important role here.

Besides helping to promote your event, your partners will be instrumental in creating and promoting an "on-demand" version for continued viewing on YouTube and the CIG global website.

Support that CIG Marketing can contribute include the following:

Email	Send 2–3 invitation e-mails and event description
Social Media	Create event page on Linkedin Publish snippets on major media Encourage "likes" from CIG members Whatsapp notices
Registration	Monitor process and ensure data provided
On-Demand	Edit event recording for archiving Obtain and edit transcript Post speaker profiles and event summary Email on-demand notification to event viewers and no-shows Publish on CIG YouTube channel and global website Promote archive on website home page Provide material to members to promote the on-demand

Promotional Timetable

Following is an example of a timetable for promoting an upcoming webinar.to an external audience. An internal event will not need as much notification and organizers should select only those items deemed necessary.

TOOLS

Email

Send three emails beginning three weeks before your event Include details of time and place. Include a link if you want people to register Have a compelling subject line.

Social Media - LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp

Event pages: both Facebook and LinkedIn allow you to create an “event” - this is useful for promoting the event but people still need to sign up with the Zoom registration page.

Posts that have a "personal perspective" can offer newness and attractiveness. Make sure everyone in your organization and connected to the event is “liking” the Social posts

Social Snippets In order for the webinar to be most shareable on Social Media, create several “Social Snippets” for your team and partners to drop in to their Social Media postings. These have the following key parts:

• Marketing statement - something short and compelling about the event and what they get / why they would attend

• Webinar registration link

• Event date and time / timezone

• Graphic •

Hashtags / tagging of the participants.

• Short mp4 videos can also be created and shared

Promotional Timetable (cont'd)

SCHEDULE

Week 1

Email #1 – Announcement Create Social Media “event” on LinkedIn and optionally Facebook

Week 2

Email #2- more detail on topic and speakers, reasons to attend. Link to register Two more social media snippets

Week 3

Email #3 – two days before event. Reminder “don’t miss”. Link to registration

Snippets – one day before SMS morning of webinar (e.g. Whatsapp)

Information

For more information about scheduling and hosting a webinar, contact one of the following:

Blake Imeson Digital Marketing Director
blake-imeson@cornerstone-group.com

Chris Allan Content Marketing Director
chris-allan@cornerstone-group.com

FREE WEBINAR PLANNING KIT

Hubspot has a useful webinar planning kit that includes a srategy Template, Checklist and Guide.

You can download it here