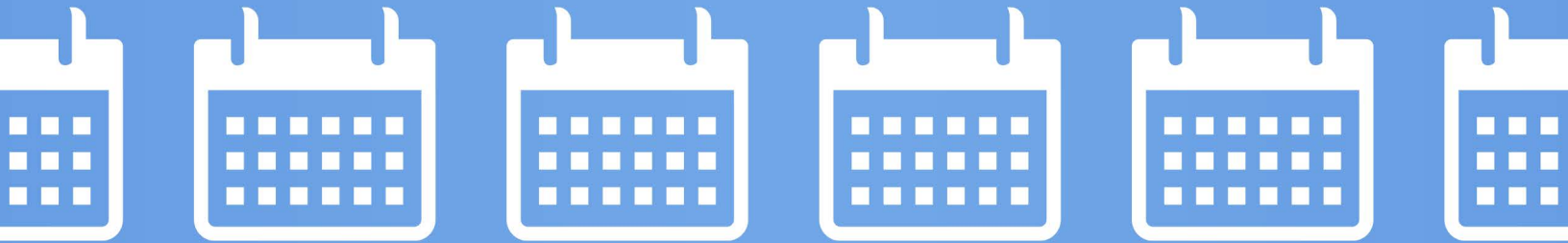
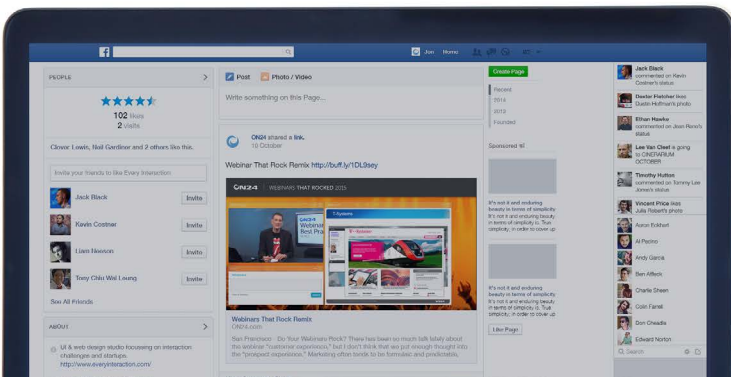


# 2016

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## WEBINAR BENCHMARKS REPORT





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# Executive Summary

Webinars are the most important tool we have for driving leads, engaging contacts, and generating pipeline. They help us move prospects through the buying cycle, from awareness to purchase, more effectively than any other marketing tool. We use them for thought leadership, live demos, product updates, informational sessions, training, internal communications, and more. For consumers, webinars are the best way to get deep information and best practices, to discover new products and services, and to see something in action before they commit to a purchase.

## METHODOLOGY

The findings in this report were compiled by ON24, the world's leading webinar marketing platform. In 2015, ON24 supported over 60,000 webcasts globally. This report is based on a random subset of those events:

- » **12,870 webinars were measured in the analysis**
- » **All webinars were held between January and December of 2015**
- » **Events represent a cross section of 500+ organizations**
- » **Company size ranges from large enterprise to SMB**



# Executive Summary

CONTINUED

This study measured statistics across the entire lifecycle of a webinar, including webinar promotion and registration metrics, webinar interactivity metrics, audience viewing habits, and both live and on-demand attendance and conversion metrics. Unless noted otherwise, the report uses the following webinar event type definitions:

- » **Live webinars:** audio or video-based events that are streamed on a specific day and time
- » **On-demand webinars:** audio or video-based events that are streamed upon request anywhere, anytime, including live webcasts that have been archived for additional viewing
- » **Audio webinars:** events that are streamed with audio plus slides
- » **Video webinars:** events that are primarily streamed with video or include integrated video clips

Unless noted otherwise, this report uses the following audience information definitions:

- » **Registrants:** people who registered to view an event
- » **Attendees:** people who registered to view an event and attended that event

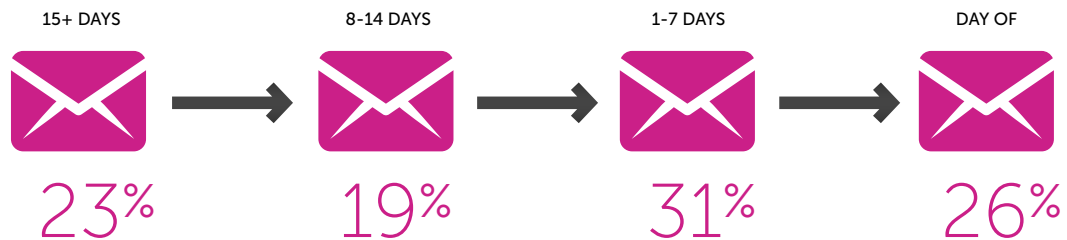


# Pre-webinar Benchmarks

## PROMOTIONAL CYCLE

Effective webinar promotion is the key to getting more people to register for and attend your events. Year after year, we see that a longer promotional cycle leads to increased registration and attendance. The week leading up to the webinar continues to account for a large share of event registration, but nearly one in four registrants sign up more than 15 days before the live webinar, and a full 26 percent register the day of the event.

This implies that a longer promotional cycle, generally including a series of email drops and extended social promotion, will provide more chances to drive a large audience to your webinars.



WEBINAR PROMOTION STARTS EARLY AND ENDS STRONG

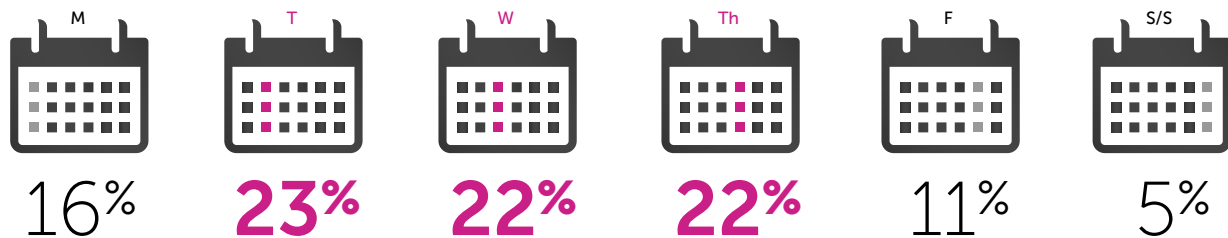


# Pre-webinar Benchmarks

CONTINUED

## BEST DAYS TO SEND PROMOTIONAL EMAILS

The goal of any promotional email is to catch someone at a moment when they'll be receptive to your message. The middle of the week — Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday — continue to be the best-performing days for email blasts, with Tuesday edging into the lead this year. Monday is a weak performer with just 16 percent, but it wins out over Friday, when many people are already wrapping up the week and mentally preparing for the weekend. Since most people are far less likely to check or respond to their email over the weekend, Saturday and Sunday are the least effective days to send promotional emails.



THE BEST DAYS TO SEND WEBINAR PROMOTIONAL EMAILS

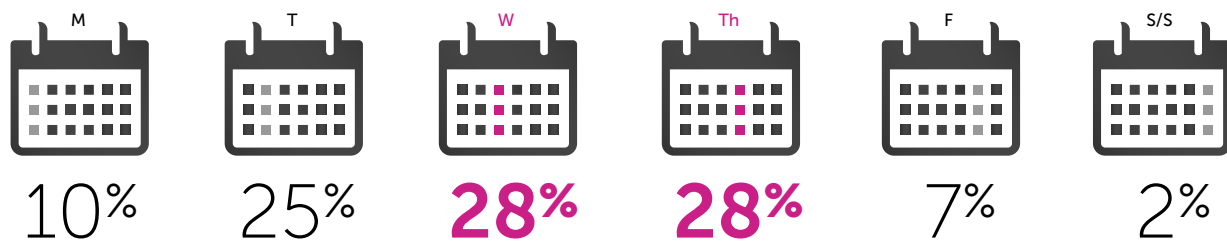


# Pre-webinar Benchmarks

CONTINUED

## BEST DAYS FOR WEBINAR ATTENDANCE

To attract an audience, you want to schedule your webinars on days when most people prefer to attend webinars. Wednesday and Thursday (both at 28 percent) remain the most successful at attracting large audiences, with Tuesday in a close second place at 26 percent. As with promotional emails, webinars scheduled on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday are very poor performers. Monday, when many people are busy catching up from the weekend, also tends to draw smaller webinar audiences.



THIS IS WHEN MARKETERS RUN THERE WEBINARS FOR SUCCESS.



# Pre-webinar Benchmarks

CONTINUED

## BEST TIMES TO RUN WEBINARS

Webinar audiences are often geographically diverse, making scheduling a challenge. When planning your webinar, you want to aim for a time that will avoid both commuting hours (before 9am or after 5pm) and lunch hour (generally noon–1pm) for the majority of your attendees. In North America, this means that 11am Pacific Time (2pm Eastern Time), which falls at a convenient hour on both coasts, is the best time for scheduling a webinar. If you are unable to deliver your event at that time, 10am Pacific (1pm Eastern) and noon Pacific (3pm Eastern) are the next best time slots. The results shown below are the top five performing times by percentage of total attendees.



THE TIME OF DAY CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE ON ATTENDANCE





# Webinar Benchmarks

## REGISTRANT TO ATTENDEE CONVERSION

One of the most stable benchmarks from year to year is the registrant-to-attendee conversion rate. This is a particularly valuable number to know, because it lets you approximate your final attendance rate based on initial signups. Since the ON24 benchmarks include partner and training events, which typically have a higher attendance rate, our average of 44 percent may be slightly higher than the averages you'll see. For most marketing events, a registrant-to-attendee conversion rate anywhere between 35 percent and 45 percent should be considered a strong result.

### CONVERSIONS



# 44%

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REGISTRANT TO LIVE ATTENDEE RATE



# Webinar Benchmarks

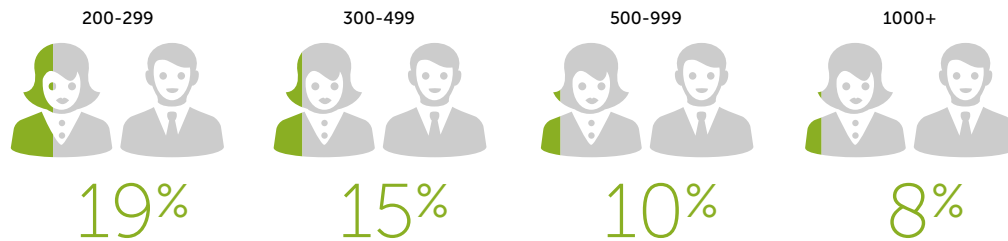
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## AVERAGE ATTENDEE RATE

Part of the appeal of webinars is their ability to draw a large crowd. In looking at average webinar sizes, we have excluded events with fewer than five attendees – events of this size are more appropriately classified as “meetings.” When we look at all events that can be officially considered “webinars,” we find an average event size of 233 attendees. Removing events with fewer than 100 attendees from our analysis leaves us with an average event size of 522 attendees.



AVERAGE SIZE OF WEBINARS, SMALL VS. LARGE



DISTRIBUTION OF WEBINARS BY SIZE, AS A PERCENTAGE OF WEBINARS WITH 100+ LIVE ATTENDEES

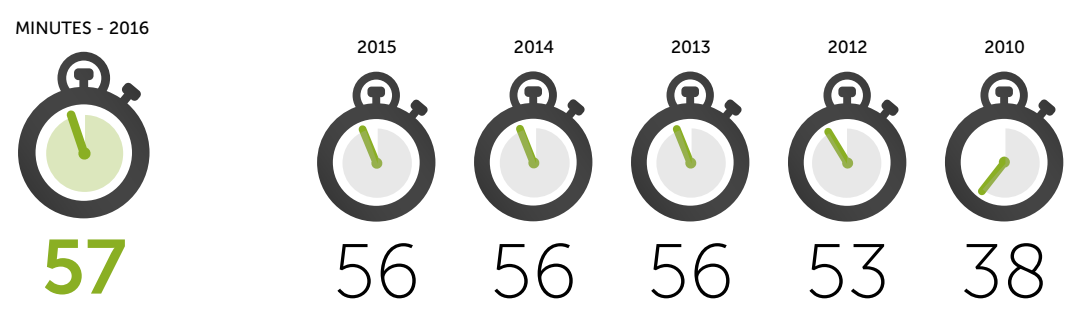


# Webinar Benchmarks

CONTINUED

## AVERAGE VIEWING TIME

Webinars continue to defy the common perception that effective marketing needs to be “snackable.” Since we started tracking webinar benchmarks, the average viewing time for webinar attendees has steadily increased. This year marks an all-time high of 57 minutes. This most likely indicates a general appetite for informationally rich, multimedia content delivery. It may also reflect the influence of a corresponding trend towards greater interactivity in webinars.



VIEWING TIME IN MINUTES 2016 VS. PREVIOUS YEARS

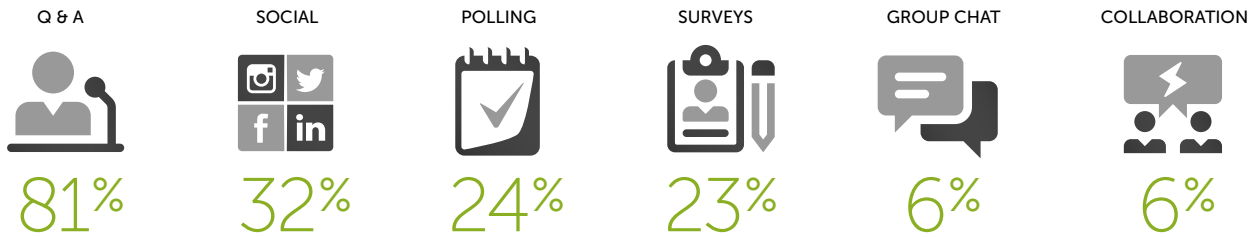


# Webinar Benchmarks

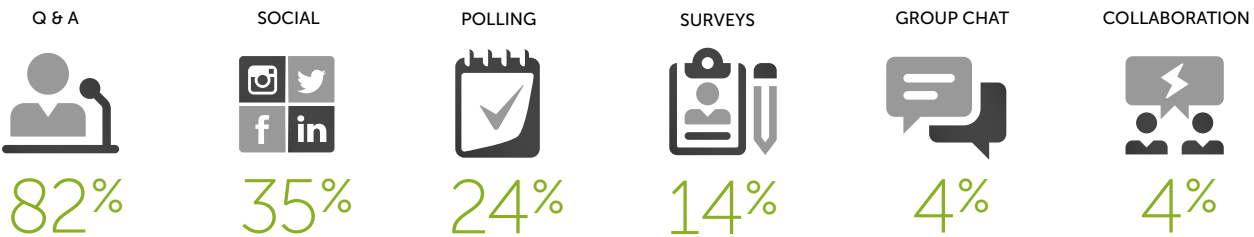
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## AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT AND INTERACTIVITY

Companies appear to be taking a more sophisticated approach to their webinars, moving beyond simple slides-and-presenter formats and including a wide array of interactive tools. Unsurprisingly, Q&A, which has become an almost expected feature of live presentations, remains the most popular tool for interactivity; 81 percent of the webinars studied for this report included Q&A. Social media, polling, and surveys also continue to be popular options for interactivity in webinars. Though they are still only represented in a minority of webinars, more open engagement tools such as group chat and collaboration are on the rise.



AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT NUMBERS – 2016



AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT NUMBERS – 2015



# Webinar Benchmarks

CONTINUED

## AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT AND INTERACTIVITY (CONTINUED)

Tracking audience interactivity is an effective way to measure engagement and interest. We looked at some of key indicators to set a baseline for expected audience engagement. As webinar hosts become more effective at encouraging their audiences to ask questions, respond to polls, and otherwise participate in the event, we expect these numbers to continue to rise.

DOWNLOADED  
CONTENT



20%

SUBMITTED  
QUESTIONS



7%

RESPONDED  
TO POLLS



31%

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AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT NUMBERS



# Webinar Benchmarks

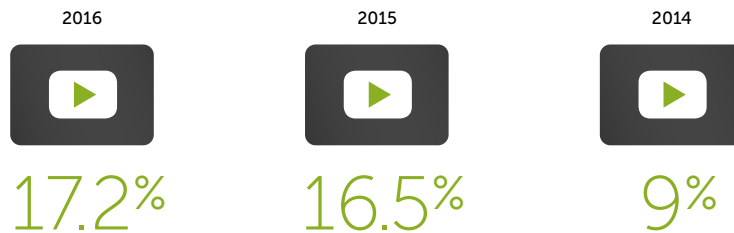
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## INTEGRATION OF VIDEO

To measure the rise of video in webinars, we look at three distinct integrations of video into the webinar format:

- On-screen presenters, via webcam or full studio video
- Streaming video and screen sharing
- Integrated video clips

The percentage of webinars that include video continues to rise, up to 17.2% of all events. This likely reflects a growing comfort with video technologies and the ability to reliably push video without bandwidth constraints.



PERCENTAGE OF WEBINARS THAT USE VIDEO – YEAR OVER YEAR



# Post-webinar Benchmarks

## ON-DEMAND VIEWING

Year after year, we continue to see a steady rise in audiences for on-demand webinars. We attribute this to a range of factors, including the following:

- Most webinars are held on the same days and at the same times (see pre-webinar benchmarks), making on-demand viewing an appealing option for overcommitted registrants
- Mobile access has made it convenient for people to watch webinars at alternative times and places
- Modern media consumption has shifted to on-demand formats that put the viewer in control of their own schedules

That major takeaway is that, without a proper on-demand strategy, you could be missing out on over 30 percent of your potential audience. Even people who attended your live event may come back to the on-demand webinar for repeat viewing. Nearly one in ten webinar attendees watched both live and on-demand, most likely because they missed part of the original presentation or because they wanted to come back and re-view a particularly relevant segment of the webinar.



ON DEMAND VIEWING PERCENTAGES

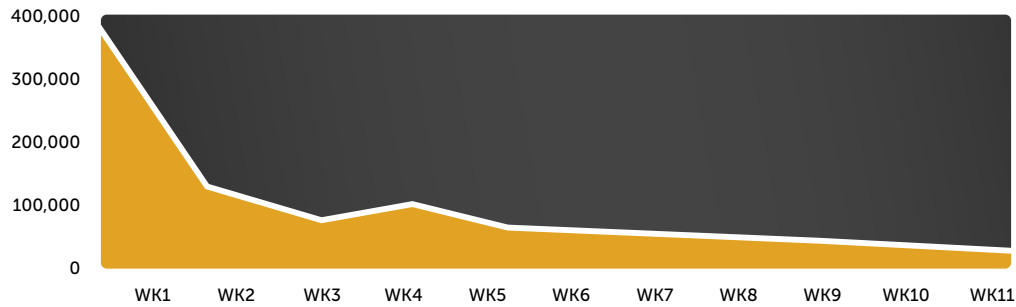


# Post-webinar Benchmarks

CONTINUED

## POST-LIVE REGISTRANTS

Of the webinar attendees in this study, 33 percent registered after the live event was over. These are people who signed up specifically to watch the pre-recorded, on-demand webinar. This number continues to rise year after year, reflecting a growing audience for on-demand content. The bulk of on-demand registrants sign up in the week after the webinar, suggesting that they were likely interested in the live event, but missed it due to scheduling or other conflicts. However, there is a long tail for on-demand webinars, which continue to pull in registrants for months after the live event.



POST-LIVE REGISTRATION DATA





# Post-webinar Benchmarks

CONTINUED

## ON-DEMAND VIEWING TIME

Over the past year, the average viewing time for on-demand webinars has increased 17 percent, from 29 minutes in 2015 to 34 minutes today. This is still lower than the average live viewing time of 57 minutes.

This lower viewing time is likely the result of a number of factors, including the following:

- Most webinars are held on the same days and at the same times (see pre-webinar benchmarks), making on-demand viewing an appealing option for overcommitted registrants
- Mobile access has made it convenient for people to watch webinars at alternative times and places
- Modern media consumption has shifted to on-demand formats that put the viewer in control of their own schedules

2016 MINUTES



34

2015 MINUTES



29

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ON-DEMAND VIEWING TIME



# Post-webinar Benchmarks

CONTINUED

## WEBINARS INTEGRATED INTO VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS

Virtual environments, including virtual learning environments, virtual executive briefing centers, client portals, virtual partner centers, virtual trade shows, virtual user conferences, and so on, present a compelling use case for webinars. These events often include multiple webinars, both live and on-demand, that participants can attend without leaving the environment. The popularity of webinars in virtual environments has increased every year we've tracked it. This year, 21 percent of the webinars we studied were integrated into a virtual environment at some point.



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VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT INTEGRATION



# Conclusion

In all the years we have been producing this report, we've seen a consistent rise in the popularity and value of webinars as an essential marketing, training, and communications tool. Year over year, we see companies taking their pre-webinar promotions more seriously, getting more sophisticated about how they integrate video and offer opportunities for engagement, and thinking more carefully about their post-live strategies and how they promote their on-demand webinars. Webinar audiences are getting larger and more engaged, and spending more time watching webinars, both live and on-demand.

As you plan your next webinars and evaluate the effectiveness of the program, use the benchmarks in this report as a set of guidelines to help you create, promote, and deliver successful events.



## ABOUT ON24, INC.

ON24 is the leading webinar marketing platform for demand generation, lead qualification and customer engagement. Its award-winning, patented, cloud-based platform enables companies of all sizes to deliver engaging live and on-demand webinars. Providing industry-leading analytics that can be integrated with all leading marketing automation and CRM platforms, ON24 enables marketers to optimize demand generation, enhance lead qualification and accelerate sales pipeline opportunities.

Additional applications for the ON24 product portfolio include virtual training, talent development and town hall meetings. More than 1,000 enterprises rely on ON24, including IBM, CA Technologies, Merck, JPMorgan Chase, Credit Suisse, and SAP. The company is headquartered in San Francisco, with offices throughout the world. For more information, visit [ON24.com](http://ON24.com).



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