The Trainer’s Guide to Using Video Streaming, Video Conferencing and On-Demand Video

How to effectively add video into eLearning
Integrating video into online learning is an undeniably hot topic, but determining how to use video effectively can be challenging. There are a variety of ways we can incorporate video into our online learning efforts:

- Leveraging live video conferencing during class sessions, broadcast events, small-group Breakouts or 1:1 tutoring and mentoring
- Sharing recorded video content during live online class sessions or broadcast events
- Delivering on-demand video content to learners that allows them to access and absorb the content on their own schedule

The goal of using video is to offer richer, more engaging and ultimately more effective learning experiences. It is important to understand the value, benefits and limitations of applying these approaches to determine which types to incorporate into your learning initiatives.

**Video conferencing**

Using video conferencing is all about adding engagement and familiarity to your live sessions. Face-to-face communication via video conferencing is one of the fastest and most efficient ways to establish trust and foster engagement between you and your students in an online environment, and it is a key element in providing an interactive and more cost-efficient means to online learning.

**Video conferencing is most beneficial in the following learning formats:**

1. Collaborative small-group sessions or discussions — in other words, an interactive education experience for learners. Group discussions benefit from face-to-face communication since it is more engaging and builds trust and familiarity faster.

2. Interactive Q&A sessions or panel discussions where keeping track of who’s speaking is difficult to do without visual confirmation. With video conferencing, students can follow the conversation more easily.

3. Learning demos where the instructor needs to be able to demonstrate something on screen as he or she would in person. For example, showing a specific button to press on the technology the instructor is teaching is easier to demonstrate visually than verbally.

4. Instructor-led lectures for content delivery. One-to-many lectures are more engaging when the class can see the instructor talking, so turning on video conferencing during live online training will foster familiarity and engagement between the instructor and students faster.
Limitations: Bandwidth and camera feed constraints

The most common limitations to the use of video conferencing are bandwidth constraints and the number of live camera feeds. Video eats up bandwidth. Be sure to work with your IT team and your virtual classroom/web conferencing vendor to understand the bandwidth requirements for their video conferencing tools and factor that into your plans. If you are trying to deliver video to learners with slower connections, you may want to limit your use of live video conferencing to specific segments of the learning experience such as introductions or Q&A.

Most virtual classroom and web conferencing tools now support live webcam video, but they are typically limited in the number of live feeds that can be viewed simultaneously, with most vendors supporting between 6 and 12 live feeds. Factor this into your plans for using video conferencing and recognize that larger classes will require inventive means to balance the use of live video feeds.

“If your class size is small enough, you can invite all participants to turn on their webcams for the introductions. Not only will this help you visualize your participants, it will allow them to establish connection with each other, which will lead to a more engaging session for everyone.”

Cindy Huggett
Author, speaker, CPLP, training consultant
www.cindyhuggett.com

Streaming video

While video conferencing helps you establish trust and familiarity with learners, adding video streaming to your live class sessions will help you keep learners engaged and provide a richer learning experience by incorporating short videos either from your own library or other sources. These video “breaks” change up the pace of your course — variation that is key for keeping students engaged. To successfully add streaming video to your live online classes, try:

• Starting your class with a video that summarizes or provides an example of the content you are sharing during the course. You could even play the video again at the end to restate the point and help bring the story full circle for your students.
• Playing a video that illustrates a particular point or skill that you bring up during your online lecture. Even better, plan to have the group discuss the video after you play it to continue to mix up the eLearning format and keep your students’ attention.

Limitations: Bandwidth constraints and synchronization

As with live video conferencing, video streaming requires adequate bandwidth, so be sure to work with your IT team and your virtual classroom/web conferencing vendor to understand the bandwidth requirements for streaming video tools and factor that into your plans. Keep your video segments as short as possible, and if you are trying to deliver video to learners with slower connections, look for solutions that allow you to verify that the video finishes playing on their end before you move...
on to the next stage of your class session.

“Use of video clips can also be a powerful part of telling your story. Be sure it’s on target with the point you are trying to make, and edit out anything extraneous.”

Roger Courville
Author, speaker, consultant
www.thevirtualpresenter.com

On-demand video
With the advent of mobile devices, services and time shifting, learning has become an anytime, anywhere process. A perfect example of this is the use of the blended learning model, combining live instructor-led courses and on-demand content that can be found and consumed by learners from any device.

Students are going to seek on-demand information whether you give it to them or not. Creating and curating a library of on-demand videos (or content in other formats) helps you meet the needs of your learners by enabling them to learn whenever and wherever they choose. It allows them to review and reference learning content and drives home the points made in the live learning sessions.

Here are some ways to create and incorporate on-demand content into your learning model:

• Record your live training sessions and host the recorded file online for students to review on their own time. Students who miss a class will also benefit from being able to watch the class recording on demand.
• Create or find short videos that supplement the message and content in your live lecture and have students watch the videos before or after class. Then discuss the video at the start of the next class.
• Create a video library (could be a YouTube playlist that you share with your students) of content that helps demonstrate and explain the topic.

Limitations: Accessibility to content and learner’s self-motivation
Making your on-demand content accessible can be a challenge. You may host it on your LMS, requiring that your content be in a specific format to conform to the LMS’s requirements. If you don’t have an LMS, you may need to find another mechanism to publish and present your content, such as Vimeo or YouTube, or host the content on your own website. You’ll need to consider issues such as security for your proprietary content, transcoding video to support viewing on multiple mobile devices and copyright issues for content you license or purchase.

Equally important is the issue of learner motivation. You are counting on your learners taking responsibility for viewing your content and may need to drive this activity to ensure that they do so. Use solutions that allow you to...
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