

Virtual Seminar Set-up

Internet

You need a strong, stable internet connection. A weak or unstable connection will ruin your event. If the location's internet is inadequate, a smartphone with 4G or 5G can be used as an internet hotspot. Just be aware that you will be using data so your next bill might remind you of the event. Unlimited data? Check to see where you are in your data allowance before you begin. Some "unlimited " plans are not really unlimited in that they significantly slow down the data stream when a certain limit is reached. You do not want that to happen in the middle of an event.

Computer

Just about everyone has a laptop computer of their own so there probably is no need to purchase a dedicated laptop for your event. But be sure to check the computer ports to make sure you can connect the TV or projector. An HDMI port is the most common way to connect, just make sure you have HDMI out on the computer and HDMI in on the projector. Make sure that you have an HDMI cable long enough to allow convenient placement of the computer relative to the TV or projector.

I recommend using a Windows computer. I know the Apple products are popular and very good, but I speak from experience when it comes to doing these events.

Viewing Guidelines

It is important for all attendees to be able to see the material presented so here is a guideline to consider before you begin.

Recommended Screen size for various group sizes

The distance of the farthest viewer	Ideal display size
27 feet or less	55 inches

27-32 feet	65 inches
32-37 feet	75 inches
37-43 feet	86 inches

Large Screen TV

Using a large screen TV is the easiest and most cost-effective way to present to a group. Just a few years ago, large screen TVs were heavier and more expensive. Now, many models are light weight and relatively inexpensive. If you can use a TV, you will usually need only two cables, one to connect the TV to an electrical outlet and an HDMI cable to connect the computer. The TV does not need all the fancy features if its only use will be for showing presentations. A low-end model will serve just as well as the most expensive brand. A 65-inch model can now be purchased for less than \$300.

The TV is best placed on a sturdy table high enough for everyone to see. A folding 4-foot table will serve the purpose nicely.

Projector and Screen

It is hard to beat a nice large screen that everyone can see well. It took me two swings and misses before I got a screen that meets my needs. I do not have any financial interest in this company and this is not a paid promotion, but I am much more than satisfied with my screen. Here is the description on Amazon: "Projector Screen with Stand, PARIS RHÔNE 80-inch Outdoor Indoor Projector Screen 16:9 4K HD PVC, 1.5 Gain Portable Wrinkle-Free Movie Screen for Home Backyard Theater with Carry Bag, Ground Nails" The "PVC" material is the key to avoiding wrinkles when it is in storage. I can set it up by myself, but one person to hold a side while I unroll the screen is helpful. It stows nicely in a carry bag which is very easy to transport. The only downside is its height above the ground when assembled. For larger audiences, it needs to be a foot or two higher. I built two risers, each one foot in height, with folding legs for easy transport. I can use just one, or stack them to get the height I need. An alternative to the risers would be a folding table with adjustable height legs. When using risers or the folding table, a small stepstool is handy for attaching the screen to the stand.

I use the Epson EpiqVision Flex CO-W01 Portable Projector, 3-Chip 3LCD, Widescreen, 3,000 Lumens Color/White Brightness, 5 W Speaker, 300-Inch Home Entertainment and Work, Streaming Ready. It is priced at approximately \$300 and adequately satisfies my requirements.

Presentation Audio

TV: HDMI connection carries video and audio so TV speakers work fine.

Projector: Recommended one has built-in speaker and is generally sufficient, though for in-person events, I take a sound system for my audio and use only sound effects embedded in my presentation through the projector speaker.

Enhanced Audio

For live audio from an onsite person such as a host, MC, or panelist, an additional audio system is recommended. If that system includes wireless microphone capability, a "mic runner" can be used to carry the wireless microphone to anyone wishing to participate or ask a question. There are many suitable products at various prices. One that should serve you well and not break the bank is the Pyle PWMA200 which is right around \$100.

Safety (People and Equipment)

We aim to prevent individuals from tripping over cables or bumping into tables holding equipment. Falling people or falling equipment can quickly cause injury or damage to equipment and ruin an event or worse. I carry a roll of gaffer's tape (available on Amazon). I also carry a pair of scissors to cut it. The gaffer's tape is specially formulated to leave no residue so it can be used on finished floors, bare concrete, carpet or anything else. I use the bright red color and put strips across my cables about every foot to make them visible.

This guide was created by Gene Benson in March 2025. Specifications and prices mentioned are of course subject to change. Questions regarding creating a set-up for your group are welcome. Just email me at gene@genebenson.com.