

You have permission to publish this article electronically or in print, free of charge, as long as the bylines are included, as well as a direct link back to www.MegaMeeting.com (if published electronically). A courtesy copy of your publication would be appreciated - send to danr@MEGAMEETING.COM

Eight Steps to a Successful Video or Web Conference

By Dan Richmond, www.MegaMeeting.com, Copyright, 2005

A successful video or web conference can really give a boost to your organization. Online conferencing is now connecting people in a way that was not possible in the pre-Internet era. However, as powerful a tool as online conferencing is, it works best when you prepare your conferences properly. Here are some steps that you can take to help guarantee that your next video or web conference is a great success.

1. Make sure each of your attendees has enough bandwidth at his or her location

There is nothing more frustrating than trying to watch a video online when you just don't have enough bandwidth to get it all. If your participant doesn't have enough bandwidth there will be latency delays and he or she will not be able to enjoy the experience or participate properly. The amount of bandwidth that is required varies from system to system and also according to what features you will be using during the conference. Features such as video, audio, screen and application sharing have different requirements. Check with your vendor or provider to find out what the minimum bandwidth requirements are, and then make sure each of your locations does indeed have enough bandwidth.

2. Test your web cameras to see that they are working properly.

If video will be involved at any of the locations, make sure that the location has tested their camera to ensure that everything is working satisfactorily. Ideally, all cameras should be tested from within the video or web conferencing system that you will be using. A camera that is working fine in one application may work differently within another system. Check it in advance so that you will not have any surprises on the day of your conference.

3. Check your sound equipment in advance

If VoIP (audio) is going to be used from within the meeting itself, make sure that all attendees have the right tools needed, whether these tools are microphones, headsets and speakers.

4. Supply your participants with proper access information in advance of the conference

If audio will be conducted via an audio conference call, make sure all attendees have the access number to dial into and the PIN (Personal Identification Number) they will need to access the call

5. Conduct a "trial-run" of your presentation prior to the conference date

The presenters or leaders of the conference should practice in advance. If a presentation will be involved, make sure that whoever will be presenting any material has tested this part of the video or web conferencing system. The presentation that is to be used should be demonstrated to another party BEFORE the date of the actual meeting.

6. Supply web access information to your participants well in advance of the meeting

Make sure that all of your participants know how to access the video and web "conference room". Send an e-mail "link" to each participant well in advance of the meeting so that they will be able to easily access the meeting when the appropriate day and time has arrived.

7. Get as much training as you can in the video or web conference system that you will be using

The host should be very familiar and comfortable with the video or web conferencing system they are going to use. If training is offered by your vendor or provider, then take advantage of this in order to become more familiar with the system. Familiarity with the system will help you to host a flawless meeting or conference.

8. Conduct a test meeting prior to the big event

Most importantly! Conduct a test meeting or two before the day of the "big" meeting. Tests will help you eliminate as many surprises as possible before you gather all of your attendees. A meeting free of technical glitches will go far to help you achieve the goals of your conference.

The key to a successful online conference, whether it be a web conference, a video conference or a combination of the two, is preparation, preparation and preparation. The more you prepare and the more you practice, the better your online meetings will be.

Dan Richmond is CEO and Co-founder of MegaMeeting.com. MegaMeeting provides [Web Conferencing](#) and [Video Conferencing](#) services for individuals, businesses and educational institutions. For more information, or for a free live demonstration of Video & Web Conferencing technology, please visit <http://www.MegaMeeting.com>.