

**ON24**

# **ON24'S GUIDE TO MAKING WEBINARS MORE ENGAGING, INTERACTIVE AND EXPERIENTIAL**

**A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO PLANNING, PRODUCING  
AND UPLEVELING YOUR WEBINAR EXPERIENCES**

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# INTRODUCTION

Compared to other formats — from e-books and blog posts to videos and podcasts — webinars offer the ability to create two-way conversations while providing the content and information audiences need.

But sometimes, a digital marketer may want to do more with the tools available to them. In that case, this is the guide for you.

By following the steps laid out in this guide, you'll learn about the fundamental tools and processes you'll need to evolve your digital events beyond the typical webinar and provide an immersive experience that truly delights. You'll discover how to organize and coordinate experience production. You'll learn how to bend the rules and use [ON24 Webcast Elite](#) in ways you've never considered.

So, read on to discover how you can create engaging, interactive and experiential environments that everyone will want to attend.

# CREATE WEBINAR EXPERIENCES WORTH EXPERIENCING

You have your webinar program down pat, complete with a series, one-off events and a lineup of subject matter experts that'd make any expert panel blush.

So, what's next for your webinar journey? Enter the post-webinar experience — one where your audience follows you from a live webinar to a digital experience they've never had before. But why would you want to evolve your webinar experiences?

## BECAUSE YOU'VE REACHED WEBINAR MATURITY

Your webinars are attended by all and have a reputation for being engaging and informative. Where do you go from here? You go to a post-webinar event where your community can directly engage with your subject matter experts and your brand.

## BECAUSE YOU CARE ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY

Your community is loyal and comes to you for the latest trends, information and expertise. Make sure your community knows you care by crafting an interactive experience that celebrates them.

## BECAUSE YOUR EXPERIENCES MATTER

At the end of the day, you want to provide better experiences because better experiences drive more engagement and provide you with the insights you need to accelerate deals, retain customers and create a brand everyone talks about.

## BECAUSE YOU'RE CREATING A SPECIAL EVENT

Have an upcoming event? A special day in mind for your brand? Take your event to the next level when you create an experiential webinar that drives engagement, enhances your brand and creates a fun, interactive environment.

## BECAUSE YOU HAVE A GREAT SOLUTION

Your products and solutions are the best in the field. But how will your audience know? Show them the ins and outs of your lineup in an interactive environment that points them to the right information when and where they need it. Go ahead. Create an interactive booth, virtual showroom or showcase and make your solutions stand out.

## EXPERIENTIAL B2B MARKETING:

Experiential marketing means exercising both sides of your brain and thinking outside of the box. As you browse this guide, we encourage you to take notes, jot down questions and involve your wider marketing team. As you do, you and your team might have an epiphany and create an entirely new webinar format. Just remember: relax, have fun and experiment!

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# BUILDING BETTER EXPERIENCES: THE ESSENTIALS

There are a few prerequisites to creating a new webinar experience. If you're going to make your webinars more engaging and interactive, it helps to have the following resources handy for at least your first experiment with a new webinar format:

## TOOLS

- A sophisticated webinar platform
  - Design skills and tools
  - Video editing software and skills
  - A project manager or management tool
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## PERSONNEL

- Demand Generation Specialist
  - Design Specialist
  - Webinar Producer
  - Webinar Presenter
  - Sales Representative
- 

## PROCESS

- A content calendar
- An experience map for the event
- A content brief
- Scheduled practice time
- A list of CTAs and interactive features you'd like to include

# DESIGNING YOUR EXPERIENCE

Before you run a new experience, you'll need to dedicate some time to planning. During this phase, you'll need to sit down with your team to discuss roles, responsibilities, design needs and more.

First, start with your timeline. For your first run, plan a month ahead. You will need at least two weeks for design alone — from ideating to lining up final assets — and you should plan to practice at least twice before going live.

## THEME

Ensure audiences know they're entering a whole new experience with a well-defined theme that carries through to your design and tone.

At ON24, we created "After the Webinar," a post-event experience that played after a [Webinar Best Practices Series](#). We decided to run with a talk show theme so our subject matter expert, Mark Bornstein, could talk and interact with the ON24 community in a more casual tone. Take a look at the console below:

In it, you'll see the theme not only carries through to each element but it also sets the tone of experience. It's fun. It's exciting. It's community-driven.

Settle on a theme for your event and let the theme guide your decisions on what to include in your console.

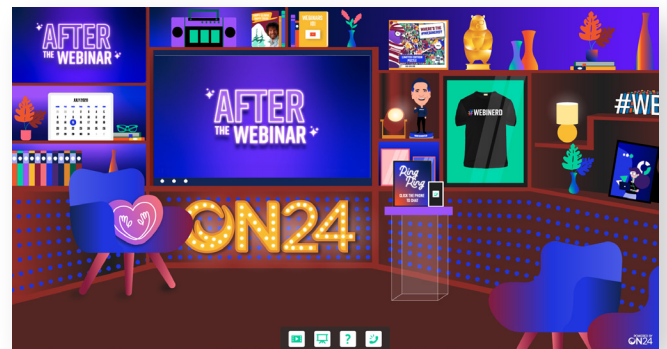
## CONSOLE

The console background is probably one of the most important elements of any experiential webinar event. Not only does it put your theme into practice, but it will also embed your CTAs.

Say you want to have an attendee sign up for your next webinar from your experience. To make this happen within your experience, you'll want to create a console background with an icon or image that an attendee will notice, click and complete your CTA.

During our initial setup, we placed a clickable transparent image on the calendar image. When an attendee clicked on the image, the experience routed them to a registration page for the next event.

Your background image size matters, too. Assume attendees will participate in your event through both laptops and large computer monitors.



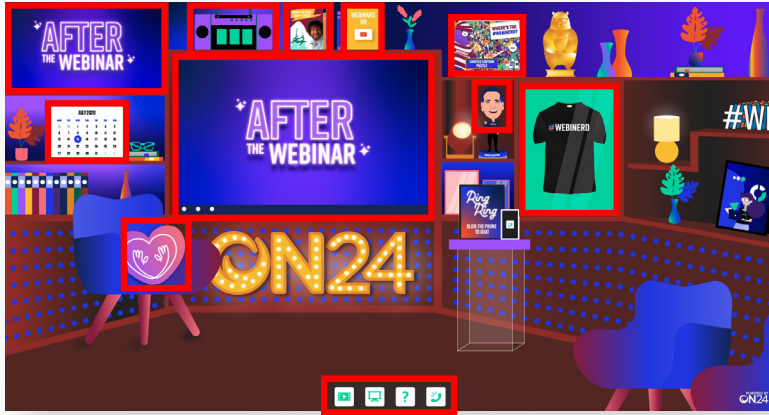
CONSOLE BACKGROUND IMAGE SIZE: 2900 X 1350



AT ON24, WE USED A CALENDAR EMBEDDED INTO OUR CONSOLE.

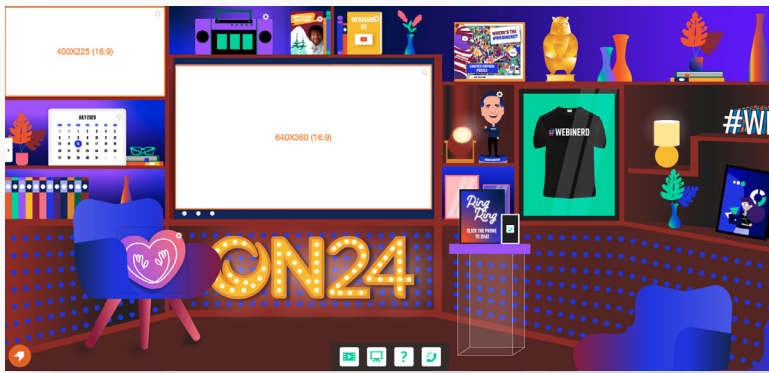
## MAP IT ALL OUT

When creating your first experiential event, it might help to sit down with a designer to map out where you want to embed interactive features within your console. Doing so will help your design team understand where images ought to be embedded and help you to map all of the different CTAs and Engagement Tools you'll include in your immersive experience.



You'll see exactly where we embedded interactive features in this console map — from hidden links and Engagement Tool icons to our embedded video and slides.

Pay special attention to any multimedia elements you want to embed. For example, if you want your experience to include video, then make sure your video is mapped out as well.



Don't forget to settle on an appropriate size and aspect ratio! This will help your design and video team to develop a seamless experience.



### ON24 TIP:

Background images are usually static, but GIFS can add movement to a scene — from a flashing neon sign to a bobble head. All you have to do is plan out where you want your movement to take place on your console and create a GIF with a transparent background. Talk with your design team for inspiration and direction.



# CREATING YOUR EXPERIENCE

Okay. So you have your console map, a theme and design figured out. Now, it's time to set up your experience. Fortunately, this is fairly easy to do, especially once all of your design pieces are in place.

Here's what you'll need to do.

## STEP 1: CREATE A NEW WEBINAR.

Log into ON24 Webcast Elite and click on "Create a Webcast+."



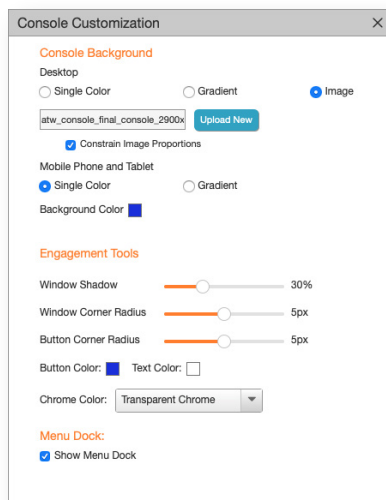
Enter all of the information — from title to time to campaign code — you'll need. If you're asking the audience to go from one live event to your new experience, you should schedule your experience to go live two to three minutes before the first event ends.

## STEP 2: UPLOAD YOUR CONSOLE BACKGROUND

Go to Console Builder and click on "Console Customization" (the gear icon) in the Console Builder Bar.



Now, under "Console Background," click on the "image" selection and upload the console background.



You'll also want to click on "Constrain Image Proportions" to ensure your console background does not stretch and change clickable elements if an attendee decides to expand your experience.

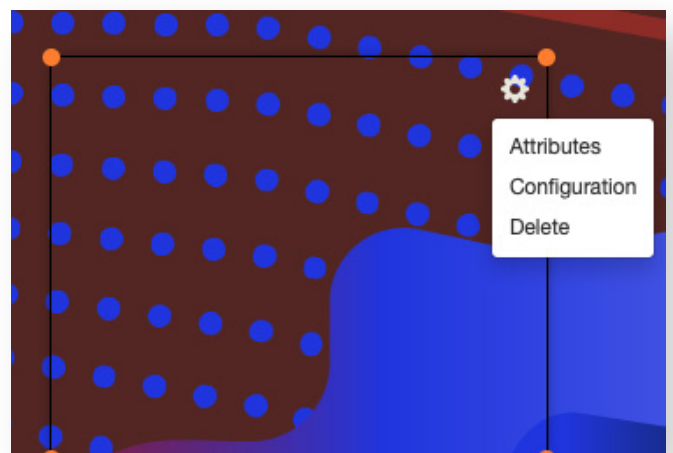
## STEP 3: CREATE TRANSPARENT IMAGES AND SCALE THEM TO YOUR PRE-PLANNED ENGAGEMENT POINTS

Okay, now it's time to create what your audience will actually click on. To do this, we'll make use of transparent, clickable images.

- Click on the "Tools Manager" in the Webcast Elite Console Builder Bar.

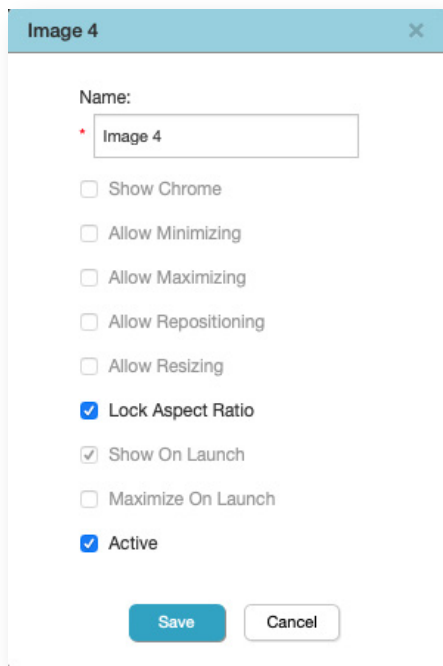


- Scroll down to the "Image" tool under "Engagement."
- Add the image and adjust its size using the four corner dots.
  - » If you need a transparent image in the shape of a rectangle, then you'll need to unlock your aspect ratio. Click on the gear icon in the upper right-hand corner of your image, select "attributes," and deselect "Lock Aspect Ratio."

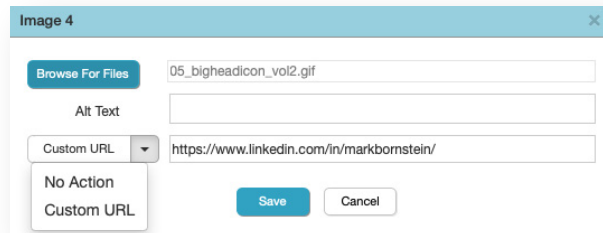




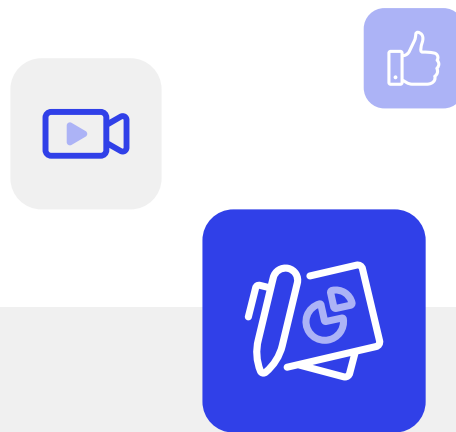
- Make sure transparent images are marked to be “active” and “show on launch.”



- If your experience goal is to link to new experiences or provide CTAs, make sure your transparent images link to your destination.
  - » Click the gear icon on your transparent images and then click on “configuration.”
  - » From the drop-down menu, select “custom URL.”
  - » Enter your destination URL into the field.
  - » Click “save.”



And that’s about it! Your immersive experience is ready to go. All that’s left now is to actually run it.



### ON24 TIP:

Anchor your media. Decide on whether you want your chrome — the border around windows like the Media Player — to be transparent or not. Making your chrome transparent helps to blend your tools with your overall console and prevents attendees from moving tools — like slide and media player — around.

# RUNNING YOUR EXPERIENCE

Running your immersive experience will take a degree of coordination — especially if you’re pushing from a live webinar to your post-event experience. The rest of this guide will focus on doing just that: pushing audiences from a live webinar to a post-event experience.

If you do not intend to connect your immersive experience to a webinar, then simply push your experience live and enjoy.

## WHAT TO DO DURING A LIVE WEBINAR

If you’re going to push attendees from a live webinar to an immersive experience, you’ll need to do at least four things.

## I. CREATE A POP UP CTA

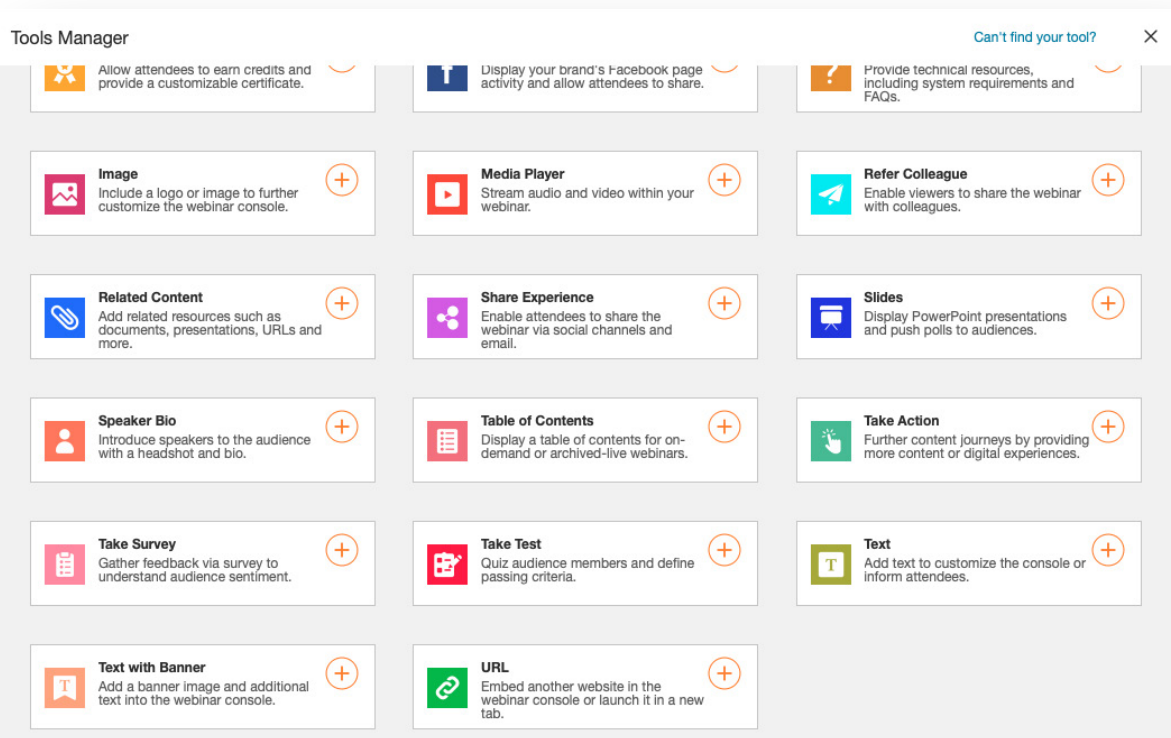
Your host should make references to your post-webinar experience throughout their live event. Still, your audience will need to click through a CTA to enter the actual event.

To do this, select the “Take Action” tool from the Tools Manager, found in the Console Builder bar.

Under “Configuration,” click on “Show automatically on webcast end.” Once selected, upload your image and enter your CTA Text.

After entering the copy, go down to “Button Action” and select “Webcast” from the dropdown menu. Then enter your immersive event’s audience URL in the “Audience URL” field.

As a side note: make sure the CTA matches the theme and tone of your immersive experience — you’ll want to make sure your audience knows it’s a brand-new event.



## 2. PROVIDE TIME

Your audience will need time to move from your live webinar to your post-webinar event. In fact, you will need time as well so your presenter can exit the live webinar and log into the immersive experience.

To buffer some time, set your post-webinar experience to go live two to three minutes before the end of your live event and plan to start the post-webinar event (if it is a live experience as well) three to five minutes after it starts.

## 3. COUNTDOWN

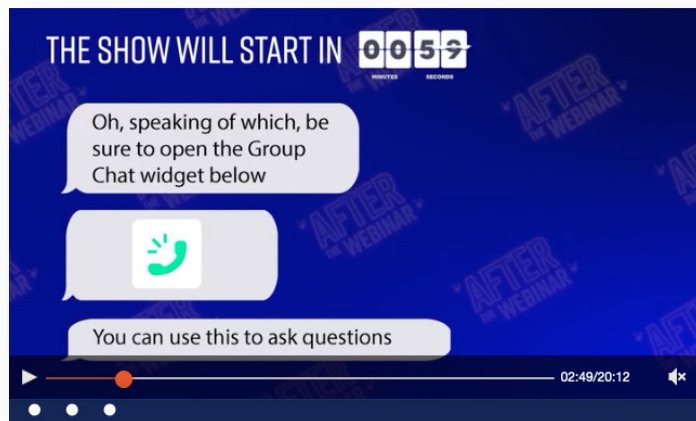
That may sound like a lot of downtime, but it goes fast. At ON24, we use a short pre-recorded video that counts down to when the event will go live.

We list out the different activities participants can engage in during this pre-recorded countdown — like Q&A and group chat.

## 4. CHANGE UP YOUR PACING

Change up the pacing in your live post-webinar experience to set a different tone. For example, in “After the Webinar,” Mark Bornstein takes a tea break — complete with a Tea Cam — to give the audience a different emotional tone from a normal event.

For complex scenarios like this, you’ll need to have a producer to ensure the post-event experience goes smoothly. Set aside some time between your presenter and producer to practice transitions and queue up questions to ensure the live event goes smoothly.



### ON24 TIP:

Add New Perspective. Thinking about adding another camera to your post-event experience? You should! If you’d like to create something like Mark’s Tea Cam, then add a second device, like a spare laptop, a presenter in ON24 Webcast Elite. This way, your producer can easily switch between “presenters” during the event.



## ENJOY THE EXPERIENCE

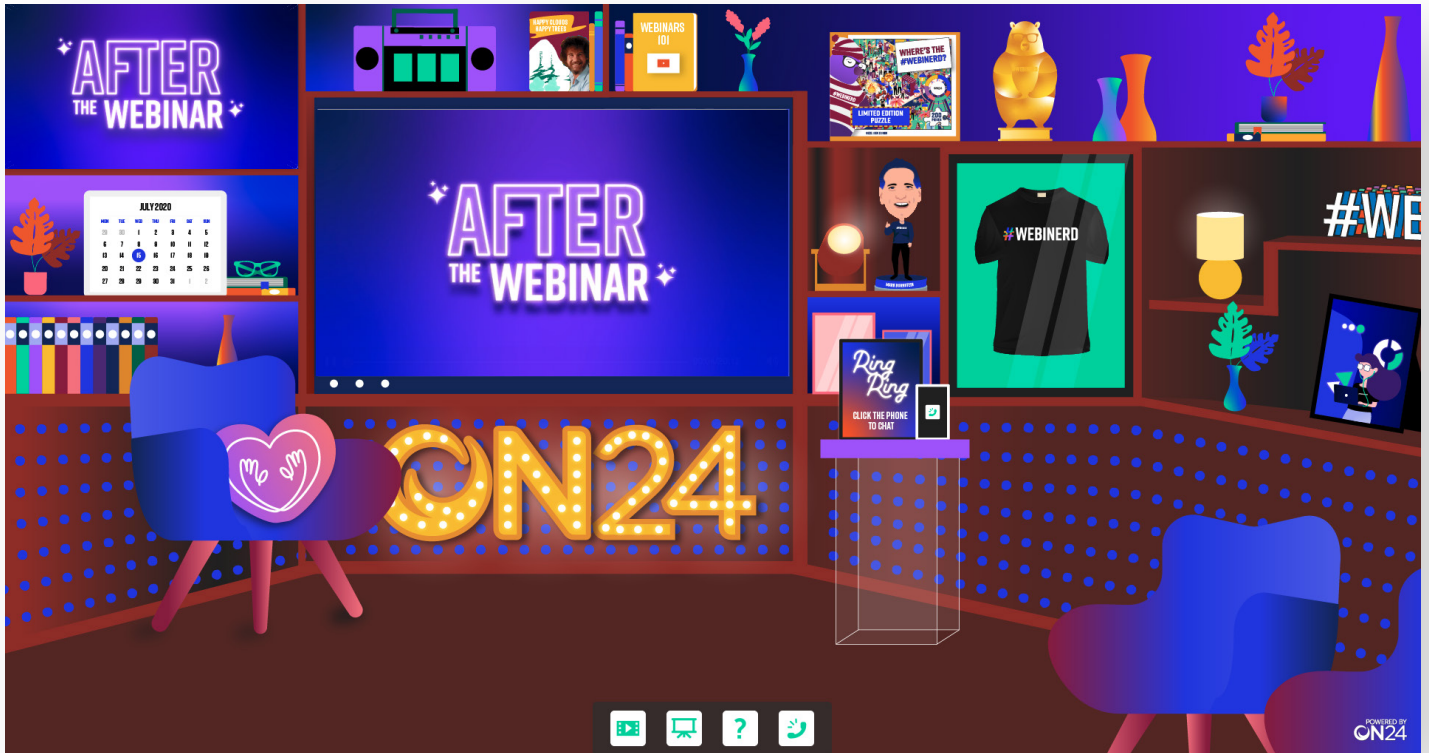
Okay! Your presenter is in position and the countdown is over. It's time to engage! Make sure your presenter lists out housekeeping items, like calling out specific CTAs and activities, before diving into the substance of the post-event experience.

It should be smooth sailing from here on out. Treat the rest of the post-event experience like a normal webinar and have fun!



### ON24 TIP:

Q&A v. Group Chat. ON24's Q&A and Group Chat Engagement Tools can help make responding to your audience a lot easier — so long as you use them right. Designate a sales or marketing representative to monitor the Q&A and leave group chat to your audience. This way, you can have a team member capture and raise solid questions to the presenter without navigating an overwhelming chat log.



## SEE IT ALL IN ACTION

Want to see how an immersive experience works?

Check out [“Beyond the Webinar”](#) to learn how you can take your webinar program to the next level.