**Best Practice Tips for HEUG Webinars**

**For starters -** Work with Sarah Bryan (sbryan@heug.org) to identify the presenter/s, describe the session, and schedule the time. HEUG will advertise and administer the webinar event, including launching poll questions and sending out links to recordings upon webinar completion.

**Now the tips for best practice preparation …**

**Get technical –** If you haven’t previously delivered a webinar through HEUG, schedule a test/practice session with Sarah. This will clarify how the process works and confirm connectivity, etc. (Done this before? Then confirm that the process hasn’t changed.)

**Do some homework –** Don’t just deliver the content you delivered somewhere else last month. Think about your possible audience and adjust your content/focus accordingly.

**Spend time on visual assets –** Strong visuals, minimal text, and a good pace of slide progression are even more important for a webinar than they are for an in-person session, where you can capture audience attention with hand gestures and other movement. Be sure you have a slide that explains how to use the webinar chat function – a lot of people may not have done that before and you want them to be able to ask you questions or send you comments.

**Encourage interactivity –** Use poll questions to promote engagement, understand your audience and keep them focused/involved, and gather input that might lead to chat questions later. We recommend three poll questions per 50 minutes of webinar time. The first poll question should not be the most important question you ask since people not used to webinars may take a long time to respond and miss the cut-off point for submitting answers. Poll questions should have some relevance to your webinar topic (as opposed to post-webinar survey questions, discussed below).

**Speaking of time –** Plan your webinar for 50 minutes, building in about five minutes for questions. If you run a bit over, that’ll still keep you to an hour or less. More than an hour is too long to retain attention and participants probably have something else they need to do on the hour.

**Don’t go it alone –** Have a co-presenter. The change in voice throughout the webinar will help keep people awake (even if you’re doing most of the talking and your co-host is doing much less). Also – very important! – when you have another panelist for the webinar, that person can help you by monitoring responses to poll questions and incoming chat questions … and raising them to you at appropriate moments. This leaves you, the main presenter, able to focus on talking instead of trying to read incoming data at the same time.

**Follow up with a short survey –** No more than six questions. These can be generic as opposed to topic-specific. You just want to get a sense of how your audience felt about your webinar (and show them you care about how they felt). Sample survey questions:

* Are you glad you participated in this webinar?
* Did the presenters explain the topic clearly?
* Did you learn something you can use?
* Did the interactions (like poll questions) help keep you engaged?
* Do you plan to visit the website for the recording, slides, and handouts?
* Do you have any comments for the presenters regarding webinar content, delivery, or format?

**Read your post-webinar attendee report –** HEUG will send this to you and it tells you some important things … like how many people registered vs. how many people attended. And how well they focused on your session (as opposed to doing other things on their computer like writing emails or browsing the web). And how they answered your poll questions (and if they submitted their own chat questions). Paying attention to your attendee report *and* those survey answers can help you be a better presenter next time around.

**Practice, practice, practice (and record yourself practicing) –** Know your content, talk normally, watch your ummms and uhhhhhs, and make sure there’s some life in your voice. If you don’t sound like *you’re* interested, how can you expect your audience to be interested? Let your passion for your topic shine through.

**Relax and have fun –** Presenting a webinar is a great way to connect with current colleagues (and possibly future friends) all over the world. It’s an opportunity for a whole new community to learn from each other. Plus, you should feel great about stepping up to contribute to your field. Enjoy and make the most of it!