Web Presenting – Gear Tips & Enhancing Your Remote Studio

Thank you for speaking at **gRPC Conf 2020**! Please take a moment to review these tips for enhancing the quality of your presentation, whether pre-recorded or live. In order to give the attendees/viewers the best experience, we strongly encourage you to use our various tips and gear addition options towards that enhancement.

AUDIO

Good audio is important. All recorded or live webcasts have audio (some presenters choose not to use video) and this is the most important element that reinforces your presentation slides. Here are some enhancement options beyond your built-in microphone. The first 2 options are better choices if you are part of a panel and need to hear the audio feed from other participants.

- A headset with microphone, even if it's earbud type with the mic on the lanyard. It's about isolating microphone pick-up from ambient noises within your recording/streaming space. Obviously, there is a visual distraction having a headset on your head – but really that's a personal choice. Input via USB or single mini-jack typically (or dual minijack for older laptops/PC's). Make sure you purchase one with the connection that corresponds to your computer's inputs.
- External microphone (condenser recommended over dynamic) usually via a USB connection. i.e. Blue / Rhode / Razer brands – keep your mouth somewhat distant from the microphone, not up very close, and try and keep it out of the video shot.
- External microphone built into your webcam. Often better quality than your built-in laptop microphone.

In general, it's best to be in a controlled environment with little to no background noise and mute all other audio devices that are not necessary.

VIDEO

Some laptop cameras are of poor quality, especially in sub-optimal lighting situations. An external webcam can help achieve a better image for your audience.

- Add an external webcam. 1080p preferred, or a 720p minimum. Typically, either will be better quality than the built-in camera on your laptop. They often have an autofocus function and auto lighting adjustments that help you get a better camera feed in less than optimal lighting conditions.
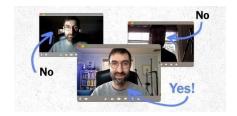
LIGHTING

- Try and optimize the ambient lighting within your space. No window or strong light source behind you that darkens your face, and no strong light source from one side that casts a shadow on the opposite

side of your face. Good ambient lighting from your ceiling lights or windows may be enough. Diffused lighting is better than harsh, direct lighting.
● If your image still appears dark, try adding a portable lamp (somewhere behind or off to the side of your camera), casting light back onto your face, diffuse light is better.
● Here's a great video with a bit more detail – it's only 4 minutes. https://youtu.be/rGcAM1CNEU0

POSITIONING & BACKGROUND.
● Background – keep clean and uncluttered. A plain wall is just fine, no need to overdo it.
● Position the camera as close as possible at your eye level, not pointing up towards your nose or the ceiling, or down towards the floor. It can be as simple as raising your laptop via a few books. Or if you have an external webcam, position it on the top edge or close to the top of your screen you are advancing your slides/notes from.
● Keep eye contact with the camera, just like you would look at your audience during an in-person presentation.

MISCELLANEOUS
● Presentation remote / clicker – Although it is not necessary it can help to keep your eyes directed at your screen & camera and stop you looking down or leaning forward to hit the spacebar or arrow keys.
● Connectivity – Wired ethernet is better than Wi-Fi. Turn off your VPN if you use one and avoid using other devices within your home internet network space that decreases the total bandwidth available to you.
● Computer – close all other applications that are not needed and close background applications that are running.

LINKS TO GEAR
Plan ahead! A lot of the webcasting equipment mentioned above is in high demand and could be currently out of stock or on back-order at retailers. Here are some of the most popular and more commonly available products out there. If you are looking to purchase, please look online at your preferred retailer for availability.

Headset Microphones:
Logitech / Plantronics – i.e. Logitech H111 (amazon) / Logitech H390 (BestBuy, amazon) / Plantronics C225 (amazon)

External Microphones:
Blue / Samson – i.e. Blue Snowball (amazon, BestBuy) / Blue Yeti (amazon, BestBuy) / Samson Meteor (amazon, BestBuy) / Samson G-Track (amazon, BestBuy)

Webcams:
Good value – Logitech C270/ (amazon, BestBuy)
Value + added features – Logitech B525/C615 (amazon, BestBuy)

Higher resolution, better microphone – Logitech 9series ([amazon](), [amazon](), [BestBuy]()) Microsoft LifeCam ([amazon]())

https://www.tomsguide.com/news/where-to-buy-webcams-now-these-retailers-have-stock

Presentation remotes:
Logitech / Canon / Kensington / SMK – [amazon](), [Canon](), [BestBuy](), [B&Hphoto]()
Tested & recommended for PC or Mac – Logitech R400, R800, Spotlight / Canon PR500, PR100