



SPREADING YOUR WORD

Using webinars to reach more prospects

Contents

About Webinars	2
Market, Promote and Execute Your Webinar	9
Follow Up and Convert Your Webinar Leads	15
Lather, Rinse and Repeat	19
Closing The Sale	22
Quick Wins	27

ABOUT WEBINARS

Let's start from the beginning. What is a webinar?

Webinars are a live online lesson or class that hundreds of people can watch simultaneously on their internet-enabled devices. Webinars are powerful tools that can boost your credibility and leadership status within your industry, sell services directly, and very effectively generate leads for your business. In this chapter I'll show you how webinars work, why they work, and how to create your own webinar campaign.

Why Webinars?

A knowledgeable speaker giving a well-researched PowerPoint presentation to a live audience is powerful. Public speaking is an excellent business development tool, and it does wonders for your credibility and status in your industry. Unfortunately, public speaking isn't scalable because you can only be in one place at a time. And you've got a practice to run, right? Well, a webinar is just like giving that PowerPoint presentation in front of a room full of people, but with a couple of major differences.

First, webinar campaigns are hugely scalable, able to reach hundreds and even thousands of prospects.

Second, your webinar audience can be anywhere in the world; they don't need to book a flight and a hotel to come see you speak. They don't necessarily have to turn up at the time of the presentation (if you are recording it). All they have to do is turn on their computer.

Third, as the speaker, you don't need to spend time and money travelling around the country, either. You can give your presentation wearing pyjamas and bunny slippers while sitting on your couch at home. The webinar attendees will only see your computer screen and hear your voice (unless you prefer to turn your webcam on).

And finally, if you record your webinar you can replay it over and over again to new audiences without doing additional work. So you only have to research, write, and create the webinar once. In fact, you could have multiple pre-recorded webinars running every week while you're lounging by the pool. Now that's scalability!

There are many ways to do webinars. The most common is to simply share your computer screen with your attendees. All they see are your PowerPoint slides and all they hear is your voice. Some webinar presenters choose to also have their computer's webcam enabled, so the audience can see their face. But disabling the webcam makes hosting a webinar much easier, as it leaves you free to look at your notes or even read them straight off the page. For somewhat introverted people like me, this is wonderful.

A webinar is not a teleconference. A teleconference is just a phone call that many people can listen to. There are no visuals and no PowerPoint presentation. Webinars are much more powerful than teleconferences because they engage your audience's eyes as well as their ears. So if you have a choice, I always recommend a webinar rather than a teleconference.

Webinars create value

You probably want to do a webinar to sell your service or generate leads. But remember the principles of content sharing! First and foremost you must provide your attendees with

real value. They must get something out of the time they're investing in your webinar. You may think lecturing them for an hour about your services is value, but trust me, it isn't. If your webinar is a giant pitch you're just going to irritate your audience. So you have to give them something that they really want: useful, actionable information that will help them in their work.

Instead of pitching, do some research on your target prospects and find out what they are interested in. What types of problems do they worry about in their business? What are the frequent topics of discussion in their LinkedIn groups? What are people complaining about? What topics generate the most comments? Use your research to generate a short list of three to five potential webinar topics.

Next, do a quick survey. Message a few dozen of your prospects or LinkedIn group members and ask them which topic they'd be most interested in learning more about. Webinar success starts with understanding your market and your customers.

For example, you might learn that many companies are looking for creative ways to cut costs at their shareholder meetings or annual conventions. So if you create and plan a webinar titled "Amazing Corporate Events on a Budget" you will likely get many people to sign up. Then when you present the webinar, share plenty of solid, useful information and inside tips for cost cutting. Every attendee will feel it was time well spent because they learned something valuable.

Unlike with a LinkedIn group discussion or message campaign, though, with a webinar you do get to include a pitch for your services at the end, and a call to action around a service you offer. This works well because once the webinar is finished, you'll have already earned their respect and goodwill for sharing your amazing content, so a short pitch doesn't seem manipulative or underhanded. (Also, since many webinars end with sales pitches, most people who sign up for yours will not feel blindsided by you including one.)

One popular tactic for webinars that will work in almost every business is including case studies and success stories. This generally involves telling the story of one company that succeeded in the marketplace and giving a step-by-step analysis of how they did it. People love success stories, and they love learning about what other successful companies are doing.

This works especially well if the service you're selling played a part in their success. For example, if you're a SaaS provider and your software helped the business in the case study succeed, that becomes a natural segue into a discussion for your product. "Today I showed you how ABC Inc. used our software to grow by 200%. If you'd like to explore how this solution could generate the same results for you, we'd like to set up a call with one of our account specialists. We'll be reaching out to you in the coming days." Done!

Types of webinars

Generally there are two broad categories of webinars.

The first type is designed primarily to build brand awareness and generate leads. In this type of webinar your goal is to impress the attendees so much with your knowledge and expertise that they agree to a post-webinar meeting or phone call. You already have their contact information at this point, so you simply let them know that "Someone from our organisation will be reaching out to you in the next couple of days to ask your thoughts on the webinar and discuss some of the ideas we talked about today." This webinar strategy is best for B2B companies, and any company with high-dollar expensive services.

The second type of webinar is designed to directly sell something—and the goal is to get attendees to pull out their credit cards and make a purchase immediately. This category of webinar is popular for information products, such as training or coaching programs, as well as many other types of products. If your goal is to make a direct sale at the end of the webinar it is helpful to offer an incentive to buy now.

For example, if you have an information product, like a \$99 e-book or a video series that helps personal fitness trainers sign more clients, in your webinar you could share the top ten tips for building a fitness business and wow the audience with your knowledge and expertise. At the end of the webinar, you reveal that there are actually twenty-five tips in total, and all of them are explained in detail in your 100-page e-book...that you can buy right now for 50% off.

There are also webinars that actually charge customers a fee to attend. This strategy works best when the webinar offers very valuable and specialised information that people are willing to pay for upfront. Aside from making a few bucks, another benefit of charging for your webinar is that registrants are much more vested; when they actually have skin in the game, the attendance rate skyrockets. Whereas free webinars typically see attendance rates of 25-40%, paid webinars can see attendance as high as 80%.

That being said, most webinars offer their content for free, and then try to convert attendees at the end.

Is your business a good candidate for webinars?

For a webinar strategy to make sense for your business, you generally must have at least a few hundred potential customers. This is because webinars are not a high response rate kind of tactic. After all, you're going to be asking people to dedicate an hour of their time, and many people simply aren't willing to do that, no matter how much they'd like to hear what you have to say. As such, you need a big enough audience to which to market your webinar.

There are also many steps in the webinar sign-up process, or funnel. Potential attendees need to:

- Open the email invitation
- Click the invitation link
- Sign up at the registration page
- Show up at the webinar
- Stay for the whole webinar
- Convert (buy or sign up) at the end

That's a lot of steps, and at each one you will lose people. So in order to have anyone left after all that attrition, you need to start with a decent pool of prospective attendees.

Let me walk through a representative example of some typical numbers. Consider an email list of 5,000 prospects. That's a good-sized universe. You send two rounds of emails marketing your webinar, and the emails average a 15% open rate. So now you're down to 1,500 prospects that even see the promotion. If you then get a 20% click-through on those emails, you're down to 300 prospects that make it to your registration/landing page. If the landing page converts well, maybe 50% of those people will sign up – or 150. From those 150, 70% will actually attend the webinar. So that's about 105 attendees for your webinar from a total

possible pool of 5,000. If you're new to webinars that may not seem like a lot, but it's actually very strong. You should be pleased if you get 100 attendees on your webinars; those are solid numbers.

But now consider a business that only has a total universe of about 500 prospects. Even if they convert well, the same formula would only result in about 10 attendees. Is it worth all the effort? Maybe. Only you can decide that. If you're selling a product or service that costs \$20,000 or \$50,000 or \$500,000, and those remaining five prospects are hot leads, then yes, it's worth it. It depends on your business and your product. But the key point here is that webinars work best if you have a large universe of potential customers.

For these same reasons, businesses that only operate in a limited geographic area are less likely to have success with webinars. For example, a regional company that only sells products in the city of Cincinnati will have a much smaller universe of potential customers than a company that sells its products all over the country or the world. The smaller your prospect pool, the faster you'll run out of runway.

Planning your webinar

Planning a webinar is like planning a party; the longer you wait until the last minute to plan it, the less likely it will be to succeed.

It takes about four weeks to prepare for and promote a quality webinar, if you know what you're doing. Here's why:

- First, it takes time and testing to hone in on the topic that will most appeal to your prospects.
- Second, you have to research, write, create, and produce your webinar content.
- Third, you have to think about what your goal is for your webinar, and plan your strategy and call to action so that at the end of the webinar the attendees will become paying clients.
- And fourth, perhaps most important, you must market and promote your webinar so people will show up. You don't want to do all that work and have only two people in the audience. (I'll cover marketing and promotion in detail in the next chapter).

If you procrastinate too much, you won't be able to do quality work on any of these four tasks. Take content, for example; once you have decided on your topic, it takes time to research information, collect case studies, organise your presentation, build the PowerPoint slides, and practice. Then you should test the presentation in front of your friends or co-workers and ask for their feedback and suggestions. You will probably make small changes and tweaks all the way up until a day or two before the live webinar.

What you *don't* want to do is get behind schedule and have to slap something together that isn't your best work. Remember, your attendees are busy people. They're trusting you to make this webinar worth their time. If you start at least a month out and put in the effort, it will be. I'll show you what steps to take and when in the next chapter.

Some practical hints

MAKE SURE YOU CHOOSE WEBINAR TOPICS THAT PEOPLE REALLY CARE ABOUT

This is critical. Choose a topic that adds real value and is worthwhile for your target prospects to attend; otherwise, no one will show up. We'll talk more about how to pick the right topics in the next chapter.

WRITE OUT YOUR ENTIRE TALK TRACK WORD-FOR-WORD

Script it! This may sound like a lot of unnecessary work, but trust me, it's worth it. You've spent a lot of time and effort planning your webinar and getting people to show up, so you want to make sure you deliver your message the right way. Don't leave this to chance. There will be a lot of thinking going on in your head during a webinar, so it's easy to forget things, even your key message. Having it all scripted also reduces fear and anxiety. If what you're going to say is written right in front of you, you'll be more relaxed—even if you don't use the script.

WRITE THE WAY YOU TALK

Don't use fancy words in your script, unless you actually talk that way. Most people use small words, lots of contractions, and sometimes incomplete sentences. Sentence fragments are fine.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

The more you practice, the more confident and relaxed you'll be. It is important to practice so the words seem like you're just talking, not reading, especially if you are going to read word-for-word from a script. The more you rehearse the more natural it will sound. Ask a friend to listen to you over the phone and see if she can tell you're reading a script.

USE A PROFESSIONAL MICROPHONE

The built-in mic on your computer is fine for Skyping with your friends, but probably inadequate for professional use. Upgrade to an external mic. You can acquire high quality microphones for less than \$100 these days.

USE GOTOWEBINAR FOR HOSTING YOUR LIVE WEBINARS

There are a number of live webinar solutions out there. GoToWebinar is probably the gold standard. Unfortunately, it's also the most expensive. You can try to save a few bucks with one of the cheapies, but you might end up paying for it later. The cost of one webinar disaster can easily wipe out any small savings from using a lesser solution.

INVITE SOMEONE TO CO-HOST THE WEBINAR WITH YOU

When two people are presenting a webinar together it often runs a lot more smoothly. Two people can divide up the work, so one person can focus on the slides and presenting while the other person can moderate the chat, organise questions, facilitate, troubleshoot, pop out for coffee, and just chime in once in a while with an observation or a rehearsed ad-lib. Plus, with two hosts, your webinar will seem a little more legit, and make it less likely that attendees will wonder if you're sitting at home wearing a tank-top and board shorts.

PREPARE QUESTIONS AHEAD OF TIME

At the end of your webinar, when you open it up to questions from the audience, it's awkward if no one asks anything. So I suggest you always have a few questions ready to go. Many webinar hosts even act like those prepared questions came from the audience. Remember, people like to feel as though they're participating in something that's popular

and vibrant. If they get the sense that there are only a few people in the webinar, they won't come back.

PLANT THE QUESTIONS YOU REALLY WANT TO ANSWER

Whether you have a full house or a handful of attendees, you always want to make sure you get your business and services promoted at the end of the webinar. An easy way to do this is to "plant" or script a few questions about your services to make it seem as though an audience member submitted the question. That way you can talk a bit about your company and services without seeming pushy.

ALWAYS RECORD YOUR WEBINARS

This allows you to go back and listen and watch your webinar to self-critique. Make a list of things you could do better next time. Recording also lets you rerun your webinars again and again. Importantly, it lets you provide your webinar – and its vital content – to a whole bunch of people who could not attend at the time you ran the live webinar.

TRY TO KEEP YOUR WEBINARS EVERGREEN

In other words, omit any reference to the time of day, day of the week, date, seasons, holidays, the weather, your Christmas tree, and anything else that would give away the fact that you recorded this webinar six months ago and you're replaying it. This goes for what you say verbally, as well as the text on your slides. If your webinar is evergreen you can record it and run it over and over again.

EDIT IF YOU **HAVE** TO

Sometimes you'll want to make a few edits, cut out something stupid you said, or add information. You can use any editing software to do this, but a program called Camtasia is simple and easy to use because it's designed as a screen recorder.

PLAN AND IMPLEMENT A STRONG CALL TO ACTION AT THE END

A rookie mistake is that a good webinar just fizzles out at the end, instead of finishing strong. Do not end your webinar by mumbling to yourself and saying, "Well...uh...I guess that's it...bye." A strong finish needs to be well planned, compelling, definitive, and rehearsed. If your goal is to sell product then and there, have your sales pitch ready to go and say it. Do not end in a wishy-washy puddle of indecisiveness. Practice strong endings.

LEARN THE WEBINAR SOFTWARE AHEAD OF TIME

Make sure you know how to work everything and what to click and when. A little practice goes a long way here. You do not want to be using your webinar software for the first time *during* an actual live webinar. So do a full-on live trial run to test everything.

USE AUTOMATED EMAIL SOFTWARE TO SIMPLIFY YOUR EMAIL CAMPAIGNS

When you are running webinars you need an email system to tell people about your webinar. Send them a link to the landing page, remind them it's coming up, and then follow up after the webinar. If your firm does not already have an email marketing platform, then there are a number of good options out there. GoToWebinar has some built-in email capabilities, but it's far more limited than what you can do with your own email marketing

software. Infusionsoft is a full-featured, robust email marketing service. For a less expensive, more basic option you can also look into MailChimp, which also comes highly recommended.

And perhaps most important, *market your webinars!* The single most demoralising mistake people make is not getting enough attendees to show up. This doesn't have to happen! We'll dig in to marketing and promoting webinars to draw maximum attendance in the next chapter.

Record and rerun your webinars

Scalability in webinar marketing occurs when you create and present your webinar once, record it, then replay that same webinar over and over to a brand new audience every time. That's some serious efficiency. You can do all the hard work one time, and then continue to reap the benefits for years.

The hardest part of webinar campaigns

Creating, practising, and delivering great webinar content is not the most difficult part of webinar marketing. That's actually the fun part. The hard part is simply getting people to show up—in other words, effectively marketing and promoting the webinar. If you can master this skill you will be a webinar superstar in no time. We'll show you how in the next chapter.

MARKET, PROMOTE, AND EXECUTE YOUR WEBINAR

Webinars can be a powerful marketing tool for your business... but only if people show up! You can present the most compelling, engaging webinar of the year, but if you only get two people to attend it's an epic fail.

If you're going to put in the work to create and execute your webinar, then you must also put in the effort to market and promote it properly. I would even argue that the marketing requires *more* attention and planning than actually conducting the webinar.

In this chapter I'll run down all of the key steps in planning, marketing, and promoting your webinar, and I'll put everything on a timeline so you'll get a sense of when you should be doing what. These are general guidelines, so don't panic if things don't line up 100%. But if you follow them you should avoid most beginner mistakes. Let's dive in.

Four weeks out

About a month out, you'll begin your initial webinar preparation. (For your first webinar, you may want to start even earlier, just to give yourself an extra cushion of prep and learning time.) Initial prep will include the following tasks:

PICK THE WEBINAR DATE AND TIME. A FEW THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND AS YOU MAKE THIS CHOICE

Schedule your webinar on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. Research has shown that these days draw highest webinar attendance. (That said, every audience is different, so it's important that you test to find out what's best for yours).

If you're selling a B2B product or service, you can schedule the webinar during work hours.

If you're selling B2C, on the other hand, it's probably a good idea to schedule the webinar outside work hours. Early evening is your go-to time slot here, though over a weekend could also work.

CHOOSE YOUR CONTENT

By this point, you'll have already done some research on possible webinar topics that will directly appeal to your prospects. At the four-week mark, start to narrow down the options and decide what information, case studies, and success stories you will present.

Remember, never present a webinar that just focuses on giving a sales pitch for your product or service. No one will sign up for that. If you have a heating and cooling company, do not present a webinar titled, "Features and Benefits of the AirCon Heating and Cooling System." Come up with a title like, "Strategies for Reducing Your Building's Heating and Cooling Costs by 30%". That sounds much more appealing. (And of course, in one of your case studies you can casually mention the AirCon).

CHOOSE YOUR WEBINAR TITLE

I know, we just talked about titles. But we're going to mention them again.

Why?

Because your title is the *most important factor* in marketing your webinar.

Here's a great example. What do you think would happen if we tried to promote a webinar titled "LinkedIn Marketing Strategies Training Session?" Few people would sign up! Why? Because it's boooooorrrinnng.

Don't get me wrong, the content could be solid, but the lame title would scare people away. Your attendees may not judge books by their covers, but they absolutely will judge your webinar by its title. If your title is boring, they'll respond with a resounding "meh"—and not sign up for the webinar.

How to avoid this? Get creative. Choose titles that sound actionable, interesting, and will pique curiosity. Make sure they include tangible benefits for the potential attendees (such as: "The LinkedIn system for generating 1,548 qualified leads in just 18 minutes a day"). It's like writing headlines for a magazine; you want to hook people. And don't be afraid to try different titles until you find one that clicks, or even change the title a few weeks out based on the response you've had so far.

Professionals really struggle with this because they think it is too "sales-y", or they believe that they are not creative enough. But it's important to get over any misgivings and go for it! You need to be thinking about the benefit that will be delivered to your audience, not the technical aspects of what you do.

CREATE YOUR LANDING PAGE

One of the most important factors in marketing your webinar is the landing page, also called a registration page. This is the web page where people will be taken once they click on a link to learn more about your webinar. Landing pages are very simple, usually just including a little bit of written copy about the webinar itself and a place to sign up.

The great thing here is that you can build a landing page and start marketing your webinar before you've even committed to delivering or designing the webinar. That may sound backwards, but I really recommend doing it. Get the landing page up before you spend hours and hours refining your actual presentation. Why? Because depending on how many people actually sign up, the landing page may change completely. And this may force your content to change.

To revisit the example from above, if you create a landing page all about reducing an office building's heating and cooling costs, but no one is signing up, then it's time to change some things. You want to do some research to determine why people aren't signing up. Is it the topic? Is it the wording? Is it the design of the page? Luckily, collecting hard data will answer these questions definitively, and it's pretty easy to do.

Software like LeadPages is designed to help you create killer landing pages, and then test which ones work best. I like these sites because you don't have to be a techie to make them work (or a Wall Street **CEO** to afford them). Start with their preloaded templates and customise them as needed.

And yes, you read that right: ideally you should test more than one landing page, and they'll all need to be a little bit different from each other. Why? Because essentially, these programs give you the ability to divvy up incoming web traffic to different landing pages. Then you can look at the conversion rates of each to see which page is converting best

(getting the most sign-ups). This is an ongoing process. As you learn which landing pages are working and which are not, you can use that data to help refine your webinar content, title, date and time, etc.

The importance of a good landing page cannot be overstated. It's certainly worth investing the time and effort writing good copy and then testing. A difference of just a few percentage points in conversion rates can have an enormous impact on the number of attendees on your webinar, and your bottom line.

Three weeks out: set up your email auto-responder

Now that your landing pages are set up, it's time to prep the communication system for the people who will sign up. This is your only marketing task this week.

An auto-responder is an automated software program that sends out a sequence of emails to people on a list at predetermined intervals. Why is this important? Because once you have people's names and email addresses on your webinar list, you can reach out to them both before and after the webinar to make sure their webinar experience is amazing. This is an integral part of the webinar's success.

Immediately after they sign up for your webinar, the first email will be a welcome and confirmation email containing the login details and instructions for the webinar. The rest of the emails leading up to the webinar are designed to remind people why they signed up and what they're going to learn, to remind them when the webinar is, and to build anticipation and excitement.

Tip: Do *not* schedule a reminder email every day for three weeks. That will just make people angry. Send an email per week, and include some useful content in each email so there's more to it than just a boring reminder. This additional content can include teasers, short case studies, success stories from previous webinars, or even tips and tricks for getting the most out of the webinar. You can also ask for questions that attendees would like to have answered during the webinar.

You don't necessarily need a skilled copywriter to wordsmith each of these emails (though you certainly can use one if you'd like). Treat them like the content-sharing messages in your LinkedIn messaging campaigns; write in a casual, genuine manner, and try to write the way you talk. Avoid being formal or pushy.

Two weeks out

Now it's time to start promoting the webinar! We typically recommend four tactics for promoting your webinar, each targeting a different group of potential attendees.

PROMOTE ON LINKEDLN

All the work you've done building up your LinkedIn groups and connections will prove tremendously useful for promoting your webinars. Start your promotion efforts there.

First, send out an "announcement" to all of your group members announcing the webinar. Announcements are one of the benefits you have as a group owner. Once a week, you can send a customised message that hits the inbox of all group members.

You should also message your first-degree connections on LinkedIn, inviting them to the webinar. Sending personalised one-to-one messages to your connections, although time intensive, gets a huge response rate. You might be tempted to message your connections in bulk, which is understandable, but it gets nowhere near the results of sending each message one-on-one. People know when they're getting blasted. But when a message is personalised through LinkedIn, it will come across far more genuine and your results will be far greater.

You can also reach out individually to other groups' members, even if you're not connected to them, and tell them about your webinar. You can message anyone on LinkedIn that shares a group with you. And as long as they genuinely look like they'd be a good fit for your webinar, you'll be in good shape! These people have opted to receive messages from other group members when they joined their various groups. (And of course, be sure to include a link to your webinar's landing page in every message so they can click through and sign up.)

Remember to write in a personal and informal way, like you're telling a friend about something special. For example, "Hey, Bobby, it's been great being connected with you here on LinkedIn. I thought you might be interested in a webinar I have coming up. We're going to be talking about X, Y, and Z, and I thought you might be into it. If you'd like to check it out, here's the link. Hope you're doing well." This informal tone will get a much better response rate than sending them a message that's written like a formal marketing brochure.

PROMOTE TO YOUR IN-HOUSE EMAIL LIST

Most businesses have some sort of in-house email list of customers or clients. This is a great list for marketing your webinars. Presumably these people are already familiar with you, your company, and your services, so use your email auto-responder to leverage this list and invite them to join your webinar.

USE PAID MARKETING CHANNELS TO REACH ENTIRELY NEW PROSPECTS

Any time you present a webinar, it makes sense to try to bring in some completely new faces. Invite people from outside of your current pool of known LinkedIn contacts and your in-house lists. This is one area where more traditional online marketing techniques can help you. LinkedIn ads, Facebook ads, YouTube ads, Google pay-per-click, Twitter ads, Pinterest ads, and all variety of other online advertising can put your webinar in front of eyes that might never have seen it otherwise. Basically you want to use these tools to reach your prospects wherever they hang out online. You certainly don't need or want to advertise in *all* of the previously mentioned channels; just the ones that give you the best chance of reaching your prospects.

ESTABLISH JOINT VENTURES

When you partner with someone else who has a large list or following, it's called a joint venture. This is common practice in internet marketing. Once they agree to the joint venture, you'll be able to promote your webinar to their email list as well as yours. How many joint ventures should you do? As many as you can! One joint venture could double, triple, or even quadruple your reach.

Tip: Identify other online groups (LinkedIn or otherwise) that have a big list of members that you think would be a good fit for your webinar. Then contact the administrator or owner of that list to see if they'd be willing to promote your webinar to their members. Write something

like, "Hey, I noticed you have a community that I think would be a good fit for my webinar. Would you be interested in talking about how we could structure a promotional deal?" More often than not they'll agree as long as there's some benefit for them.

Potential benefits for joint venture partners could include:

- You agree in turn to market their products to your group.
- You compensate them directly.
- You split the sales from your webinar with them, or do a revenue share, or pay them a commission.

If your webinar will add value to their members, they might even let you use the list for free.

One week out

The most important task for the week leading up to the webinar is *to make sure everything is working correctly*.

Conduct a "dress rehearsal" of your webinar. Pretend it's really happening live, and run through the entire webinar. If something doesn't go smoothly, or if you forgot an important element, pretend it's live and keep going. It's far better to find any problems a week in advance so you have plenty of time to correct them. Besides, there are almost always minor tweaks to your script and your PowerPoint slides that you'll notice in the dress rehearsal.

One-to-two days out

The last emails you will send out through the auto-responder are final reminder emails that come two days before, one day before, and the day of your webinar.

Our research shows that you can still get results promoting your webinar through email and ads up until the time the webinar goes live. Why? Because two weeks or even one week out, a lot of people won't know their schedules for the webinar day yet. So they'll put off signing up, and maybe forget about it entirely. But *one day out*, their schedule is pretty well set; when they get one of those last-minute reminder emails, they might just join the webinar.

Send a separate set of emails out to the people who have already signed up, reminding them of the date and time, and providing login instructions. Typically it's best to send an email the day prior, as well as a final reminder a couple hours before the event. Yes, they've already received this info, but it's always better to send it to them again than to make them dig through their inboxes for it.

Twenty-to-thirty minutes out: log in, greet early birds, final tech check

I usually recommend logging in about twenty to thirty minutes before the start of the webinar. This lets you relax, get your bearings, get comfortable, and make sure everything is working properly. Then, you'll want to start the webinar and begin letting attendees trickle in about ten minutes before the official start time. This provides a good opportunity to greet the early bird attendees and get them talking.

When greeting your attendees, keep it conversational. You might like to tell them that the webinar is going to be awesome and have a lot of people attending. (Remember, they can't necessarily see how many people are attending, so keep it upbeat because people like to be a part of something that's vibrant and happening).

Then ask people questions. A really good one is "Where are you from"? The audience responds by typing into a "chat box" or "response box" on their screen (that is provided through the webinar interface). This can be interesting for attendees to see how far and wide the audience is spread – giving you additional credibility.

It also helps to get the conversation going in the direction of the webinar topic. So questions like, "What are the biggest challenges your business is facing today?" can be really good. The more you get people sharing and talking and interacting, the better the whole thing will go. This chitchat also helps make sure your audio and picture are working; you don't want to be ten minutes into the webinar only to find out people can't hear you.

One important note: If at all possible, do not conduct your webinar on a computer connected to the Internet via a Wi-Fi signal. If you have a choice between a laptop using Wi-Fi and a desktop that is hard-wired to the Internet, choose the hardwired computer. As reliable as Wi-Fi is, it's still a risk. If your connection is shaky and the audio or picture is popping in and out, people will drop out of the webinar.

Conduct your webinar

At this point you have a full house of attendees, you've warmed them up, you're well prepared, you're calm, and you're ready to begin. When delivering your webinar, just relax and be yourself—but be the version of yourself when you're excited and enthusiastic about something. Even if you're introverted and quiet, you can still be excited and enthusiastic. If the audience senses you're bored and just trying to get through it, they'll tune out. So get pumped up! Show your passion for what you're presenting. Make sure the attendees think you're excited to be there. One trick to help with this is to vary the speed of your delivery. Speed up, slow down, and even whisper at times. Change your vocal intonation to emphasise key points. This will take some practice, but it'll become second nature before you know it.

Tip: After a while, you will develop your own delivery style. One of the best ways to learn about different styles is to sign up for and attend other webinars, preferably those conducted by experienced, well-known marketers. There are plenty of them out there on all manner of different topics. So even if you are not particularly interested in the content, it's a good idea to attend as many webinars as you can. It's valuable research. And of course, you'll learn a ton by continuing to do your own webinars. You'll get better each time.

Follow up after your webinar

Your email auto-responder will also come into play after the webinar is over. Shortly after the webinar ends, an email should be sent to all the attendees thanking them for their time, and asking for their feedback or to take a short survey about the webinar. Depending on your goals, you can also use this email to make a product offer or request a sales call. Plan out ahead of time your strategy to get these webinar attendees into your sales pipeline. We'll show you some specific strategies for doing this in the next chapter.

FOLLOW UP AND CONVERT YOUR WEBINAR LEADS

You should plan and script the end of your webinar, and you should have a clear goal for what you want to accomplish. One goal might be to sell a product right on the webinar. Other goals could be to build brand awareness, to move prospects deeper into your sales funnel, or to schedule a follow-up sales call. This chapter will teach you how to accomplish that goal.

The key is to think about your end goal from the very beginning, so it can inform and influence your decisions as you plan your webinar content and strategy. Choose case studies and content that set up your pitch for your product or service. During the planning stages, look for tie-ins and connections between your audience, your content, your goals, and your service.

For example, if you're presenting a webinar to commercial construction executives, and your product is concrete, and your goal is to schedule a sales call, look for content and case studies that bridge the gap between this audience, product, and goal.

Of course it's crucial that all the content is very good, but because you're using these webinars as a sales tool, the way you end your webinar is equally critical. Always close your webinar in a way that gets people pulling out their credit card to purchase your product or service, filling out a survey form, or requesting a phone call for a consultation or strategy session—whatever the next step is. In this chapter we'll explore some of the most effective post-webinar strategies for follow-up and conversion.

Prioritise your prospects

If you only have thirty prospects show up for your webinar, you can easily reach out to every one of them with a personalised sales call after it's over. And you should. But let's say you hit a home run with your webinar and 2,000 people signed up. Wow! That means your topic was a hit, and your prospects were eager to hear what you had to say. Congratulations! Now comes the hard part. You can't call all 2,000 webinar attendees on the phone—at least not in the week or two after the webinar (unless you have a pretty big sales team). So you have to prioritise those 2,000 attendees.

In every webinar, there are generally three different tiers of prospects:

- Tier 1: hot prospects who are ready to buy right away.
- Tier 2: warm prospects who are interested in learning more.
- Tier 3: prospects who are not ready to buy right now, but might be at some point in the future (most of your attendees will fall into this category).

You can often tell which ones are the hot Tier 1 leads because they are highly engaged in the webinar conversation, they post a lot of comments in the chat box, and ask lots of questions. They may even directly request a call with you. These are the top-tier prospects you want to go after first. Follow up with them right away.

After you work the hottest prospects through your sales process, then gradually move on to the Tier 2 warm leads. These are the webinar attendees who were somewhat engaged, but not as much as the top-tier prospects.

Finally you can start reaching out to the Tier 3 cool leads. Since they didn't express a lot of interest, and maybe didn't even attend, the way you reach out to them will be different than with the first two tiers.

Warm up the cool leads

Cool leads are people who registered for the webinar but didn't attend. For this group of prospects it's usually best to warm them up a bit with an email campaign starting immediately after the webinar. Even if you have their phone number, email is the way to approach these people. Calling them when they didn't express much interest on the webinar will come off as super sales-y.

Instead, you can use your email auto-responder to send them a series of emails inviting them to watch a replay of the webinar recording, sharing some fresh content, and then culminating with a request for a phone call.

Heat up the warmer leads

For those prospects who did attend the webinar, there is also still work to be done. Use your email auto-responder to continue to warm them up as you make time to call them. Here's what the emails you send them could look like:

- The first email is designed to thank the attendees, and to invite them to contact you directly with any additional questions.
- Then a series of emails over the next couple weeks can include reminders of a few key concepts from the webinar, new tips and tricks, related information on the topic, and links to some suggested resources.
- Finally, send a request for a phone call or an opportunity to take a next step together.

This campaign is different from a long-term nurture campaign; it's designed to warm up the attendees enough to request a phone call very shortly after the webinar—within a couple of weeks at most.

If someone is not opening your post-webinar emails, consider them a cold prospect. But if they open all of your emails after the webinar and click on the links, they are a warm lead. Your email marketing software should be able to give you this data. This process can help you zero in on your list of target prospects.

Take it into the real world

The Internet, digital platforms like LinkedIn, and webinars can be powerful sales tools, no doubt about it. And the results can be amazing. But don't fall into the trap of thinking that the day after your webinar hundreds of prestigious clients are going to be filling your inbox with purchase orders; you're still going to have to put on your salesperson hat and close those sales.

If you are selling a product of modest price and asking people to buy it during the webinar, you will probably never have to take the sales process into the real world. You can do it all digitally. But for higher-priced products and services, at some point you will have to leave the digital part of the sales funnel and meet your prospects in the real world. In other words, make a real sales call. It could be over the phone or via GoToMeeting or Skype, and if it's a big enough potential client, you may be getting on a plane and travelling for an actual face-to-face meeting.

All of the automation, digital platforms and strategies in this book are designed *to get you to that real world sales call*. So let's talk about a few strategies for setting up those important sales calls and meetings.

A simple slide

The most basic technique to ask for a sales call happens during your webinar. Put up a simple PowerPoint slide at the end of your webinar with your contact information on it, and ask people to get in touch. A standard talk track goes something like, "If you're interested in talking more about how this could work for your business, here is my email and phone number. Please contact me and we can set up a complimentary consultation."

There are pros and cons to this approach. On the plus side, this can be a pretty effective method of getting your most enthusiastic prospects to take that next step. It's also simple and easy to execute. There are no online forms to build out, and no web development is required.

Unfortunately, this tactic puts you in the position of waiting for prospects to call you. So you have less control over the sales process. Prospects that are tepid or on the fence may never get around to calling you. Unless they really need your product or service right away, they'll probably want to take their time and think about it, and once it's not right in front of them anymore, they may let it slide entirely.

So depending on your business, a simple slide may be all you need. It's straightforward, easy, and it can be very effective. But in general, relying *solely* on a slide like this is often too passive to get the results you want. Let's look at a few more proactive tactics.

The feedback phone call

Many companies—from banks to utility companies—routinely perform survey calls. People are accustomed to these types of phone calls. So after your webinar you won't surprise too many people by calling to ask for feedback. But you'll use a very specific tactic within your feedback calls. Here's how that works:

- First, you call an attendee and say something like, "I am calling to ask for your feedback on the webinar you attended last week. What did you like or not like about it?" This will get them talking about the webinar.
- Once they've shared their feedback, you ask, "Have you been able to take concrete steps to implement some of the strategies that were discussed in the webinar?" Most people will respond that they have not had a chance because they're too busy, or they have other more pressing matters. That is the opening for you to segue into a sales call.
- In response, you could say something like, "If finding the time is a challenge for you right now, have you thought about letting our company implement and manage the process for you?" Or, "would it benefit if I came to see you and help with getting the ball rolling?" Just like that, you've started a sales conversation with them about how your services work and what benefits you can provide.

The scarcity close

Another effective way to get prospects to take action after your webinar is based on a kind of scarcity model. With this tactic, you inform the webinar attendees that you can

only take on six or eight new clients at this time (or one or two, the exact number is up to you), so they will have to fill out an application to work with you.

The talk track goes like this: "If you'd like to achieve the type of success we showed you in the case studies today, we have a proven program that works. But we only work with clients who are the exact right fit for our services, and we only have room for six new clients at this time. So here is a link to an application page. Fill it out and we'll contact you one way or the other. We can usually let you know within a couple days if it seems like it's going to be a good fit."

This type of close builds excitement and exclusivity into your service. It also allows you to ask for detailed information on the application form, so you can follow up with these prospects later, armed with more information about them and their business.

Long-term campaigns

Keep in mind that, like all sales processes, converting webinar attendees into customers is a numbers game. No matter how good you are, you will never convert 70-80% of your prospects. On a really good day a skilled marketer can convert maybe 20-30%. No matter how awesome your product is, most people are not going to be interested in buying or engaging with your company *right now*. They may be interested, but it just isn't the right time for that kind of investment, or they've got too many fires to put out already, or they just aren't ready yet.

So with the majority of your webinar attendees you will have to make a long-term commitment to stay in front of them and earn their trust over time. The webinar thus becomes the beginning of the relationship. It allows you to make a positive first impression, even though that person is not in the market for your product or service right now. So these prospects should be moved into your long-term email "nurture" campaign.

Much like with your LinkedIn messaging campaigns, you can send regular emails to these long-term nurture prospects sharing pertinent content, and even inviting them to future webinars. Eventually they will become familiar and comfortable with you, so when they're ready to buy they will think of you.

Learn by doing

Anyone can start learning how to achieve webinar success by reading books like this one and attending other webinars, but at some point you just need to learn by doing. You've got to bite the bullet and put on your first webinar.

LATHER, RINSE & REPEAT

Let's dive a little deeper into the real power of webinars, which is the "Lather, rinse, repeat" technique. As we discussed earlier, when you record all of your webinars you can set up an automated system to replay them to new audiences over and over again. This allows you to do all the hard work of creating a webinar just *once*. Then you can leverage that hard work many times in the future to reach a much bigger total audience. This is how webinars are incredibly scalable.

The power of taking all of that effort and plugging it into an automated system that runs continuously on autopilot is awesome. It allows you to scale up from doing just a handful of webinars each year to literally hundreds, potentially generating thousands of new leads. Here are a few specific strategies to make "Lather, rinse, repeat" work for you.

Encore! Encore!

Sometimes a television network will employ an encore strategy to get the most possible viewers for a new TV series. Here's how it works: The TV series premiere may be on a Tuesday night. Then the network will announce an "encore presentation" that same week just a few days later. Because completely different people watch TV at those two different times, the network gets more viewers to sample their new show. You can do the same thing with webinars; simply rerun them just a day or two later to a different audience.

An encore presentation is a quick and easy way to leverage all the hard work you do on each webinar so that more people will see it. Let's say you create, promote, and present your original live webinar on a Wednesday at 11:00 am. But you notice that less than half of the people who signed up actually showed up.

So shortly after the webinar is over, you send out a new email announcing an "encore presentation" the following day at 6:00 pm. Then at 6:00 pm the next day, you rerun a recording of the webinar. We always set up the encore on a different day and at a much different time, because that new time might work better for some people, or for people in different time zones.

The email might say something like, "Yesterday's webinar was a tremendous success. We received rave reviews. But we also heard from many of you who either couldn't make it yesterday or had to hop off early. So we're doing it again! If for some reason you couldn't attend yesterday's webinar, or if you just want to review the things that we talked about, then I'd love to have you join us Thursday evening."

This strategy has several benefits:

- First, you can get more people to see your webinar. By running an encore you can nearly double your total audience.
- Second, even though you get twice the audience, you only have to do the live presentation once. So you get twice the benefit with just a little bit more work.
- Third, you may even get some people who attend both presentations. You know these people are very interested and are likely to be hot prospects.
- And fourth, you can use some of the automation tools we talked about earlier in the book to set up this process on an ongoing basis.

Automate the processes

Most companies let previously recorded webinars appear as if they're live. This tends to create more excitement, drives audience engagement, and boosts authenticity, which gets more people to sign up. Marketing a webinar as "previously recorded" always leads to lower turnout, since it doesn't appear as a special event anymore. While saying that a previously recorded webinar is live is not recommended (it is lying to your audience after all!), it's generally considered okay to just not mention it at all. Most audience members will assume it's live, and what they don't know won't hurt them.

Don't pester people

There is a limit to how often you can promote your webinars to the same potential audience. If you keep telling someone week after week about the same webinar, they're going to see you as a pest, and probably unsubscribe from your list altogether.

The same goes for your LinkedIn groups. If you keep telling your group members about the same webinar every week, they're going to tune you out. Or worse yet, they'll leave your group. So you really only want to promote any given webinar to the same audience very periodically.

Manage your lists

As you start to create more and more live webinars, run encores, and rerun previously recorded webinars, it's critically important that you manage your email lists efficiently. With programs like Infusionsoft and MailChimp, you can easily select which lists receive which email marketing sequences. With these programs, when people sign up for a particular webinar they're automatically tagged in the system as having signed up for that specific webinar. Infusionsoft calls this a campaign.

By signing up for a particular campaign, that person will now receive the emails in that campaign until they exit it. You can also include and exclude certain lists from receiving emails based on tags that you set up. It's important to actively manage your lists to avoid making mistakes or duplications. You don't want someone who already signed up for or attended a certain webinar to keep getting invitations or marketing emails for the same webinar!

As you rerun your previously recorded webinars, you will need to find new audiences. This is where traditional online marketing comes into play. You can use Facebook ads, LinkedIn ads, joint ventures, and all of the tactics we discussed previously. With all of these channels you simply continue running your webinar ads until your click-through rates start to decline, and conversion costs begin to rise. When the decline starts, simply change marketing channels, rewrite your ad copy, and keep trying.

Create your own webinar library

After a year or two, you may find that you have created a whole library of webinars on multiple topics tailored to different audiences. Some companies have chosen to create a section on their website dedicated to past webinars. That way people can visit the webinars page and click on the various topics to watch whatever webinar interests them. You can ask people to sign up with an email address before gaining access to the webinar library, and then use this data to market new live webinars to them.

If you sell your webinars, then you could set up your webinar library as a membership, or subscription, site. Clients and prospects could pay a subscription fee to access all of your materials, or buy items individually.

You don't need to be a techie

One final thought on automating your webinar process: It sounds more difficult than it really is. In reality there's not much technical about it. If you can work Facebook and LinkedIn, you can run webinar campaigns.

It'll take some time to set it up and work out the kinks. Marketing lots of webinars on an ongoing basis can be intensive. But if you take it at your own pace, and slowly expand and ramp up as you get more experience, you'll do just fine.

Before you know it you'll be a webinar guru, raking in leads and creating new webinars with great success.

CLOSING THE SALE

So, what do you do once you're on the phone?

There's one part of the sales process we haven't talked much about yet. We've worked your prospects all the way through various systems to your call to action: requesting a phone call. But what do you do once you get on the phone with them? In this chapter we're going to tackle how to close the sale once you've got your prospect on the phone with you.

As you work this system, there are six types of sales calls or conversations that you might find yourself in. Yes, I said six. Why so many different kinds of calls? Because there are different types of prospects and different types of lead generation approaches. Thus, once you're face to face or on the phone, the conversation will be a bit different for each of them. These six cover the majority of situations you'll encounter.

Here are the six types of calls, from the coldest to the hottest:

- The Cold Call
- The Warm Cold Call
- The Networking Call
- The Carrot Call
- The Hot Lead Call
- The Webinar Call

In this chapter we'll take a look at each of them and dig into what they are, how they fit into the system and how you should approach each of them. But first, here's a quick tip that applies to almost all of them.

Tip: Slow down! Whether you're a seasoned business developer or a business owner doing it all yourself, it's tempting to start your sales call with the product or service you want to sell. Don't do it! The worst thing you can do is jump on a call with a prospect and immediately start telling them all about what you do.

In every type of call, except for the Cold Call, you'll want to start by asking an icebreaker question. Something as simple as where they live usually gets the job done. "So Bob, remind me again what part of the country you're in?" Immediately you'll be engaged in a conversation about Bob's personal life, which is the best way to break through and really get people talking.

(Of course, if you're operating on a more local level, the question will be slightly different. "So Bob, what part of town is your office in? Oh, awesome. Do you live around there too?" You get the point).

Be prepared to engage the prospect in a conversation here. Don't just say, "Oh, San Francisco, I heard that's a nice place. Well, thanks for taking this call today. What my company does is..." No, no, no. They'll see through that right away. Take the time to genuinely engage with them!

Depending on how engaging the conversation feels, and how interested the prospect seems in the conversation, this small talk can often go on for one to five minutes, sometimes even more! Don't be afraid to really get personal and let it go as far as the prospect will let you take it. Remember, people work with people they know, like and trust. And there's no better way to achieve that kind of status than to get personal!

Even if you can't become best friends in the first few minutes, making small talk is still essential. If you don't feel like you're good at small talk, calls like these are great opportunities to practice.

Now let's jump into each of the types of calls you will be making, and how to handle them.

The cold call

If you implement the system as outlined in this book, you won't be making many of these calls. But if you do, check out some of the tactics provided at Growthtrainers.com for tips on handling these calls.

The warm cold call

29% of prospects that you work through this nurture system will agree to a meeting. But what about the remaining 71%? Should we just forget about them?

Of course not! Those people have been exposed to a ton of content over the course of the campaign. Many might be in your LinkedIn group and receive daily or weekly updates. They're all connected to you and see your status updates. And they all just received a series of personal messages from you over the course of two to three months. You've put in a lot of effort to get them to this point; don't give up on them so easily.

Now, you might be thinking, "But what can I do at this point, if they haven't agreed to a meeting or call?"

Just pick up the phone and call them!

Here's how that conversation might go. "Hey Danny, this is John Smith. You and I are connected on LinkedIn and I shot you a message or two last week about jumping on a call?" That question mark is not a typo. Pose the statement as a question, which infers to them that you're looking for acknowledgement. Most of them will respond with something like, "Yeah, that's right, I did get your messages. Sorry, I meant to get back to you, but I've been really busy."

Now you're in. More or less, they just acknowledged that they're open to talking. And now you've got them on the phone. So the next thing you say is, "No worries, I know how it is. How does right now work for you? Do you have a couple of minutes?"

If they say no, then try to schedule another time then and there. Many will say yes though. At that point, move to the script for the Networking Call.

The networking call

Let's step back for a second and look at the messaging script that most likely got the prospect to agree to this call. It probably goes something like this:

Danny,

I'm trying to get to know my connections on LinkedIn a little better so that we both might benefit from being connected. We've been crossing paths on LinkedIn for the past couple of months and I'd love to schedule a quick call.

Would you have a few minutes to chat next week? How does your calendar look next Wednesday morning?

Thanks,
John

You can see how this is positioned as more of a networking call; the prospect isn't necessarily telling you that they want what you're selling. They're agreeing to chat, to learn more about each other's businesses.

Here's how to handle those conversations.

Step 1: Ask them about their business. Think about what things you have in common, and bring up small talk around those issues. You can talk about the industry, people you both know, things like that. "Tell me more about what you're up to these days?" is a great opening question.

Step 2: Once they start telling you about their business, keep asking follow-up questions. Be genuinely interested in what they're telling you! Spend the first ten minutes talking exclusively about them and their business.

Step 3: During this conversation, listen for pain points and needs they have. Ask questions strategically to get to these issues. The more questions you ask, the more people will open up!

Step 4: Come back to them and say, "Honestly Danny, I wasn't sure where this conversation would go. But I figured since we've been crossing paths there might be some benefit to learning more about what each other is up to. What I heard you say earlier about X, Y, Z...it really made me think that you might be interested to hear about what I do. Because I've worked with a lot of companies similar to yours, like A, B, and C [name drop some companies similar to theirs], and solved X, Y and Z by doing D, E and F [your solution]. Does that sound like something you'd be interested in hearing more about?"

Step 5: The prospect will say, "Yeah, sure," most of the time. If it's framed the right way, a smart businessperson will feel stupid by not agreeing to at least hear you out. If they say "No" at this stage, then you have saved yourself a lot of fruitless time and energy by taking the process any further – because they have effectively said they would not buy from you. Best to cut your losses now if this is the case, thank them for their time and suggest they can call you later if their situation changes.

Step 6: Talk to them about your solution and get them to a next step. That could be a second conversation, an in-person meeting, or maybe a proposal. Whatever it is, the goal of the initial call is to move the prospect toward this next step.

Simple as that!

Naturally, not every prospect will move from a Networking Call to becoming a client. But that's sales; it's a numbers game. Some percentage will move deeper in your funnel. The rest can be moved into a more long-term nurture bucket.

The carrot call

So unless you're pitching Bugs Bunny, this type of call won't involve actual carrots. The carrot we're talking about is a metaphorical carrot, the kind you dangle in front of someone to entice them to get on a call with you!

Here's what that approach might look like:

Hey Danny,

We've been crossing paths here on LinkedIn for a bit and I thought it wouldn't hurt to reach out.

My company has worked with Company X, Y and Z [companies that your prospect would know] to help them [insert result or achievement] by [insert measurable increase/decrease].

I thought you might be interested to hear about how we did it.

If you'd be open to a call, let me know!

John

The exact script will vary significantly since each prospect's business is different. The key, though, is to offer some intrigue. Get them thinking, "I've got to learn more about that."

Then, when you get them to agree to the call, you can spend pretty much the entire time sharing case studies with them about how that technique helped various clients. It's your technique and your clients, of course, but relating those things like case studies is super engaging for your prospect. And if your offering is impressive, by the end they'll be eager to learn more about working with you.

There's an important disclaimer here, though; this tactic typically only works for companies that are doing something fairly unique in the market, or have a strong differentiator.

If your company is really just a "me too" player in a commoditised space, the networking approach will work far better.

Dangling a carrot doesn't work so well when the prospect has a pile of carrots sitting at their feet.

The hot lead call

From time to time, you'll have a prospect on LinkedIn reach directly out to you and express interest in your services. Often times these will be prospects that are in your LinkedIn group, are already connected to you, or just found your awesome, optimised LinkedIn profile. Without even knowing it, the system has warmed them up for you...and served them up red hot!

These are those hot leads that you always want. You can't just sit back and rely on them, as most of your calls won't be hot lead calls. But when they show up, they are always a great bonus for your business.

Handling these types of calls is pretty straightforward.

The prospect is already interested in learning more about what you do. Thus, the agenda for the call is simply to a) build rapport and get them engaged in some small talk, then b) chat with them about your services, answer any questions they have, and get them to commit to a next step. It doesn't get much better than that!

The webinar call

Generally speaking, there are two types of webinar calls. One is for the prospects who are immediately interested after your webinar. These people can be handled pretty much the same as a hot inbound lead. They know all about you, and are ready to talk turkey. Use the Hot Lead Call outline for these people.

The second type of webinar call is more akin to a hybrid between the Warm Cold Call and a Hot Lead. Because they've seen your webinar, it's easy to give them a call and say something like, "Hey Danny, I noticed that you signed up for our webinar last week and just wanted to get your feedback on it. Do you have a couple minutes? Great! So what'd you think about it?"

At this point, they'll share their thoughts and most likely will open up about whether or not they feel your solutions are a good fit for them. Almost immediately you'll be knee-deep in a sales conversation.

Make sure to pull back and learn more about their business too, though. It's tempting in this kind of conversation to focus just on your services, but you still need to build rapport. Remember to spend way more time asking them questions than you do telling them about your solution. Following that golden rule will generate dividends, even if you take away nothing else from this chapter.

Improving the effectiveness of your sales process will have a huge impact on the results you are able to get from my system. Naturally, if you can't close, then all the leads in the world will do you no good. Be sure to check out the above resources if you need help in any of those areas!

QUICK WINS

Everything you have seen up to this point puts extreme importance on nurturing relationships before you go in for the sale, and taking time to develop cold prospects so that they know, like and trust you.

Does that mean that you should just dismiss cold messaging? Not necessarily.

Cold messaging is definitely alive and well. When done properly, it might actually be the cornerstone of your marketing. So don't rule it out just yet!

Cold messaging can be viewed as a similar approach to cold calling, almost like cold calling 2.0. For years cold calling was a pillar for sales teams, but it's lost a lot of its impact in recent years. Sure, many sales teams still do lots of cold calling, but many do it because they have no idea what else to do. Even though it remains largely ineffective for them, they keep at it because it's what they've always done.

Because of the decline in cold calling, many people now believe that cold messaging is also a worthless endeavour. After all, at face value there doesn't seem to be any real differences between cold messaging and cold calling.

But upon closer examination, cold messaging can actually yield much stronger results than cold calling. Why? Simply because phone lines are much more closely guarded than LinkedIn inboxes. Spend some time trying to get through on the phone to a cold prospect and you'll likely be stopped at the gates by an assistant—who may not even deliver your message to your prospect. But a LinkedIn cold message is much easier to get through to the target. There's rarely a guardian assistant standing over their LinkedIn account.

Also, there are ways to optimise the methods used to deliver cold messages, enabling you to send a much higher volume of messages than cold calls for a given period of time. Since this is a numbers game, the more messages you deliver, the greater the results. Even though getting on the phone is arguably much more powerful than sending an email, messaging makes up for this by being massively scalable. You simply can't hit the numbers with cold calling that you can with cold messaging.

Given that scalability, cold messaging is extremely powerful in the right situations. Knowing how and when to utilise the cold message tactic, along with knowing what type of message to deliver, will create some pretty amazing results.

That said, it is still a relatively low response activity. Just like cold calling, cold messaging will only generate a small response rate. Typically 5% is what we aim for, which is obviously much lower than the 29% average we expect from a long-term nurture campaign.

As such, this strategy is best suited when you have a massive prospect pool and can afford to get a lower response rate, or if what you sell just isn't amenable to the nurture approach.

One final note: This tactic is definitely not for everybody. You need to have the right situation to make this type of playbook work for you and your business, but if it is indeed the right playbook to run, the results can be awesome. Let's take a look at how to get those kinds of results.

When to utilise cold messaging

Cold messaging is a fantastic way to pitch smaller-priced products and services, or to get people to opt-in for something like a webinar or white paper.

Let's say that you are a tax consultant that specialises in providing services to a couple of specific industries and that your clients generally engage with you for \$500 or even \$1,000 per deal. Cold messaging is going to be a great tactic for you.

Why? Because there are not as many factors that go into signing a \$1,000 deal as there are that go into a five, six, or seven-figure deal. The risk is much lower. You don't need to build up as much trust first. There are fewer people to consult with—often the decision makers you pitch will be able to decide to make the purchase themselves, rather than asking their boss's boss's boss.

On the other hand, if you're a software company that typically sells products or services starting at \$50,000 per engagement, then chances are slim that someone will engage with you just from a cold message pitching your product or service.

Sometimes your cold message won't even ask for any sort of sale. You could simply be focused on getting prospects to opt-in for a white paper, case study, or webinar. Then it becomes an even simpler decision for the prospect. They don't need to think about the cost of taking the next step, because there isn't any cost.

This opt-in method can be a much better way to utilise cold messaging to engage with targets you want to sell high-priced products or services. If your cold message was about an \$80,000 deal, many targets won't give you the time of day because they don't know you and that's a huge amount of cash to lay out to someone they don't know. But if you ask the same target to opt-in for your webinar, they'll perceive no risk at all, allowing you to build some trust before you actually pitch them.

What about sending a cold message requesting to talk on the phone? There's no risk or cost to talking on the phone, so it should be easy to get people to accept that, right?

Well, not exactly.

There are a couple of problems with this line of thought. High-priced services and products are almost always pitched to high-level execs. What sounds like merely asking for a call to you comes off to them that you are asking for some of their most valuable resource: their time. A CEO or CFO's time is extremely valuable and limited. Half an hour of it is likely worth thousands of dollars. So asking for their time when no relationship exists is basically the same as asking for a \$50,000 sale when no relationship exists. It's not going to happen—and even if it does, they won't bite on your high-end service just from that one call. Use an opt-in message instead and go from there.

What to send for your cold message

There is an art to crafting lead generation messages. The more you hone your skill at creating scripts, the greater the conversion rates you will see on your messages. It's not only the specifics of the message that are important. The tone of your message can play a big part in how well your message converts.

It might be tempting to craft a very formal and professional message, but as with your LinkedIn messaging campaigns, it actually works better to loosen up your tone and try to write something more casual. Use a casual tone, like how you'd approach a close friend or family member. That's how you want the prospect to view you. You are trying to give the prospect the impression that you genuinely just came across their info and wanted to reach out, not that they are in a mass marketing campaign.

Let's look at an example regarding the tone of your message. Below are two intros to cold messages:

Dear Sir,

I am quite pleased to share with you a valuable resource that you may find of great use for your business. Please find it attached.

versus

Hey Bob,

I came across your profile in the Social Media Marketing group here on LinkedIn and thought you might be interested in a webinar coming up next week that I think is right up your alley. Here's the link. Hope you get some good stuff from it!

Which one sounds more appealing? It's a no-brainer.

A real person would never use the tone from the first example when sending a message to someone they know. In fact, the tone in the first example gives off a cold and impersonal vibe. The recipient would read that message and think, "I don't know this person, why should I listen to them? I'm tuning out."

Now, the prospect who receives the second message doesn't know the sender either, but the language is a lot more **inviting** and personal. The casual tone makes it easy for the recipient to take the message at face value and not think it was written and delivered by a robot from some company's marketing department. The second message was definitely written and sent by a *real person*. That will make all the difference.

Size matters

Just as important as the tone is the length of the message. Do you think everyone will be interested to read nineteen paragraphs that outline your entire history and all of the services that you provide? Think again. Prospects will delete that message before they even finish the first sentence.

It's not just high-level executives at big companies whose time is valuable. *Everyone's* time is valuable. Do you read a super- long promotional email from someone you have never heard of before? No, you don't. You do the same thing everyone else does when they get that type of message: **DELETE**.

It doesn't make sense to send the type of cold message that you personally would scrap when you see it. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that just because a cold message is about *your* company that everyone else will think it's awesome. They'll think it's trash just like the rest.

Personal messages, messages from people who care, are not long. They are short, simple, to the point and casual. Let's check out an example of a message trying to get someone on a webinar:

SUBJECT: *Free LinkedIn Training for Financial Advisors*

*Jane - We're both in the Finance Club group and I came across your profile this morning. I thought you might be interested in a free, **LIVE**, training event, specific for Financial Advisors, my company is hosting on March 10th. It's called How to Create a Massive Referral Network on LinkedIn with **THE** Most Influential Players in your Market.*

This is not just theory. We will go through real examples of businesses just like yours that are taking a proactive approach to LinkedIn and, in turn, generating some awesome results.

If you're interested in more info on the webinar, topics scheduled for discussion, and to register, please visit this link:

»insert LINK«

Please feel free to forward this to anybody in your firm that would be interested. Hope to see you on the call.

*Thanks,
Josh*

There are a lot of great things happening in that script. The length is not super long, making it easily digestible for the recipient. It's straightforward and to the point. It lets the recipient know exactly what they are getting. There's no other fluff attached to the message. The subject line is straight to the point as well. No guessing game needed to figure out what this is about.

The language in the message is also tailored to fit the prospect. The recipient, a financial advisor, knows that this is specifically for them. This is not just some general webinar. This is going to be material specific and valuable to the recipient. They see the benefit.

Do not overcomplicate a cold message. It's easy and tempting to write a message much more complex than the one above. Don't do it. Keeping things simple and to the point is the key to your success.

How to get your message out to the masses

As mentioned previously, the cold message approach is typically a numbers game, which means that the key is *volume*. Cold messaging will not have the same conversion rate as a nurture campaign, but what it lacks in conversion rate it will make up for in scale. So you need to be able to hit thousands of people for this tactic to work.

If you have a prospect pool of only a couple hundred people, then this may not be the best approach. But if your prospect pool is tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands, then you are on the right track for cold messaging to be effective. The larger the prospect pool, the more effective this approach can be.

Where can you go to deliver cold messages to thousands of targets?

I bet you already know: LinkedIn Groups.

LinkedIn makes getting access to the masses super easy. There are groups that cater to just about every single industry and niche you can think of, and many of the groups have thousands of members in them. Because you can send a message to anyone you share a group with, all it takes is joining a group that caters to your target, going into the group membership area, conducting a keyword search to narrow down who you want to send messages to specifically, and then start firing away.

This process is similar to fishing in the ocean with a giant net. You cast your net into the ocean, in an area where you know the fish that *you* want to catch hang out. Might you catch a few fish that are not the right types? Sure, but by and large, if you're in the right place, you'll find the right fish. Focus on the rule, not the exception. If you're getting a large volume of prospects to bite on your call to action, then you have your process zeroed in.

The number of people needed to bite on your call to action will be different for each business. One person may just need twenty people to show up to a webinar. Another person may need 300 people to opt-in for a report. Either way, cold messaging can work in both of those situations; you just need to determine how much activity it will take for you to hit your goal, and then do it.

In terms of sending out a significant volume of messages, it all comes down to having a process. Being able to copy and paste scripts quickly into messaging windows that you have opened up on your browser will save you a ton of time. Tedious? You bet.

Effective? Yes!

You also don't need to do this activity yourself. An assistant or marketing team member can easily handle this type of activity once a group search has been identified and the script has been drafted.

Review the results, make adjustments, and keep firing away. Cold messaging might be the best play for you and your business. If it's a good fit for you, do not ignore it. It's too powerful of a play to let slip by.