



2017

WEBINAR BENCHMARKS REPORT

THE
STREAMING NETWORK

ON24



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Executive Summary

Webinars are the best tool we have to engage audiences and communicate information. Marketers use them to drive leads, generate pipeline, and nurture prospects through the every stage of the buying cycle, from awareness to purchase. Trainers and educators use them to conduct global and on-demand training sessions. Companies large and small use them for internal communications, new hire training, town halls, and more. Consumers use them to get new information and best practices, to discover new products, and to self-educate before they make a purchase. In short, webinars have become indispensable for helping us meet our business goals.

METHODOLOGY

The findings in this report were compiled by ON24, the world's leading webinar marketing platform. In 2016, ON24 supported over 65,000 webcasts globally. This report is based on a random subset of those events:

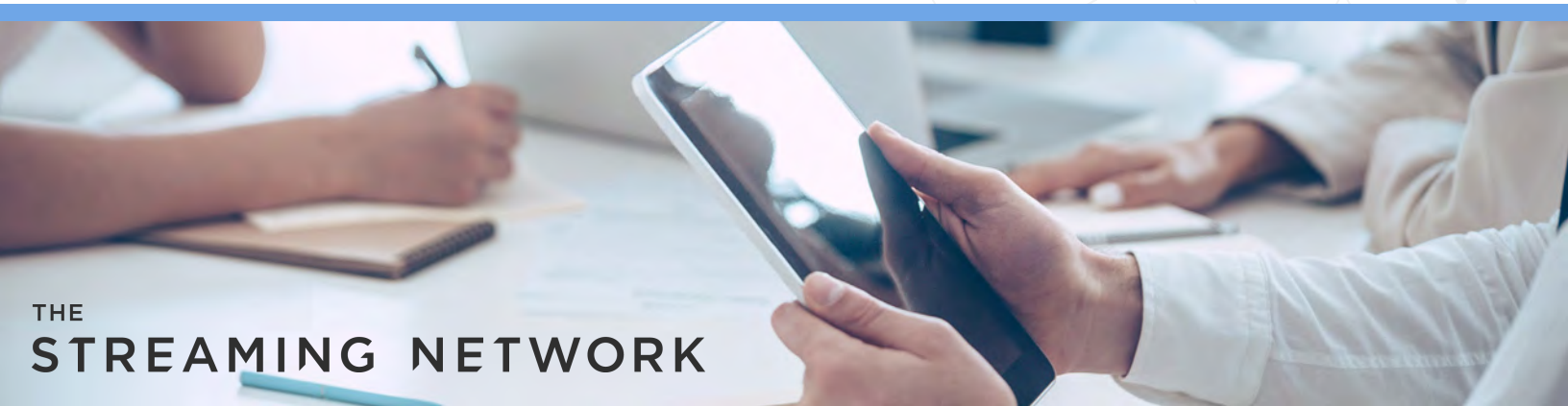
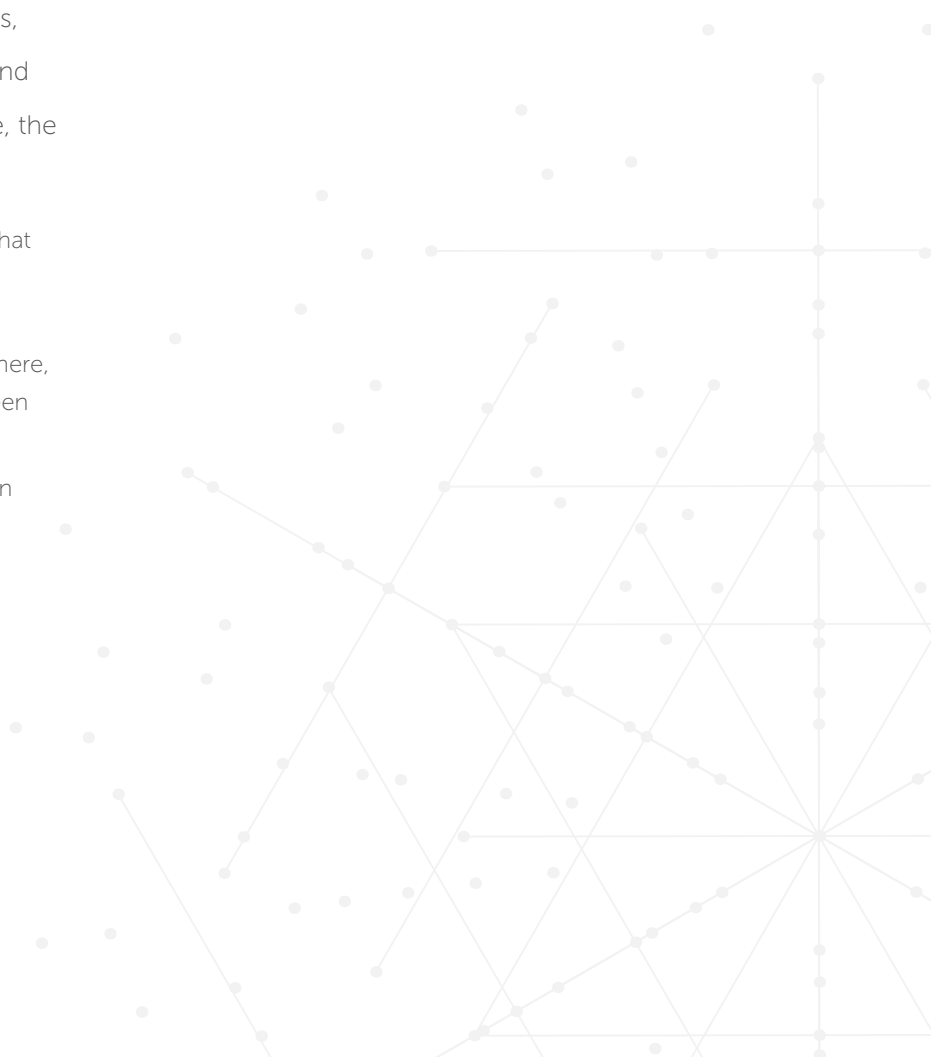
- » **16,418 webinars were measured in this analysis**
- » **All webinars were held between January and December of 2016**
- » **All webinars had at least 100 attendees**
- » **Events represent a cross section of 1000+ organizations**
- » **Company size ranges from large enterprise to SMB**

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 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audio or video-based events that are streamed upon request anywhere, anytime, including live webcasts that have been archived for additional viewing
- » **Registrants:** people who registered to view an event
- » **Attendees:** people who registered to view an event and attended that event

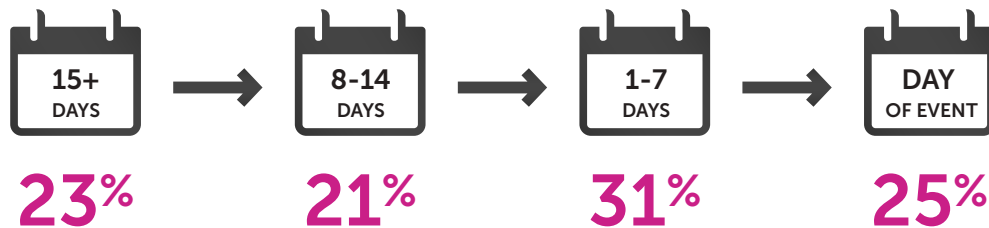


Pre-webinar Benchmarks

PROMOTIONAL CYCLE

Driving registration is critical to building and maintaining a successful webinar program. But how can you get more people to register for your webinars? If you're only promoting your events for a week or two, you may be missing out on nearly half of your potential audience. Almost one in four registrants sign up for a webinar more than 15 days before the event. And don't forget the day of the live event — 25% of webinar registrants sign up that day.

Pursuing a longer promotional cycle that includes a series of email drops and extended social promotion over several weeks will provide more chances to drive a large audience to your webinars.



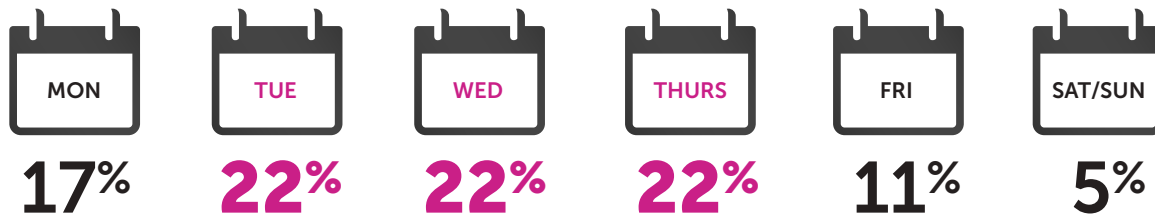
WEBINAR PROMOTION STARTS EARLY AND KEEPS GOING STRONG

Pre-webinar Benchmarks

CONTINUED

BEST DAYS TO SEND PROMOTIONAL EMAILS

The most effective promotional emails catch their intended audience with an engaging message at a moment when they are receptive to it. For most business audiences, that means avoiding weekends, when recipients are less likely to respond to work emails. Fridays, when many workers are either winding down or frantically wrapping up their work week, are also poor performers. The middle of the week (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) continues to be the most effective time to send a promotional email.



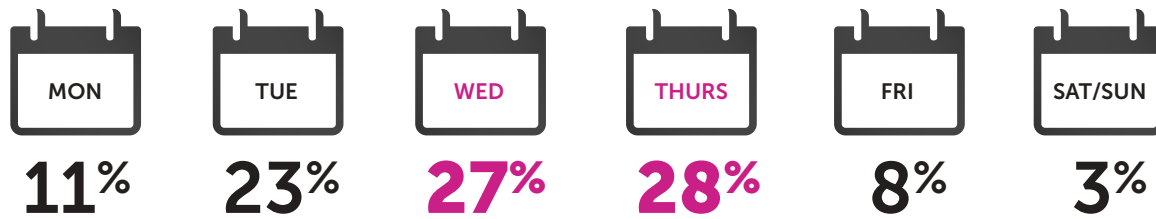
SEND PROMO EMAILS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE WORKWEEK

Pre-webinar Benchmarks

CONTINUED

BEST DAYS FOR WEBINAR ATTENDANCE

You want to plan your webinars for the days that pull in the biggest audiences. For most of us, that means scheduling your events in the middle of the week, when people are focused on work and productivity. Unsurprisingly, weekend webinars don't attract many attendees. Monday and Friday are only a little better, bringing in 11% and 8% of all attendees, respectively. The most popular days for webinar attendance are Wednesday and Thursday, pulling in a combined 55% of all webinar attendees.



MID-WEEK WEBINARS ATTRACT MORE ATTENDEES

Pre-webinar Benchmarks

CONTINUED

BEST TIMES TO RUN WEBINARS

It isn't easy to schedule a webinar, especially when you have people attending from a wide range of locations and time zones. Ideally, you would like to avoid commute times (before 9am or after 5pm) and lunch hours (noon–1pm). In this study, we found that the most effective time to run a webinar was 11am Pacific Time (2pm Eastern), because it succeeds at avoiding the most conflicts for the most people. 10am Pacific (1pm Eastern) and noon Pacific (3pm Eastern) were the next best time slots, accounting for 17% and 16% of attendees, respectively.

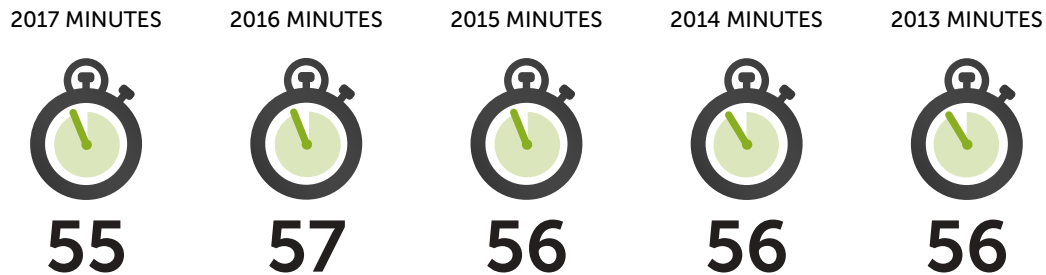


TIME OF DAY MAKES A DIFFERENCE TO ATTENDANCE

Webinar Benchmarks

AVERAGE VIEWING TIME

The enduring popularity of webinars is attributable, at least in part, to their ability to deliver deep and engaging content at a time when so many other communications are superficial or “snackable.” With that in mind, it’s hardly a surprise that they continue to hold audiences’ attention for nearly the full running time. This year, we found that the average webinar attendee stayed in the event for more than 55 minutes.



WEBINAR ATTENDEES WATCH FOR ALMOST A FULL HOUR

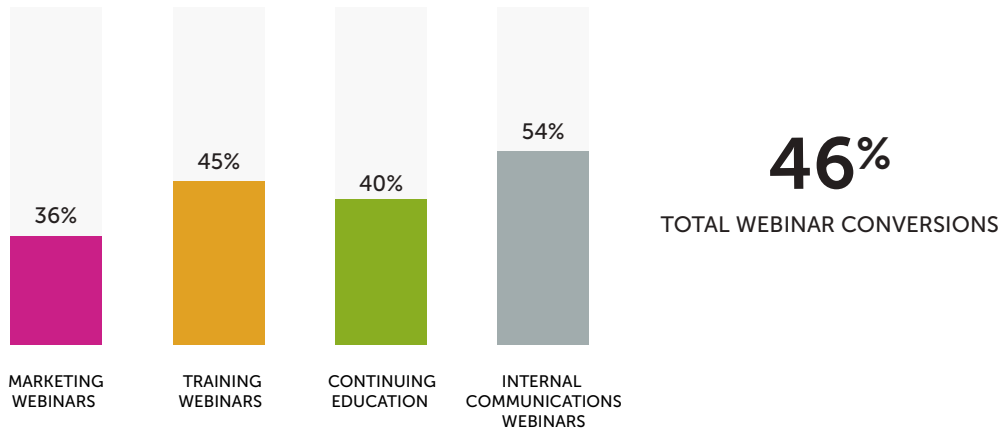


Webinar Benchmarks

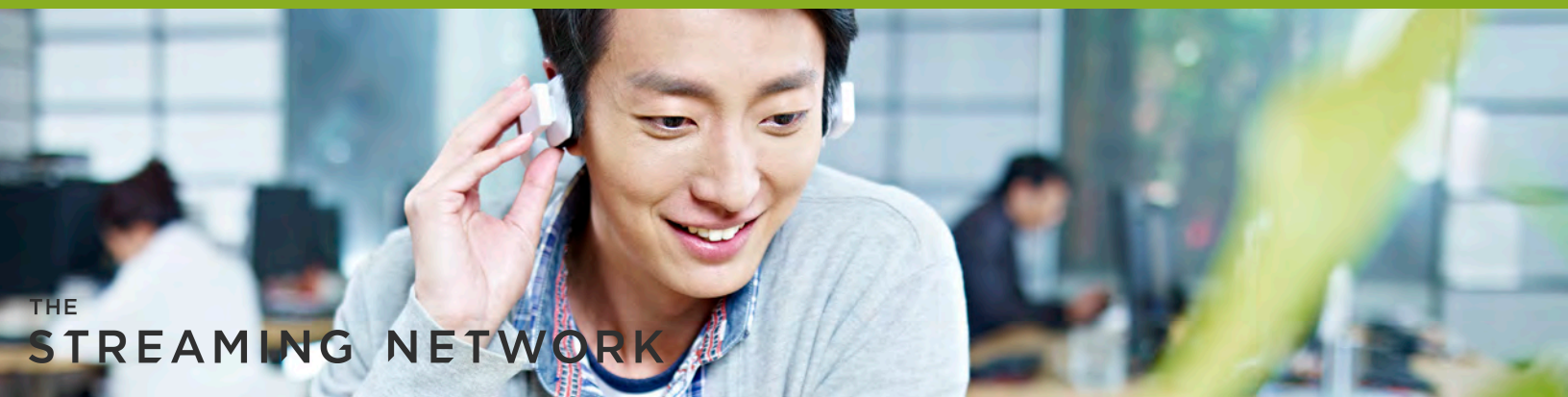
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REGISTRANT TO ATTENDEE CONVERSION

Understanding the rate at which webinar registrants convert to attendees will help you build more effective models for tracking webinar performance. This has historically been one of the most stable metrics in this report, coming in at 46% for 2017. A conversion rate anywhere between 35% and 45% should be considered a strong result. Webinars for training or internal comms tend to have a higher conversion than marketing webinars, as represented in the charts below.



AVERAGE WEBINAR CONVERSION RATES

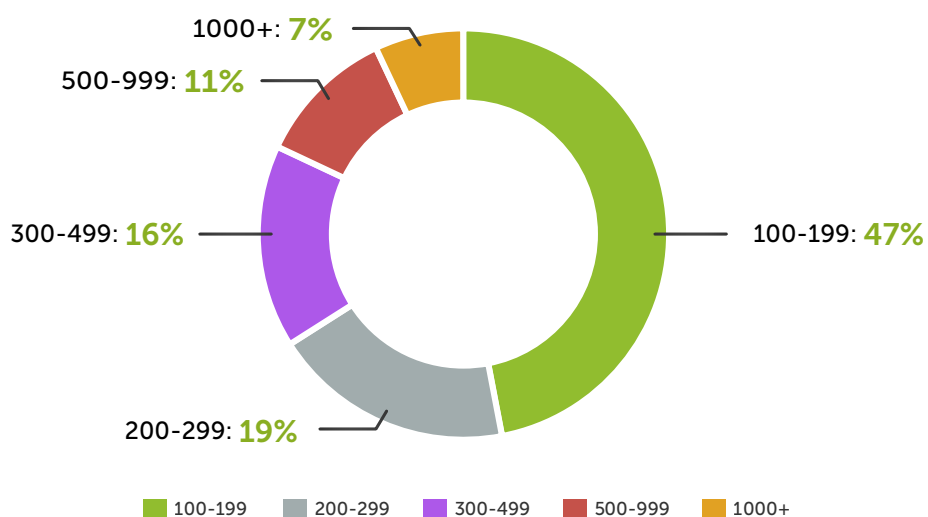


Webinar Benchmarks

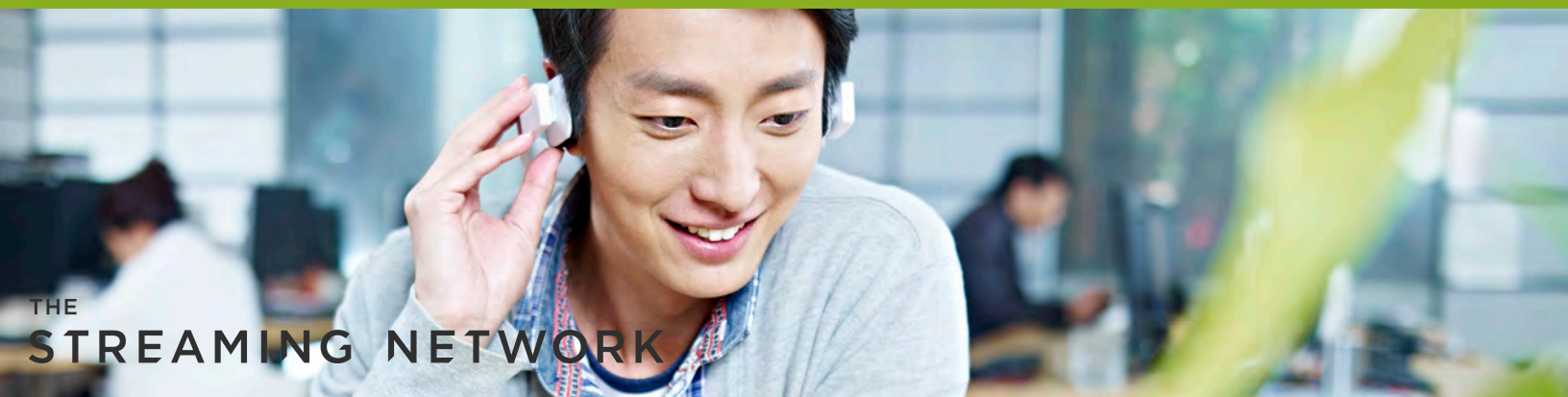
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AVERAGE ATTENDEE RATE

One advantage webinars have over in-person events is their ability to attract audiences of any size from all around the world. Over the past few years, we've seen a rise in of webinars with over 1,000 attendees, with 7% of all ON24 webinars in 2016 attracting audiences on that scale. 25% of webinars drew audiences between 300–1000 attendees.



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



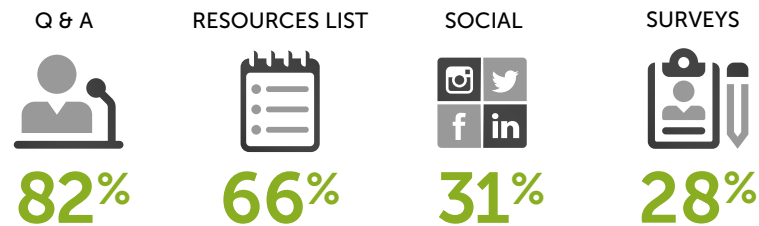
Webinar Benchmarks

CONTINUED

INTEGRATION OF ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

Whether you are talking about marketing webinars or training webinars, engagement is the key to a more successful event. An engaged audience is more likely to feel positively, retain more information, and engage with you again in the future. As always, Q&A is the most popular form of audience engagement, appearing in 82% of all webinars. 66% of webinars provide a list of additional resources for attendees to download, and 31% integrate a social experience, such as Twitter, LinkedIn, or Facebook.

New to this year's report, we are tracking webinars that integrate a "contact us" widget. This turns the webinar into a powerful tool for driving sales leads.



WEBINARS DRIVE AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

Webinar Benchmarks

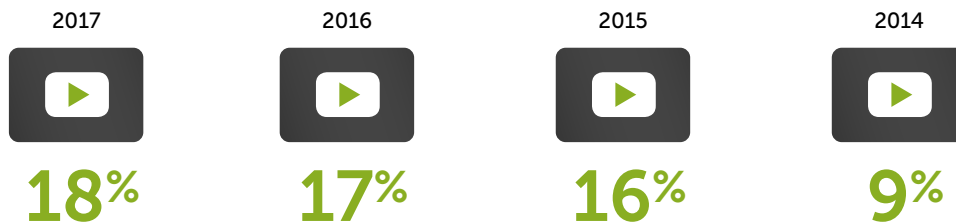
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INTEGRATION OF VIDEO

Over the past few years, webinars have become more dynamic and visually engaging. We've seen this in webinar consoles and the presentations themselves, but nowhere is it more apparent than in the increasing integration of video into webinars. For the fourth year in a row, we've seen a rise in the proportion of webinars that include a video component. This includes the following video types:

- Studio video presenters
- Webcam presenters
- Integrated video clips
- Streaming video and screen sharing

The increasing presence of video likely reflects a growing comfort with video technologies and the ability to reliably push video without bandwidth constraints.



VIDEO INTEGRATION INCREASES YEAR OVER YEAR

Post-webinar Benchmarks

ON-DEMAND VIEWING

Webinars can have an impact long after the day of the live event. Over the years, we have consistently seen strong audiences for on-demand events. In 2017, one third of all webinar attendees only ever watch the on-demand event. Audiences could be drawn to the on-demand event for a number of reasons, including the following:

- Many 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

Having a solid post-live strategy will make sure you reach the third of webinar attendees who prefer the on-demand experience



AUDIENCE VIEWING EXPERIENCES

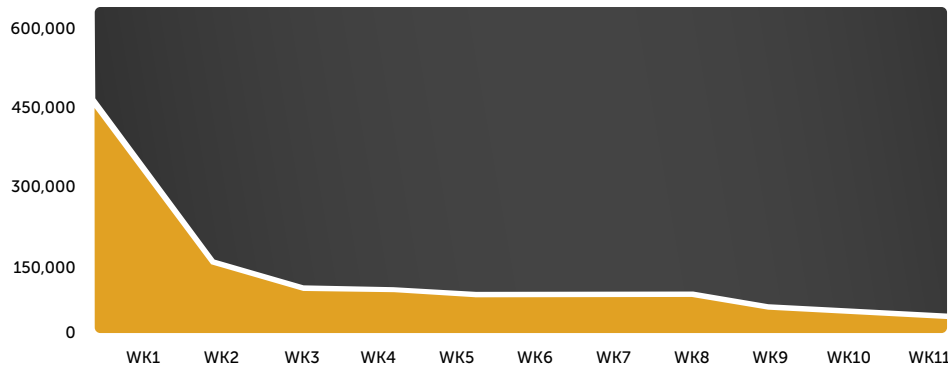
Post-webinar Benchmarks

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POST-LIVE REGISTRANTS

This study took into account the behavior of millions of webinar registrants and attendees. Of those, 33% only ever saw the webinar on-demand. This thriving audience for on-demand content represents a clear opportunity for those of us running webinar programs: by continuing to support and promote the event after the live date, we can continue to reach large and engaged audiences.

The majority of post-live registrations happen the week after the live event, suggesting that they were interested in the live event, but missed it due to scheduling conflicts. However, the long tail for on-demand registration highlights their power to pull in registrants for months.



POST-LIVE REGISTRATION DATA



Post-webinar Benchmarks

CONTINUED

ON-DEMAND VIEWING TIME

In the past year, we have seen a massive jump in on-demand viewing times, from 34 minutes in 2016 to 42 minutes in 2017. This reflects the growing appeal of on-demand content. We attribute the lower viewing time of on-demand viewing (compared to live viewing times) to a variety of factors, including the following:

- Some on-demand viewers also watched the live event, and they are only attending to catch up on content they missed the first time.
- Most on-demand webinars include timeline tools that let the audience fast-forward through the webinar and focus on the content they're most interested in.
- Viewers can watch on-demand webinars multiple times, so they may only watch short sections in any given viewing.

2017 MINUTES



2016 MINUTES



2015 MINUTES



INCREASING ON-DEMAND VIEWING TIME

Conclusion

At ON24, we spend a lot of time thinking about webinars and webinar performance. And in all the years that we've been producing this report, webinars have become consistently more popular, more effective, and more interesting. Webinar producers and presenters put an increasing emphasis on creating an engaging audience experience. Webinar promoters are thinking bigger, extending their promotions long before and after the live event. 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.