

Keeping Your Audience's Attention in a Mobile Device World

Tips for Engaging the Connected Learner

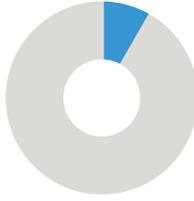




162 minutes

How much time the average American spends on his or her mobile device per day

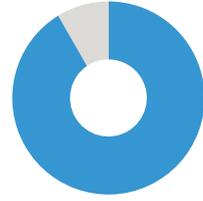
Source: Geekwire, April 1, 2014



97 minutes

How much time the average British citizen spends with his or her significant other per day

Source: The Daily Mail, May 30, 2013



8-10 hours

How much time college students spend on their cell phones per day

Source: PsychCentral

One hundred sixty-two minutes. That's enough time to microwave a bowl of popcorn, watch *The Dark Knight Rises* and still have a few minutes left over to pause for a bathroom break. More distressing, one British study found that it's nearly twice as much time as most of us spend with our significant others.

Just seeing how much of the day an average owner of a mobile device spends staring at his or her screen ought to reinforce that we online presenters have our work cut out for us. Crafting

a good webinar takes a lot of time and effort, so how do we ensure we're getting our point across while keeping our audiences engaged?

GoToWebinar and GoToTraining make it easier than ever to deliver compelling content that captures and holds your audience's attention. With our advanced tools, you can monitor audience participation, enable small-group discussion and debate, interact with your attendees and more.

Tips for keeping your audience's attention:



Talk with your students,
not at them.

Think back to when you were a student. Chances are you can recall at least one teacher who brought to life what could have been the most mind-numbing or convoluted topics. You probably also remember at least one teacher who could drain the fun from even the most exciting subject matter.

In person or online, the best educators don't just appear in front of a class and lecture. They interact with their students, foster discussions and debate, and use every tool at their disposal to keep their learners engaged.

The same is true for your training. Thankfully, modern technology has injected a little science into the art of presenting. Whereas your favorite teachers had little way of knowing who was struggling to see the board, the

Audience View feature on GoToWebinar gives you a thumbnail image of what students are seeing when you share your screen. Meanwhile, real-time polls help you better understand the parts your webinar having the greatest impact and the areas where it might be falling short.

Like a talented teacher, an engaging presenter understands the power of small-group collaboration. The Breakout feature on GoToTraining makes it easy for students to actively participate, work together and exchange ideas with classmates all over the country or the globe. Document editing allows students to team up and record their work — all as you monitor their progress and jump in to provide assistance as needed.



Know what's working.

You can pack your presentation with loads of indispensable information, but if you fail to keep your audience's attention, then it's all for naught.

How do you know whether you have their full attention or whether you're competing with a dozen other open browser tabs?

It could be that you've allowed parts of your webinar to drag on and on. Or maybe you're jumping abruptly from one point to another. Whatever the reason, you don't want to wait until after the session is over to try and figure out why your audience lost interest.

With GoToTraining, students can virtually raise their hands from within their Breakout sessions to get your attention and ask questions, giving you

valuable — and instant — feedback.

This helps you find and address potential difficulties as they occur, not after your presentation has ended.

Sometimes, though, you just need data to gauge your success. The presenter dashboard monitors on GoToWebinar how many attendees have your session front and center and how many have the GoToWebinar viewer in the background, giving you real-time insight into how your audience is reacting. You know right away if you need to tweak your message in future presentations or adjust your webinar on the fly.



Remember the basics.

Even the best technology is no substitute for the fundamentals. Remembering a few basic public speaking and presentation skills can separate dull webinars from those that make attendees forget all about their smartphones — even if only for the duration of your presentation.

First, it's important to connect with your audience. This may sound self-explanatory, but it's surprisingly easy for even the most experienced presenter to get bogged down in the kinds of facts, figures and other minutiae that can cause your attendees' eyes to glaze over. Everyone enjoys a good story, and a fun anecdote can go a long way toward reinforcing your message without losing your audience.

Second, don't skimp on the pictures. Simple, well-crafted visuals can help break up potentially dense statistics and data. Be careful, though, as images that are too small or overpower key pieces of text can distract rather than engage your audience.

And finally, practice, practice, practice. We can all remember when preparing for a big presentation meant talking to ourselves in front of a mirror until we had the material down pat. Now, with the Practice feature on GoToWebinar, you and your fellow organizers and panelists can run through your webinar before the first attendee has joined. Cut down on any technical surprises and rehearse as many times as you need before the webinar's scheduled start time.

It's a fact of life for any presenter:

The rise in mobile devices means we have to work that much harder to grab our audiences' attention. Still, with a deft style and a few tools, you can be confident your audience is paying attention to your presentation — and not their smartphones.



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