

2023

B2B Marketing Webinar Benchmark Report



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For more than a decade, webinars have been regarded as one of the most effective tools B2B marketers use to generate demand and capture data from their audience. But as webinar hosting has evolved, so have best practices. This report explores B2B webinar best practices with an emphasis on benchmarking and optimizing performance.

At BigMarker, we're driven to create the most advanced webinar hosting technology for B2B marketers, and that starts with understanding where the bar is and how it's being raised by world class marketers over time.

To create this report, we analyzed data from over 1.6 million marketing webinars hosted on BigMarker in the past year. From that population, we identified the top 10% – 160,000 webinars that demonstrated **high performance B2B webinar marketing**. The companies and organizations hosting webinars that made the top 10% have certainly “dialed-in” their webinar hosting formulas, testing and iterating every aspect, from when they're hosted, to the content presented, to the interactive tools employed to engage and capture data from their audiences.

Read on to learn more about the results high performers are achieving, and explore some insights to consider as you evolve your own webinar strategy for the coming year and beyond.

As a quick disclaimer, it's important to note that no personally identifiable or customer data was used, and the results presented are averages of various cohorts established during the analysis process, including both “Average Performers” and “High Performers.”

Like everything in marketing, the following rules apply:

1. Your own results may be wildly different from the averages; and
2. There are many variables in play, so improving performance requires rigorous hypothesis-driven testing and iteration.

As always, BigMarker's Customer Success team is on-hand to help you interpret your own results and develop experiments and tactics to improve webinar performance.

INSIGHT #1

What's the Best Day of the Week to Host a B2B Webinar?

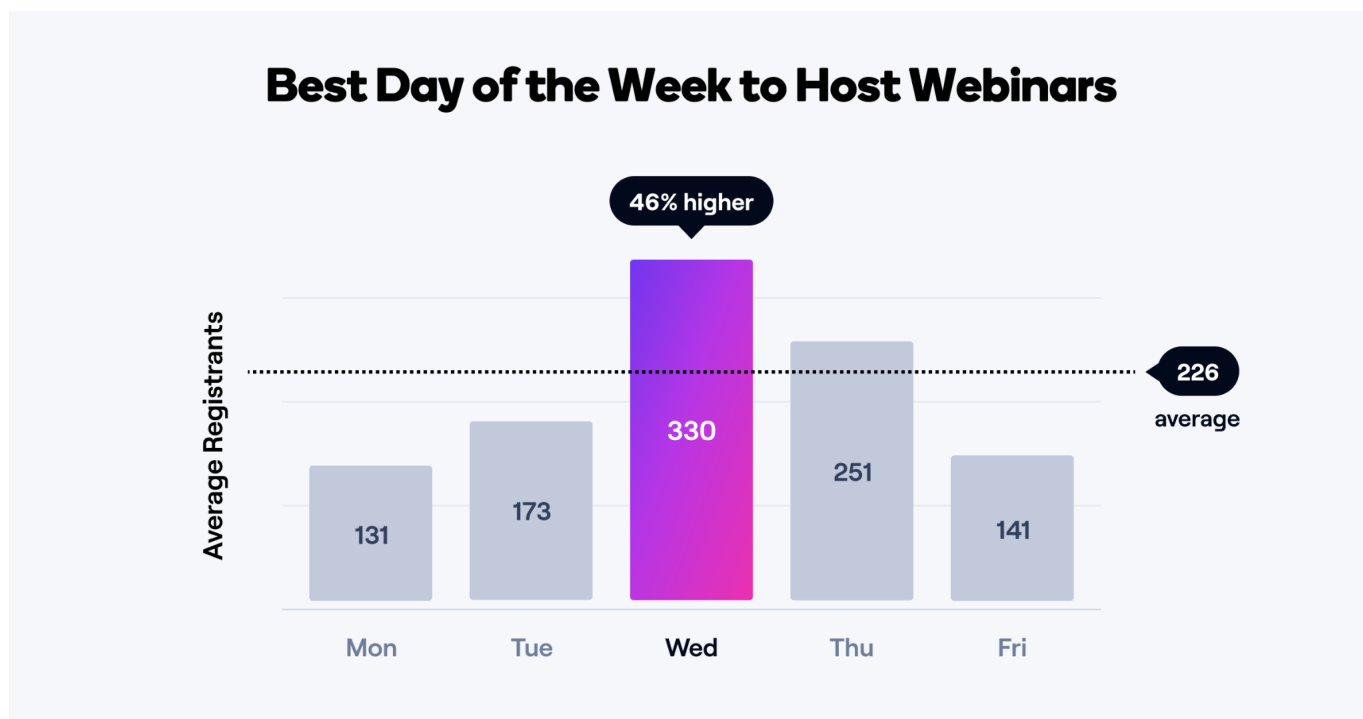
It's hard not to wonder how significant the day of the week actually is when it comes to scheduling webinars. But the truth is, the day you host your webinar could have a major impact on your registration numbers.

And with lead generation at the forefront of most marketers' goals and KPIs, a simple scheduling change may make a significant difference in your results.

So what day of the week is considered best when hosting a B2B webinar?

Wednesday!

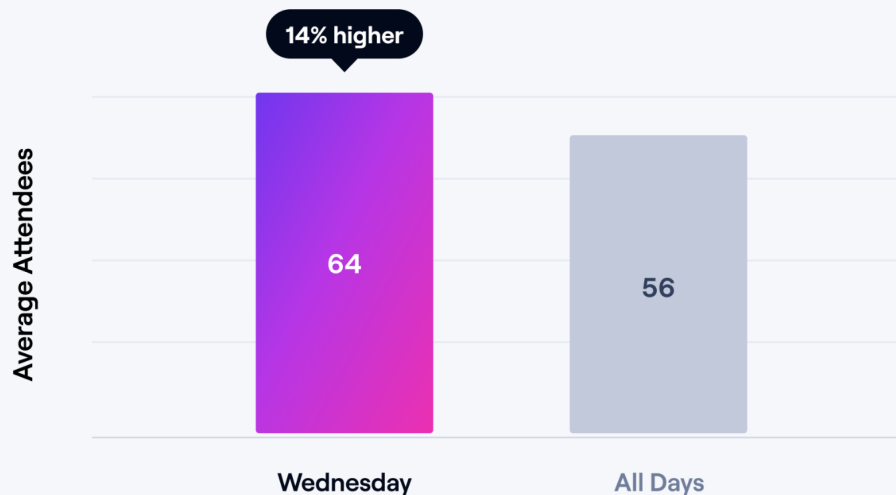
With an average of 330 registrations vs. the overall weekly average of 226 registrations (including weekends), Wednesdays beat other days of the week by 46%.



Webinars hosted on Wednesdays also saw a 14% lift in average webinar attendance when compared to other days of the week.

Specifically, webinars hosted on Wednesdays drew an average audience of 64 attendees per session while other days averaged 56 attendees.

Average Attendees: Wednesday vs. All Days



We now know that day of the week has a significant impact on registration and attendance rates, but does it also affect audience engagement?

Our data didn't show a statistically significant correlation when comparing day of the week to audience engagement rates. It appears that once attendees join a webinar, they're just as likely to chat or ask questions, regardless of the day of the week or time of day.

That said, anecdotally speaking, audiences do appear to be somewhat chattier on Mondays and Fridays, while Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays show a higher likelihood to get higher conversion rates for poll responses and collateral downloads.

If your primary goal is to generate leads, we recommend testing Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday as webinar hosting days. While the average webinar host does best on Wednesday, results vary company by company, and it is clear that the middle of the week outperforms Monday and Friday.

We also recommend offering on-demand or evergreen options for busy no-show attendees to engage with your content at times more convenient for them.

INSIGHT #2

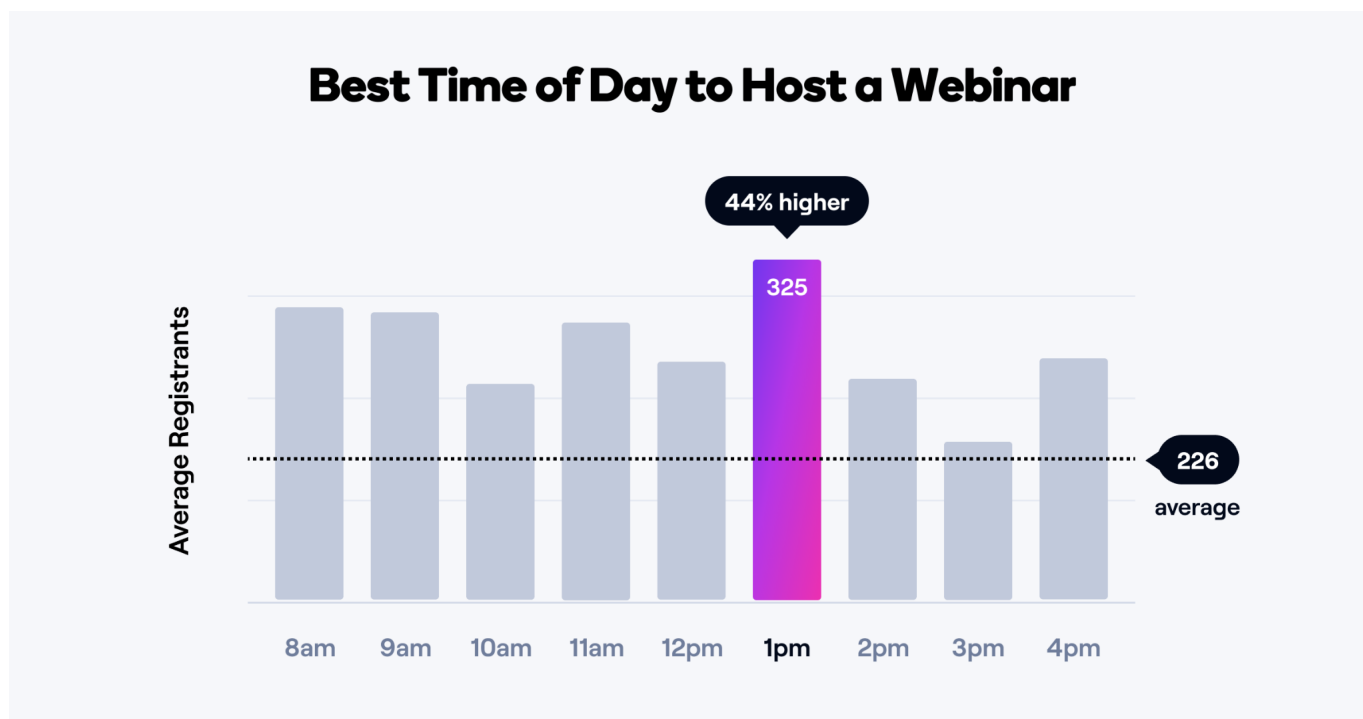
What's the Best Time of Day to Host a B2B Webinar?

Similar to our findings on days of the week, the time of day you host your B2B webinars can significantly impact your registration and attendance numbers.

What's more, we found the optimal time of day may differ depending on your primary goal. Read on for a breakdown of our findings and recommendations based on your webinar hosting goals.

Overall, our 2022 data showed that the winning time slot for hosting a B2B webinar is **1:00 pm** (in the host's local time).

Averaging 325 registrants per webinar, the 1:00 pm time slot beat the overall average registration rate of 226, accounting for a 44% lift in registrations compared to any other time.



All times in the webinar host's local timezone.

How do other time slots compare? We broke down time of day into: early morning, midday, afternoon and after business hours, to assess each time frame.

Unsurprisingly, hosting a B2B webinar during business hours (8:00 am - 6:00 pm) significantly increased registration rates over those hosted after hours (5:00 pm - 11:00 pm), with after hours webinars serving up the lowest registration rates at just 129 average registrations per session.

During the work day, performance breaks down as follows:

- The afternoon time frame (2:00 pm - 4:00 pm) could be characterized as an “afternoon lull,” trailing behind morning and lunchtime sessions, with an average of 230 registrants.
- Early morning (8:00 am - 9:00 am) and midday (11:00 am - 1:00 pm) led the pack, with an average of 276 and 273 registrants across those time frames, respectively.

Finally, it’s important to note that these results are indicative of a B2B marketing use case. During the process of generating this report, we also considered evening and weekend webinars, some of which showed tremendously high performance. These webinars did not make the cut, however, because they didn’t align to this report’s strict B2B filter.

The takeaway? If you’re outside of the traditional B2B marketing sphere (financial advisors, course authors, and digital creators, we’re talking to you!) don’t sleep on evening and weekend time slots, as your peers are generating strong results outside of traditional business hours.

Consider Your Audience’s Location First When Choosing Time of Day

It may be obvious, but we think it’s worth noting: a logical explanation for the early morning and midday time frames outperforming other times may be driven by hosts using time zones to their advantage to maximize continent-wide audience coverage during business hours.

For example, US webinar hosts on the east coast hosting at 1:00 pm can capture the “lunch and learn” audience in the Eastern and Central time zones, while also capturing the morning audience on the west coast.

You can use this insight to your benefit: If you’re on the east coast and have a nationwide audience, sticking with the mid-day timeframe is a good bet to ensure you capture both markets. But if you’re on the west coast and you want to boost registration and show-up rates among your east coast audience, consider testing an early morning (e.g., 8 or 9am) west coast time slot to capture both coasts, and avoid the afternoon “lull” on the east coast.

INSIGHT #3

If You're Trying to Maximize Data Capture in your Webinar, Does Time of Day Matter?

We've examined how time of day affects registration and show-up rate, but the question whether time of day affects the amount of data you're able to capture inside your webinar still remains.

So how does time of day affect audience engagement?

We were able to draw the following conclusions:

1. Early morning and midday sessions outperform late afternoon and after hours sessions by about 2:1.
2. During business hours, average performers achieved about 50-55% average response rates. Outside business hours, average performers achieved about 25-30% average response rates.
3. In addition to suffering from lower registration and attendance rates, the late afternoon "lull" also suffered from lower poll response rates. During the hours of 3:00 - 6:00 pm (in the host's local time), average poll response rates dropped to about 30%.

If you plan to drive action and capture data via polls, handouts, and offers in real time, consider hosting earlier in the day for an improved response rate.

INSIGHT #4

What Does Successful Data Capture Look Like?

Now that we've discussed the ways date and time can impact webinar registration, show-up, and data capture rates, we can move on to the next important set of findings.

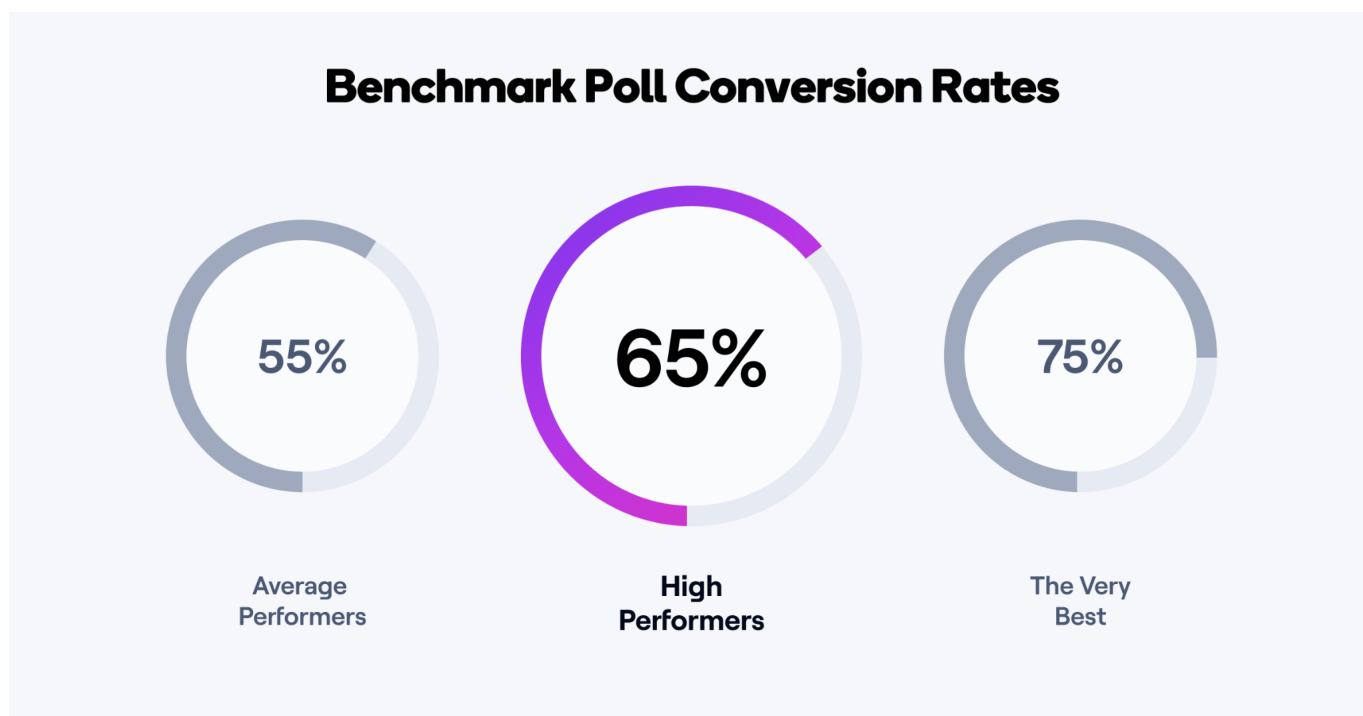
Behold, the best practices and benchmarks for sending polls during a live webinar.

If webinars are the hammer in the B2B marketer's toolbox, polls are definitely the nails. When used correctly, polls not only engage your audience but also generate a wealth of information about your attendees, which can be used for better profiling, targeting, and of course, selling.

In this section, we'll break down the data on when and how to trigger polls effectively to maximize the quality and quantity of data you're able to capture from your audience.

High Performers Typically Achieve 65% Poll Response Rates

What constitutes a healthy poll response rate? Our data found the average poll conversion rate falls between 50-55%. High performers saw 60-65% conversion rates, and the very best received up to 80% response rates.



So how can we increase conversion and maximize our results? Let's look at how high-performing companies are timing and sequencing their polls to capture more data.

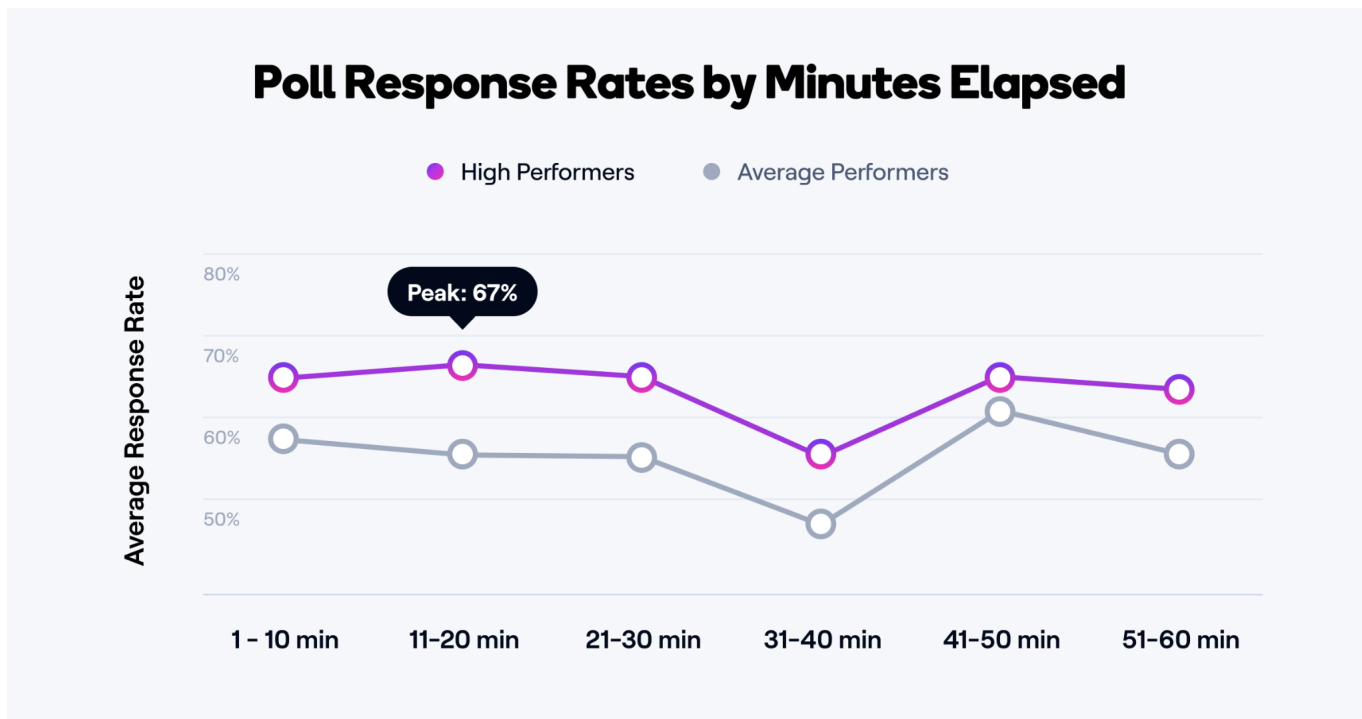
INSIGHT #5

What's the Best Practice Approach to Poll Timing & Sequence?

We found a few levers to pull. First, we analyzed the best time to send a poll by comparing poll response data to minutes elapsed during a live webinar.

The results varied between cohorts (Average Performers, High Performers, and The Very Best) but based on average performing webinars hosted over a 50 to 60 minute period, we discovered the following trends:

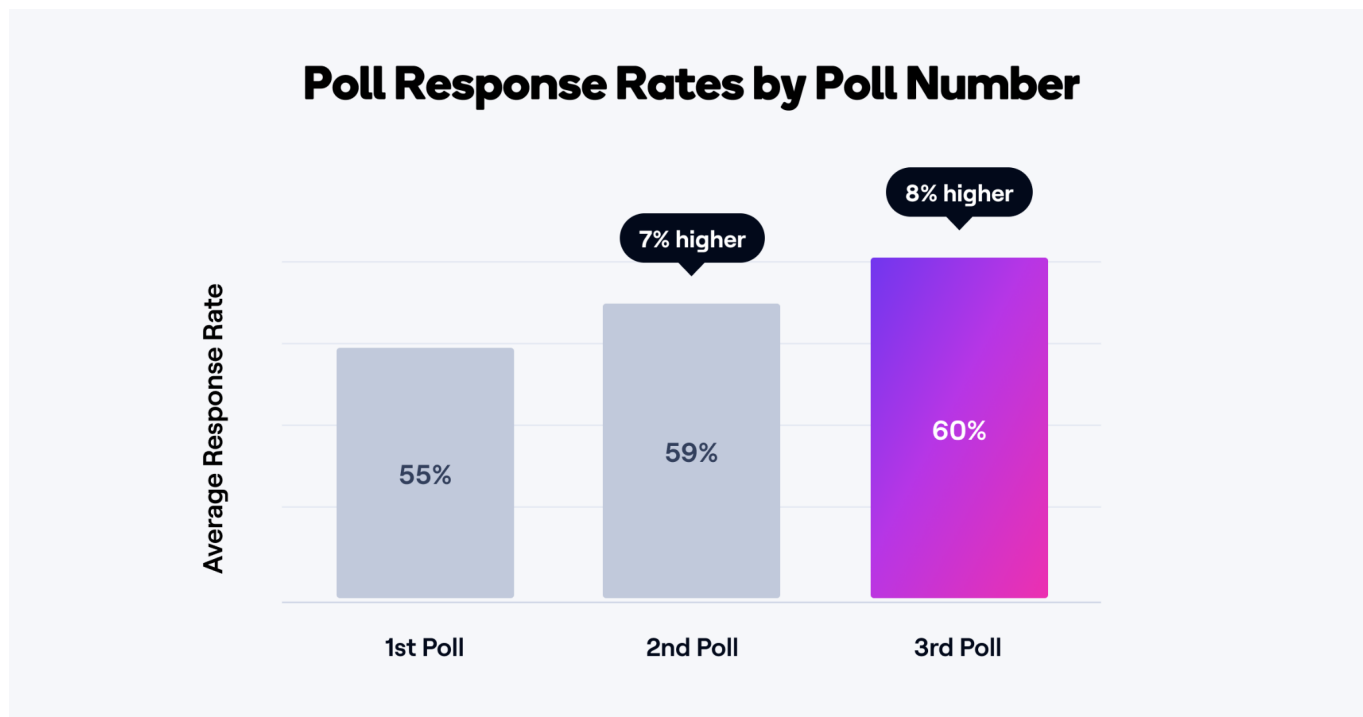
- The best time to trigger polls is at the beginning (in the first 20 minutes)
- The second best time is at the end (40 - 60 minutes elapsed)
- The worst time to trigger a poll is at the 31-40 minute mark



This leads us to our next lever, poll cadence.

Our data shows that one poll won't cut it if you're looking to maximize your results. Average poll response rates actually increase as the number of polls increase!

While best results depend on your specific audience, format, and content strategy, we found that using only 1-2 polls would be a missed opportunity, as our high performers capture significantly more data from their audiences using 3-4 polls (or, even more, in some cases) per webinar.



Our hypothesis as to why? FOMO.

If attendees hear polls happening but aren't fully engaged in the session due to multitasking, daydreaming, etc. It's likely their ears perk up and they're more inclined to tune-in to participate in the poll.

People tend to love sharing their opinion, especially when it's quick, easy, and anonymous. Use polls to your advantage by triggering several times throughout your webinars. Not only to gather data but to also keep attendees engaged throughout the presentation.

Polls: Strategic Considerations

So how can we effectively leverage polls using the insights above? We suggest the following strategies to consider when planning your next webinar:

Poll Tactic #1: The One-Two Punch

When you have one very important data point that you want to capture from your audience (which is more important than all the other data points), use the “One-Two Punch” Tactic.

When a second poll is triggered quickly after the first (e.g., within a few minutes), we see a lift in response rate on that second poll.

We also see a general correlation between poll questions and engagement. (Unsurprisingly, webinars that leverage polls more frequently tend to have higher engagement rates.)

One hypothesis around why this tactic works is that there are three buckets of attendees: First, the attendees that are already tuned-in, and will respond to polls. Second, the attendees that are not tuned-in, and will not respond to polls. And third, the attendees “at the margin,” who would not have otherwise responded to a poll, but whose ears perked up after hearing the first poll, tune back in after the first poll, and answer the second poll question.

Hence, the higher response rate on the second poll. The one-two punch, or cloak and dagger.

The strategic implication here for webinar hosts is our best practice approach to poll timing and sequencing:

Option 1: Three (3) Polls

1. **1st poll:** 10-12 mins elapsed, the “tee-up poll”
2. **2nd poll:** 12-14 mins elapsed (on the heels of Poll #1), “the money poll” - your most important datapoint to be captured (and the highest expected response rate)
3. **3rd poll:** 45 mins elapsed, another money poll, or a “warm-down poll”

Option 2: Four (4) Polls

1. **1st poll:** 5 mins elapsed, the “warm-up poll”
2. **2nd poll:** 10-12 mins elapsed, this is the “tee-up poll”

3. **3rd poll:** 12-14 mins elapsed (on the heels of Poll #1), “the money poll” – your most important datapoint to be captured (and the highest expected response rate)
4. **4th poll:** 45 mins elapsed, another money poll, or a “warm-down poll”

You could also modify Option 2 by replacing the warm-up poll with a second money poll. Like everything else in marketing, testing and iterating to find the answer that works best with your audience is imperative.

Poll Tactic #2: Write (and Test!) Copy Designed to Get Your Audience to Respond

Our findings suggest that different types of polls have different response rates. And those response rates also vary by audience type. Remember that copy matters! Keep your poll questions short, snappy and to-the-point to avoid confusion and maximize response rate.

Another important success factor is deciding when to use polls vs. when to use offers.

Polls are a great tool for collecting intimate information about your audience. Use them strategically to learn more about who they are and how they think and feel.

A call to action on the other hand (e.g. Are you interested in scheduling a demo?) may get a lower response rate when posed as a poll question. Why? CTAs are typically shared as offers, which is a different tool in your webinar toolkit. We'll discuss more on offers later...

Polls: Common Missteps & Landmines to Avoid

Be mindful of a few common missteps when building your next webinar:

- Only doing 1-2 polls is a missed opportunity, because hosts that do 3-4+ polls consistently demonstrate the ability to drive higher engagement and capture more data.
- Only relying on polls late in the webinar is a missed opportunity, because the best poll response rates come earlier (generally, in the first 20 minutes).
- Not being strategic about data capture is a missed opportunity, because using warm-ups and tee-ups increases response rates on the money polls (when you're trying to capture the data points that really matter).

INSIGHT #6

What's the Best Practice Approach for In-Webinar Offers?

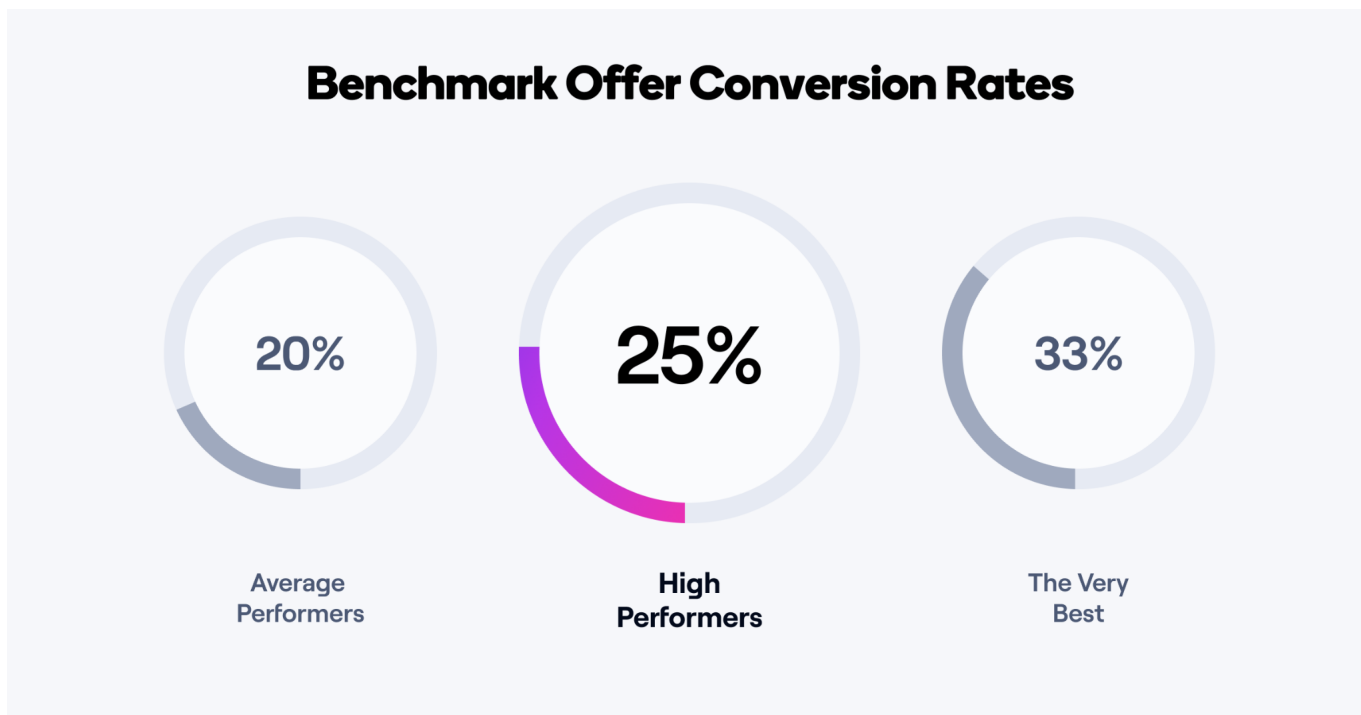
Last but certainly not least is our analysis of offers.

Offers can be a marketer's best friend when used effectively. Discounts or freebies can be distributed to your webinar audience, or you can push the portion of your audience who's ready to take the next step to do so, booking a meeting with you or starting a free trial. Timed right, offers can drastically increase the overall dollar-impact of your webinars.

So what results can we expect from offers triggered during live webinars? Something to note: our analysis covers click rates on in-webinar offers. Because hosts send this traffic to a wide variety of different destinations, we don't have a solid grasp on overall average conversion rates. But for the purpose of our analysis, click rates are a great place to start.

Not only does the click rate tell us the number of folks interested in your offer, it also allows you to better segment your audience post-event, which in turn enables you to send more targeted follow-ups to guide them on the path to conversion.

Average offer click performance generally falls between 15 and 20%. This is a good number to aim for when starting out, but high performers routinely see 25% click rates, and the very best exceed 30%.

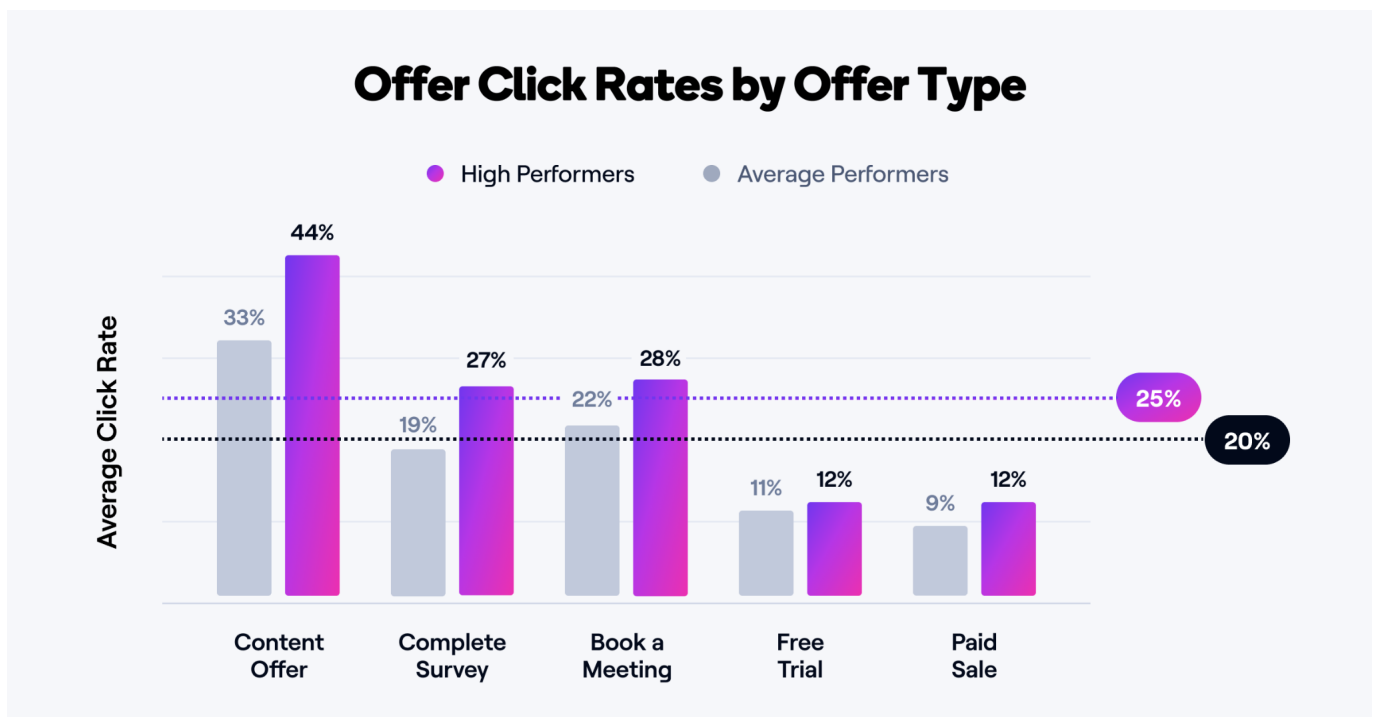


It's also important to consider that click rates vary widely based on the type of offer you're giving.

Unsurprisingly, top-of-funnel (TOFU) offers have a 3x higher click rate than bottom-of-funnel (BOFU) offers, and middle-of-funnel (MOFU) offers end up in the middle of the two.

As a general rule of thumb, you can use the following benchmarks:

- **TOFU Offers:** ~30% average click rate
- **MOFU Offers:** ~20% average click rate
- **BOFU Offers:** ~10% average click rate



Offers: Common Missteps & Landmines to Avoid

In order to get the most impact out of your offers, you'll want to be sure to avoid the following three landmines:

Landmine #1: Not Giving Attendees Enough Time to Decide Whether to Click the Offer

When a webinar host triggers an offer with too little time remaining in the session, attendees don't have enough time to click the offer and miss out on the opportunity.

Landmine #2: Not Optimizing Offer Copy to Maximize Conversion Rate

If it's not clear what a person is getting by clicking, if it requires too much cognitive load, if the offer signals that there will be a lengthy process ahead, or if the offer is not compelling enough, we would expect a below-average click rate.

Here are some examples of the types of offer copy we commonly see, and associated conversion rate benchmarks:

Weak Offer Copy, or Offer Not Compelling Enough: 2-3% click rates

- "Apply to our Bootcamp"
- "Learn more about our Company"
- "Leave us a Google Review"

Weak offer copy like the examples above consistently demonstrate low (under 5%) click rates. If you're seeing click rates in this range and want to improve them, we encourage you to put yourself in the shoes of your audience: Why should I accept this offer? What's in it for me? Why must I act now? Am I really bought-in at this point?

Then, you can rethink your offer copy, and in some cases, perhaps even your broader content strategy, working backwards from the goal of converting your audience to the next stage of the lead/prospect/customer journey.

Strong Offer Copy: 10-30%+ click rates

- "Book a Demo"
- "Get today's slides and our free self-assessment tool"

Strong copy leads to the 10%, 20%, 30%, or even 40% click rates we see from high performers!

The consensus? Aim for snappy, high-impact offers that offer value to your webinar attendees quickly and don't leave them guessing.

Then, once you've reeled them in, keep momentum going by following up with targeted email outreach post-event. That way, you'll have the best chance of conversion without things going stale after the webinar ends.

Throughout the years, we've watched webinars evolve into a marketing powerhouse that not only delivers effective audience engagement, but also drives the analytics we need to make more informed decisions throughout the marketing and sales lifecycle.

In this benchmark report, we uncovered a new, more refined set of measures and best practices to reference when developing your webinar strategy. Like everything in marketing, a hypothesis-based, data-driven approach is required to find the best combination of variables for your audience. Use these findings as a guide when setting your goals, but ultimately, the data you collect will lead to a tailor-fit approach to webinar hosting in 2023 and beyond.

As always, BigMarker's Customer Success team is on-hand to help you interpret your own results and develop experiments and tactics to improve webinar performance.

About BigMarker

In 2010, BigMarker pioneered the webinar and virtual events space as one of the first live video platforms on the web. Today, we're a category leader helping thousands of companies accelerate demand generation and deliver targeted content experiences at scale. Regardless of your CRM, MAS, and business environment, BigMarker's unparalleled customization, expertise and partnership-approach help you achieve your unique demand generation goals.

Reach out to us at sales@bigmarker.com to see the difference today.

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