



## **Virtual event speaker best practices & tips**

Speaking at a virtual event and speaking on a live event stage do not compare one-for-one as experiences. Even seasoned speakers have had to completely rethink their approach to engaging audiences, copying your old presentations for our new virtual world won't cut it. To connect with online audiences in meaningful ways, consider these best practices for virtual event speakers.

When presenting online, it's important to follow best practices to ensure all your attendees have an equal experience.

- Consider background, lighting and camera placement. It's all in the details – clothing, background, and posture.
- All speakers need to rehearse. It is imperative for speakers to learn the platform being used for the event and to meet the event producer.
- Speakers should plan to sign-on to the broadcast at least 30 minutes prior to the event start time. This allows the opportunity to test A/V and to gain cohost/panelist rights. While speakers could just walk into an in-person session and hit the stage, the producer needs time to enable the correct functions to give a speaker rights before they go live.
- Not all speakers need co-host rights in the virtual event platform—only the person needing to share documents. Everyone else can use the virtual event platform as an attendee to speak.
- Speakers must use their name as printed in the program. Nicknames or first letter/last name names should not be used when entering the virtual event platform. We need to be able to find you.
- Provide your slides ahead of time, you should provide a link for attendees to access your slides before the presentation. Additionally, a resource document with any links mentioned during your presentation. The AIA staff program manager and producer will need to receive your presentation 3 days prior to the event.
- Take a moment to describe your slides. Make sure you summarize key graphs, videos, images, and bullet points. Please do not read from your slides.
- Check the color contrast of your slides. Ensure your slides have enough color contrast between text and background, as well as images. You can use a [color contrast checker](#).
- Read polls, chats, and questions aloud: If you incorporate polls or use the chat, make sure to read questions and replies for other attendees. In addition, make sure to give attendees plenty of time to answer.

- In order to accommodate registrant requirements, AIA will offer closed captioning services on all sessions.
- Don't forget to have fun! Doing the exact same presentation you would have in-person typically does not translate the same in the virtual world. You want to be sure the audience is engaged.