Rules of the Road: How to Successfully Host a Webinar

The ABA Section of Civil Rights and Social Justice is comprised of thousands of skilled lawyers, judges, associates, and law students, each with their expertise and unique perspective. CRSJ strives to utilize the expertise of our Section and Committee leaders to provide cutting-edge legal programming to our members.

New and ongoing civil rights crises in the news and legal profession have made such programming crucial and highly sought after due to an increasing demand for cutting-edge legal programming. In response to these events, the Section has created a Rapid Response Project. As part of this project, webinars provide an important forum that allow for the fast and widespread dissemination of information, legal resources, and techniques to a diverse audience.

Below are guidelines for successfully hosting an ABA Section of Civil Rights and Social Justice webinar:

Preparation

1. In order to ensure timely website setup and marketing of the webinar, all information about the program must be provided no later than 24 hours after the initial proposal. This includes the title, a brief (one concise paragraph) description, and a list of speakers with their affiliations and email addresses.
2. All of the panelists must plan to go through a technical walk-through and practice run at least two days before the program.
3. All materials for the program (PowerPoint slides, handouts, etc.) must be sent to CRSJ staff no later than COB (5:30 p.m. Eastern) the day before the webinar.
4. Set clear roles—this will help determine who will do the following:
   a. Introduction/Conclusion
   b. Control the screen/Switch between PowerPoint slides.
   c. Sort through and read audience questions

During the webinar

5. Sign on an hour before the start of the webinar. This time will be used to sort through any unexpected issues that arise (they do!).
6. ABA staff will begin and end each program with a membership pitch.
7. Be aware that your webcam is on throughout the program—movement and/or reactions can distract from the current speaker.
8. Mute all devices and applications prior to the start of the webinar, including email and calendar notifications. We also recommend that you close out of any unnecessary applications.