IL-NET Presents

Coordinating Accessible Virtual Events

Tim Fuchs, Sierra Royster, Mary Willard

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TIM FUCHS:   
Hi everyone! We will wait 10 seconds before we start any content today. Alright, thanks. I see the audience populating here. We always like to wait a few moments to make sure everyone is connected before we start any content. I'm Timothy National Council on Independent Living and I want to welcome you all to our latest IL-NET webinar Coordinating Accessible & Engaging Virtual Events for CILs and SILCs â€“ a panel discussion of promising practices. My pronouns are he has I am a white man, 40 years old, sitting in a dark office with a dark grey shirt and I have a tapestry in the background and a lamp that sometimes look like it's attached to my head.   
  
This presentation is brought to you by the IL-NET Center for Independent Living. The IL-NET as many of you know is operated by ILRU in collaboration with NCIL. April, and the University of Montana with support provided by the Administration for community living at the US Department of Health and Human Services. I will run through some accessibility tips before we start today.   
  
As I do that, I was on the wrong slide. I am sorry. I will go to slide three as we review these things together. CART captioning and ASL interpreters are available of course. You can turn on captioning selecting the 'show subtitle' option in your menu. You can look under more options, it should be on the right-hand side and say more. Look for closed captioning and select show subtitle.   
  
Our ASL interpreter should be appearing in the video screen. We are screen sharing today, so please ensure you are in side-by-side mode. I am forcing this presentation in gallery it should look OK. But if you have not already â€“ you can go up to the options at the top of your screen where it says I am sharing my screen, and on the drop-down, ensure you are in side-by-side mode and if you are using two different monitors, you can select optimize for dual monitors there. If you are not using dual monitors, you do not have to worry about that. What that side-by-side mode will allow you to adjust the video and PowerPoint to the size you prefer. If you want the PowerPoint to smaller, and the video larger, you can do that. And vice versa.   
  
If you have any trouble with that or any questions please let us know in the chat and we will give you a hand. In addition to our panel discussion today we will have plenty of time for audience questions. There are a few ways you can submit questions and you can do this any time during the presentation. We will wait for our Q&A to address questions, but you can submit them whenever you would like. You can use the Zoom Q&A tab if you are connected to Zoom tonight, if that is not convenient or accessible for you can email your questions to me at tim@ncil.org.   
  
If you are on the phone today, only calling and you can press\*nine. If you are connected through Zoom and these options are accessible, please use the Q&A tab only press\*nine or raise your hand if you are on the phone. I want to save that option for folks that could not submit questions.   
  
Finally, we do have an evaluation form for today's presentation. We would like to ask you to take a few moments after today's webinar to fill it out and let us know what you thought. That was sent to you and the materials email, that you received a couple of days ago with the materials for today's presentation.   
  
It is also in our Zoom meeting. When I close the webinar today, that evaluation form will pop up in your browser. So, if you take a few moments we would really appreciate it. We take your feedback really seriously. We all know even with the best intentions it is really hard to go back a few days later and fill one out. If you plan on doing that, we really appreciate it.   
  
Alright! So, with us today we have Brooke Curtis, Mary Willard, and Sierra Royster, I want to thank them for all the time they have taken to plan today's event. I think these are familiar names, I am sure you all know some of these folks very well. Brooke Curtis is associate Director of the IL-NET Centre, and Brooke has generously offered to moderate today's discussion since I am one of the panelists, she has offered to facilitate our panel discussion. Really appreciate that.   
  
Sierra Royster is from April and Director of Innovation. Mary Willard is Director of Training and Technical assistance. Between the four of us, we have done a lot of virtual events. These are not necessarily proven best practices but promising practices, things that have worked well for us and based on a lot of events and a lot of lessons learned over the past few years.   
  
Alright. I will go to slide five and on today's webinar, you will learn effective strategies for ensuring all aspects of virtual events are fully accessible including registration, pay wall, and event communication. Accessibility features offered by the Zoom platform and ways to improve virtual engagement and combat virtual burnout.   
  
With that, I will click to slide six and turn the floor over to Brooke to get us started on the discussion! Brooke?   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
Awesome. Thanks so much, Tim. My name is Brooke Curtis and I'm the new associate Director of training and publications for the IL-NET at ILRU. My pronouns are she/her and a visual description of me is I am a black woman I am wearing my hair in a bun, I have glasses on today â€“ I guess this is a purple sweater.   
  
So, again, thank you so much for being here we definitely want to be sure to answer any questions you may have. Feel free to start using that Q&A feature in zoom. I want to make sure to say thank you to the presenters today it is such a pleasure working with you all, it is so great. Thanks again for being here Tim, Sierra Royster, and Mary. Our first question is â€“ what platforms do you use for webinars and virtual events and why?   
  
Tim, I will send this one to you first.   
  
TIM FUCHS:   
-- Sure, for anyone that has participated in a NCIL event including today, you will not be surprised to hear me say we use Zoom. We use Zoom almost exclusively for virtual events. There are virtual events where we have used Zoom to capture video and connect but we had support from an AV team or production company to enhance what Zoom offers. I will talk about that in a minute.   
  
We have a Zoom account, we have a paid professional Zoom account, we have 13 licenses because if you are new to Zoom, be aware if you will share licenses that might work for you, it can be cost-effective but you cannot have simultaneous meetings within a license. If you have different staff, they will create events or host events probably best to get them their own license or coordinate very closely to make sure none of them will overlap. Or interfere with each other.   
  
On one of those accounts, we have a webinar license and we strongly prefer the webinar format for any events larger than 25. Of course, some of this is subjective. In fact, I think you will hear a little later about why they prefer to use meetings even for larger events.   
  
And quickly â€“ the difference between webinar and meeting is what you are seeing right now is the webinar format where we are pushing out this content, you are seeing our cameras, you are hearing us, you are seeing this screen chair. Meetings is when everybody is in the same room, everybody can turn their video on and everybody can mute or unmute and speak at any given time.   
  
We prefer webinar. Zoom is also â€“ I am not interested in giving a commercial but it is undeniable the amount of growth and use they have had in the last couple of years. Everybody knows the other platforms out there. But so many people have used Zoom that there is common knowledge around that and we found that to be beneficial too. It is mostly accessible. It is mostly affordable. It is mostly easy to use â€“ obviously, we can come up with caveats and exceptions to that.   
  
I think what is key for us is that it is as or more accessible than competing platforms. So, it's not like there is another platform out there that solves or avoids the access issues we find within Zoom. I can tell you, having used a host of webinar platforms in the last 15+ years, with NCIL, it is this most cost-effective and easiest platform we use. We used to spend exponentially more to access webinar software than we do now.   
  
It does not mean it is perfect, it is not. We will talk about the challenges later. Let me see. I wanted to mention it also plays nicely with other programs, and futures. Right? You can plug in captioning, you can plug in language translators, you can bring in ASL interpreters, and like I alluded to earlier you can have â€“ you can use it as the background technology and have some additional support or enhancements from an AV provider, or your own staff to do what you wanted to do.   
  
That said, lots of caveats, we will get into that later. Recording ASL interpreters is really tricky, learning the solution â€“ the final solution to this week that has dogged us for years now, and we have had some kind of... expensive workarounds but thanks to April we were able to solve that. We will talk more about the challenges and barriers leaders in the presentation. Those are the reasons we will primarily use Zoom.   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
Thanks, Tim. Would you like to talk about using Zoom meetings versus the Zoom webinar function?   
  
MARY WILLARD:   
This is Mary. Sure, I would love to. My name is Mary Willard and my preferred pronouns are she/her. I am a white woman, I am a few years younger than Tim but not many. (Laughs) I currently have red hair. I just wanted to mention a couple of things that Tim started saying, one is that â€“ one of the reasons if you use Zoom you want to make sure you have a paid account is that the free accounts will actually kick you out or time you out after 45 minutes.   
  
So, we do use paid Zoom accounts and I want to say that we purchase ours through tech supra. We get a 50% discount every time we renew. If cost is a factor I would check into that.   
  
I wanted to say that we definitely â€“ like Tim was saying, there are two different purposes for webinar versus meeting. I like to think of it as if I will use a webinar, it's because I know there will be a small amount of people sharing a majority of the content. Like we are doing today.   
  
One of the reasons we really love the meeting feature is when we are doing peer support sessions. It just becomes easier to connect with each other and actually â€“ people can drop files into the chat to share with one another, and it makes it a little easier for me as the person who is running the meeting because folks have control over their own controls. So, their own mute, their own video, and it creates more engagement if that's what you're looking for. It differently comes with its downfalls such as crowd control. Making sure people are not talking over one another, making sure that those who need ASL are able to pin them and make them bigger, that's why we do the intro scripts which I believe we have shared with you guys.   
One of my favorite features is not only auto captions, but I like to use, for folks who rely on captioning only, the life transcript. So, if you click on the CC option, you can actually show... It will say, "show full transcript." You can read everything in case you missed one of the lines.   
  
I think that is all I have for that option. That question.   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
Perfect, thank you Mary, Tim. I want to share briefly that some folks have let us know and shared a few of the platforms that they are using. So, a lot of Zoom, some Google Classroom, Skype, and Teams. So, thank you for letting us know that.   
  
Awesome. Thank you.   
  
So, the next question is: what are things you do before your events the plan for full access?   
  
So, Tim, to you?   
  
TIM FUCHS:   
So, if I really gave the full list, we could be here for an hour and 1/2.   
  
So, one of the things that we are going to do is, I'm actually... Well, NCIL and April will share the checklist that we use, the prevent checklist that we use. And then we will post it to the archive page on our website.   
  
So, when the recording and transcript of the webinar go up, we will also post those resources so that you can review them.   
  
That is the right place to get the nitty-gritty of those key steps that we take to ensure access. Sometimes, it literally goes back to checking a button before an event to start to make these things work.   
  
And none of it is hard. But it can be very complicated.   
  
We were talking about this earlier. We do not feel like the goal of today's webinar is to sit here and have you watch us click through buttons in our Zoom account. What we want to express are the challenges and the successes that we have and to know that there is a process for this. So, in addition to those checklists, just please feel comfortable, either today's Q&A session, or come afterwards to reach out and asking questions if you want more detail about these processes.   
  
All of us are providers, so we are more than happy to take time to sit with you or put together some resources to help you navigate these in Zoom or whatever platform you're using.   
  
What are the things that we do before our event to plan for full access, it is a lot. We plan for accessibility from the earlier stages. So, we think about content, as we think about marketing and scheduling and the length of our event. Our Q&A breaks, materials. Like, a lot of you, all of you I hope, it really drives everything that we do. It is access first and then it is cost and then everything else cascades from there.   
  
One of the earliest step that we take is that we state, in our marketing and registration information, what accommodations we will provide. So, when you register, you saw, we said, "we are going to have captioning, we are going to have ASL interpreters and we are going to share their materials with you ahead of time. What other accommodations would you like to participate in the event?"   
  
I think that is really important. Not just asking for accommodations, but stating what accommodations you will provide.   
  
You all might have your own examples. And not to gloss over the fact that asking for accommodations is really important. It has to be part of the registration even for small and informal events. I think it is really preferable to give people that space and make sure they know it is being seen as opposed to being shared somebody's email address. Email so and so far accommodations.   
  
And then you will also be mindful of, like with in-person events, if you're going to offer accommodations, then what is your registration cost? We take registration until the event begins because we have seen with 100% captioning and 100% ESL interpreting, we are able to commit. You do not want to be in a position where allowing people to register up until the event and then you get an ASL request two hours before the event starts. Unless you have an interpreter on staff, you will not be able to fill that accommodation. Be mindful of those things so that your deadlines and registration deadlines apply to everybody evenly and not just somebody who is requesting for accommodations.   
  
I also confirm all access services several days ahead of time and we send prep materials as well. So, if you've gone to the trouble to connect with a captioner and interpreters, make sure a few days out that they know that they are signed up, that everybody is on the same page, everybody has the connection information. Make sure that you have all the prep materials that you can share with the event.   
  
We have a detailed checklist with our host, staff and presenters to make sugar access procedures are followed for the event. So, our event host... That's to say, somebody like me, on camera, opening the event, running the event, they are going through that full checklist will stop so, they also have topics that they are going through with presenters, with other staff to make sure that everybody is on the same page and following the protocol and we will talk a little bit more about that in the next slide.   
  
We hold a free call before our events. So, make sure that if you are hosting a virtual event, regardless of how formal it is, that all of your speakers, all of your staff, any accessibility vendors, so, captioners, interpreters, etc., are connected ahead of time. And that they are ready, they do not have any tech issues, everybody is there and ready to go before you begin your life event.   
  
That does not have to mean it has to be a formal webinar for 150 people, even if it is small, just know that you're ready to go and that you have accessibility confirmed before you start.   
  
For large events, I would really strongly encourage you all to think very carefully about technical assistance. I realized, for a small event, you know, and IL skills training, whatever it may be, you are probably the technical support provider. And make sure that you have yourself or somebody on staff that have the ability to support people. But for larger events, you know, conferences, trainings, galas, statewide conference, whatever it may be or involved in, think about the technical support you have available.   
  
The NCIL conference, for instance, we had 1/3 party technical support company available just to assist people with connecting to the event and answering technical questions. That way, our staff can focus on the content. And because that company was able to provide remote support, did not matter whether your problem connecting hinged on a technology issue or an access issue or accommodation. They could literally connect to your computer with your permission and help you get signed up.   
  
That was extremely valuable. We used 1/3 party in 2020 and 2021, our AV provider, we actually had a team that provided that service. That was such a great peace of mind for our small staff to have that support. Obviously, that was an investment. That did not come free. But it was an important part of the process and really, blending heavily with technical issues and accommodations.   
  
And again, I do not want to get too far into the nitty-gritty, but we set things up in gallery view so that you are seeing shared screens and interpreters and speakers. We prepare our PowerPoint's to go live. And that is something that is in the checklist will stop I know a number of you submitted that in the pre-questions that you wanted to talk about. There are very specific, easy steps even take when you set up your PowerPoint, to have it browsed by an individual and then slide changes are manual. That will allow it to display properly.   
  
So, we will talk much more about settings about live events in one minute. So, I will stop there and let April respond.   
  
MARY WILLARD:   
Cool, Sierra, I do not know if you want me... I can start off. I just have a couple of things to add. This is Mary.   
  
First of all, sometimes, April, we have some envy about... We have a much smaller staff so, we actually run a lot of the events ourselves. With just Sierra and I. And I wanted to mention that if you do have a small staff, you can also use volunteers.   
  
I know that there are a lot of CIL's, let's say that you are running a small group, if you have one consumer and the IL skills class who is more tech savvy than others, that is a great opportunity to get them more involved. They can help support the smaller issues that are going on.   
  
I also just wanted to mention that one thing I like to do is really make sure that my audience can access the meeting that I'm setting up. So, I send out reminders to folks. If you're using the Zoom registration system, you can have an auto resend the link right before the event.   
  
If you're doing a smaller event, I know a lot of CIL that use Google Voice account to text that zoom link directly to their consumers phone. That way the consumer can just click it and be right in there. And they do not have to search through email if they are not feeling confident in those skills.   
  
Like to mention, I like to work through material ahead of time to do some basic access checks. I have been learning it on the fly. A lot of times, what I will do is just click in that search bar of whatever program you are using in the Help. I will say, "access checker."   
  
I mostly use... You can do that in PowerPoint and it will give you some steps on how to adult text and do that fun stuff. I do Adobe Acrobat easy and it has a really great access checker as well. And Microsoft office was not unhappy to walk to folks if that is on me that you're interested in.   
  
I wanted to give a shout out to folks at the AT centers. I know that they have somebody who is really knowledgeable and accessible documents. I learned everything I know from Danny Housley at the Georgia HT Centre. So, I will always check in with them. And then Tim alluded to this, but I would say, one of the number one things I like to do is to make sure my Zoom account is ready for access.   
  
So, you will want to go into your back and settings and you will have to find out whether or not you just have an account or you are the administrator on the account. And the administrator settings are the most important place to change them because the changes it for everybody. And so, when we do that, there are couple of things that you want to check for. Make sure that your recording set up is there. And you want to enable your captioning option.   
  
And Zoom has the option to enable your auto captioning. You will want to do all of that ahead of time in your back and setting. That's all I have to add. I'm happy to   
  
SIERRA ROYSTER:   
I was going to add a few things. One of the things we do I know Tim and Mary mentioned, we do lots of prep making sure microphones and cameras work. The other thing we like to do is record a full meeting if we are having a staff meeting, or having a run through one recording that. And make sure if you choose to do recordings that's coming out the way you want to. Are you able to capture the interpreter, the screen share and the CART? Whatever that is, are you capturing those things. That takes playing with because those settings change from week to week sometimes. As it updates. That's one of the things we like to do.   
  
The thing I was going to mention as well is inserting poll. If you are running polls, we put them in beforehand so you don't have to do it during the actual session if you have somebody running the background. Those are some really easy things to make sure you have there before you get going.   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
Thank you. These are some really great tips. Our next question is â€“ how do you make sure that your speakers and presenters follow your accessibility guidelines and that the event is accessible to them, too? I will turn this over to you Sierra Royster.   
  
SIERRA ROYSTER:   
Awesome. I do not know if I shared this, I'm Sierra Royster my pronouns are she/her I am a white woman with glasses and a white shirt on. One of the biggest things we work with speakers and presenters is to know their accessibility needs. I said that particularly if you have somebody that has vision or hearing loss. Working with an interpreter and making sure you have the interpreter feel comfortable with voicing if that's what's needed, or signing, wherever that falls. That takes a lot of set up time beforehand.   
  
And making sure everybody is on the same page and using the language the deaf person is most comfortable with and everybody is able to communicate effectively together. Who is coming on, and who is going off as far as screens.   
  
One of the other things we have talked about â€“ I will not go far into it. We do our renters with speakers and presenters, we have a full checklist we go through with everybody whether they are doing a simple presentation or in depth, longer presentation. To make sure we have everything covered. We want to know â€“ I mentioned polls in the last slide, we want to know if the doing poles. We want to know if they wonder results screen shared. We want to make sure their cameras work, their microphones work, one of the other things I often ask and I learned this from another group I used to present with and work with. Asking what type of Internet connection individuals have.   
  
So, we all know that we get to that place where we are presenting and all of a sudden your screen freezes, or your audio cuts in and out, sometimes that is just the Internet connection and especially with APRIL we work with a lot of rural areas and we have had that happen where we are at. Making sure that people â€“ if they can, hardwire their Internet versus using the Wi-Fi. We found that sometimes helps. We have been playing with it a little bit.   
  
We also really ask that we have them... go over what our expectations are over the call. We may be in gallery view which is more than one square, more than one person showing about a time. But if we are doing a webinar style presentation, we do not allow 10 people or 15 people to have their camera on at the same time especially if it is a panel discussion or something.   
  
What happens is the more people you put on the screen, the smaller the boxes get which make it pretty in accessible if you're trying to access the interpreter or if they are using other accommodations, maybe they are using lipreading or maybe they are really close up to you. If you are small, that will be really hard for them. Sometimes even changing the screen to speaker view is still not accessible. We limit those amount of cameras that can be on at a time.   
  
Sometimes people do not understand that because they maybe have not experienced that. I really like to explain why we are doing what we do so that lets them understand, OK, this is for accessibility reasons, and maybe this is teaching them along the way too. I think that is really important.   
  
We also like to have a lot of times reminders at the beginning, Tim talked about and you shared the checklist of going over stuff right before. We may have met before we will go over a checklist before we go on of hey, turn your camera off if you are not speaking. Be sure you mute so there is no background noise or feedback.   
  
Those are some of the things we like to do. One of the tips we found in the rural areas one video is not working or somebody is coming in and out if you turn your camera off sometimes, it saves your bandwidth so your audio is able to come through. We have had to troubleshoot and play around with that for some individuals as well.   
  
I would say â€“ do not be afraid to say "Hey, this is what we expect and we do not have any wiggle room on this. It is for accessibility." One of the most important things we do for speakers is ask them! "Is there something that would make this more accessible for you?" There is conversations about chat, whether it is on or off or anything like that, sometimes that is an option they need to be off.   
  
Sometimes they prefer to have Q&A read out. I have seen some people prefer or pronoun listed on your name to be, versus a/in the middle of she him, she/her, they/them, those different pronouns options to have a visual of a comma versus a slash is more visible to be following along.   
  
Asking them and going back over it and making sure you really stick with it.   
  
MARY WILLARD:   
This is Mary. I wanted to add two quick things before we turn it back over to Tim. This is also our chance to work with presenters to make sure they really understand how to properly audio describe. If they will show a video, we go through some basic tips on how to audio describe it and we actually have a presentation on that I'm happy to share for the materials, Brooke.   
  
The other thing that we learned â€“ one of our lessons learned is that... we want to get all of those videos ahead of time, if they will show a video, because even if it is captioned we still ask our captioner to recapture net live and that's because an individual who is following the full script might have to change where they are looking on the screen and potentially lose some information. That is the tip we got from the inclusive partnership. That's all I wanted to add.   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
That's a great tip, this is Brooke. Thank you for sharing that. Tim, did you want to add anything for this question?   
  
TIM FUCHS:   
Sure. That was very comprehensive. A lot of our processes look the same. A small addendum to what Sierra said. I am preaching to the choir here â€“ I think you all know this. Accommodations for a presenter can look very different from accommodations for an audience member. Right?   
  
Providing ASL interpreters for the audience, awesome! Right? Providing it for a presenter, obviously equally important. But that set up, completely different. You cannot just have the two interpreters that use a sign for the audience, provide voicing for the presenter as well. You may need an additional interpreter, you may need another team. You need to work through that with the presenter. If you are not sure, just ask. That is just one example of an accommodation. Sometimes, presenter accommodations can be different when they are actively presenting throughout the session.   
  
I think that the only thing I wanted to mention. I have some notes here, but that's the same way we work through this thing. Great points!   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
Perfect, thanks y'all so much. Next slide, please. Next questions are â€“ so, what do you do during the live event to make it accessible? What are some of the key lessons learned from running accessible virtual events? I will turn that over to Tim!   
  
TIM FUCHS:   
Thank you, Brooke. This is another one I will give a disclaimer about the checklist we will share. Again, I just saw somebody ask a question about that in the Q&A. This will be posted to the on-demand page or today's webinars are archived. For those really specific point by point details on how to do this stuff, check out the checklists from NCIL and APRIL.   
  
In general, there are a number of things we do for the live events, that you are experiencing right now and you are seeing and noticing them today. We always review the accessibility features and tips at the beginning of all of our events and try to reiterate them during the live event. We provide instructions to request help with accessibility items and technology.   
  
I would encourage you all â€“ you may not have noticed we did this, we asked you all to notify us in the chat if you need any help with technical issues or accessibility issues. Then we have the Q&A feature for content questions. So, I would really encourage you to separate those â€“ you might want to think about separating and assigning a different person to be responsible for each of those two.   
  
Your host, or facilitator, or your panel can respond to content questions but maybe you have someone else who can help somebody who cannot get connected, or cannot get the captions turned on. Cannot find the PowerPoint. Something like that. It is an issue. You may not always have that luxury.   
  
If you, or someone else may be a staff member of yours is doing this alone, I would encourage you all to be mindful of that and spell that out for the audience. So if you are assisting somebody with an accessibility issue, you have the leeway to pause the event until that issue is solved. And everyone has equal opportunity to participate before you resume the event. Spelling that note, I am assisting someone to make sure the captions are running properly, we will resume the event as soon as that is done.   
  
We have a tendency â€“ I was talking about this the other day, there was tension between not wanting dead air. Feeling like you need to keep the event going. Dead air is not as awkward as denying somebody accessibility. (Laughs) Solved that access first, then you can proceed. We turned the chat off. The chat is enabled so the audience can communicate with the panelists about technical issues and accessibility items like I described.   
  
We do not have the audience to audience a chat turned on. We used to do that, this was a lesson learned for us. It was just impossible to voice all of those comments during a live event, especially in our conference sessions where we might have 600+ people connected.   
  
There are different approaches to that, and different solutions â€“ that is not a hard and fast rule, you will need to find so new that works for you. Trust me, when I do small meetings I love having the chat on. We use it all the time and voice what comes through for folks who cannot see it or easily reference it. I love it. It is great. For large events, we usually turn it off. Be mindful of that and pick a solution that works for you.   
  
If you are not sure â€“ ask your participants! Right? That is the good out on this stuff. To ask what people prefer. We do visual descriptions, you noticed that. There are different perspectives on that as well. We think that is the right thing to do. It only takes a moment.   
  
We spotlight our ASL interpreters and our speakers. So, Zoom offers the option to note multi-spotlight â€“ you used to only be able to spotlight one individual at the time which made it virtually useless for accessibility issues, now you can multi-spotlight which means you can add a spotlight to as many of your panelists as you would like. It is useful for spotlighting your active speaker and your active interpreter. That is important during live events and especially important in the Zoom recording.   
  
When you go back, and have an archived version of an event, you can see the active speaker and the interpreter at the same time. That is a very complex process and that's one I would encourage you to reach out to us about if you are struggling with, also happy to answer any specific questions in the Q&A break. Of course, we enabled the captioner â€“ I talked about the importance of that pre-call, making sure everyone is connected early. You want to make sure your capture is there and you will assign them to stop it is very, very simple. You will right-click on their name and click 'assign to type closed caption' it is easy, but a very important step. That is true of most of us. We provide several ways to submit questions, you saw that in our opening instructions. You do not have to use the Q&A tab, I offer my email â€“ that is easy enough to do.   
  
Also, callers can press\*nine and speaking of calling, that is one thing I like about Zoom, as well. I sought in the Q&A. Somebody was saying that Zoom does not offer a toll-free number. Despite that, one of the things I love about Zoom is even everybody thinks of it as a webinar platform, and it is. Anybody can call in. That's not true of all the other platforms of there.   
whether you are a panelist, or whatever, you can always dial into his bed. That is important for access and accommodation. It is also important for people who do not have access to high-speed internet. It is important for people who do, but are experiencing internet issues. So, that Colin is really important.   
  
If you want to have meaningful participation, they will have to be able to interact, it does not have to be one way. That is why we have the\*9 to submit questions for the events.   
  
Lots more detail in our checklist, but those are the things that we do to make our life events more accessible while we are running it.   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
Mary, Sierra, would you like to add to that as well?   
  
SIERRA ROYSTER:   
A lot of the things that Tim has said. But I wanted to hit on the points that we go over. When we start a session, we are in the pre-meeting with the speakers are panelists, we actually had a couple buttons to get going.   
  
Tim mentioned closed captioning, we do that as well. We do other things like following the Host mode, so that everything that I see the recording will see as well.   
  
Running the meeting is quite state forward, it is when you need to find the recording, where it gets a little bit tricky. So, we do follow the Host mode. We also turn off non-video participants so, one of the things that we found is that in the recording, you can see everybody's black box sometimes if you do not turn that off. So, that is one of the things that we do.   
  
And then, we mentioned it before, but I will say it again because Zoom plays by their own rules and they change it. So, we like to go in and make sure that all of our settings are still the same before we start and that way, when we are going live, that is all up there and running as well.   
  
We make sure... It just totally jumped out of my brain. So, visual description. We do that throughout the event to make sure that it is accessible. And we have used chat probably more than Tim has used. It is so hard to get a conversation going, especially when you are in a webinar platform. There have been times where we have turned it off, I mentioned that like if there is a presenter that needs to be able to focus and it is a distraction and they cannot turn it off, that kind of thing.   
  
One of the things that we do provide is keystrokes once we start, that is part of the script that we go through. So that if people need those, they can use that option as well.   
  
And then, lessons learned? Everything that we have been sharing is a lesson learned, in my mind. We are constantly still learning. And when we hold our meetings, most of ours are held in meetings, we are learning about what everybody is running into and trying to put that into our own toolkit as well.   
  
Mary, I know that you had somewhere to be able to jump in.   
  
MARY WILLARD:   
This is Mary.   
  
I just wanted to mention, if you are going to share a screen with audio, you are going to want to make sure that when you click share screen, you actually have to enable the share audio function. It is a little checkbox in the lower left-hand box of your shared screen.   
  
And then, I didn't want to mention something else. Tim, you had mentioned the toll-free number. It is actually an option to purchase a toll-free number in in Zoom. It is pricey. But one thing that I have seen CIL's do, is that if an individual is using a landline, you can sometimes by those little cards with minutes on it. And a lot of grocery stores, for example, carry them. They've had grocery stores offer to donate them so that an individual can participate in a class or an event without using up all of their minutes.   
  
One thing I did want to say about lessons learned from running events is to be flexible and patient with yourself. One thing that I have learned is that the minute you figure out technology, it will update and change.   
  
This is something also, my husband taught me that there is something that you can do that cannot be undone. A lot of what I do and learn from this is that going into the program, not being scared of it. I've pushed buttons and pushed buttons, and sometimes I have Sierra join in until I get what I want. And then I write down really quickly how I did it.   
  
My other little hot tip is, I do a lot of googling. Using technology includes a lot of seeking information. So, YouTube has a lot of really amazing how to videos. And I just Google "how do I do this in zoom?" And I watch a few videos until I figure it out.   
  
The other thing is that every software program that you use has something called documentation notes. And you can find those just by actually googling documentation notes for Adobe, or whatever it is that you are using. And that is basically a how-to manual to use that program and the different features that are in it. That's what I do.   
  
One thing I wanted to mention is when we do use the chat feature, one thing that is really important is to go ahead and voice the chat so that everybody can use those. If you're giving folks keystrokes, which are like alt H, for example, it will actually turn off your chat feature. So, if you are somebody who is visually impaired and maybe it is hard for you to find the chat bubble in the Zoom, you can also use your keyboard function in order to navigate. I just wanted to mention that as well.   
  
I'm looking through my notes, but I think that is it for right now.   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
A lot of great information. I did not know that about... Mary, it is the document? What is it called again?   
  
MARY WILLARD:   
It is called documentation. My husband is a software person. I do not know... He does things on the computer and he taught me how to do that. You just Google it and it is a whole set up manual for what you are using.   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
That's great. Awesome.   
  
And this might have already been said already, but, especially in meetings when multiple people are speaking, just asking for folks to say their name before speaking, it is really helpful. That way the captioner can capture that in the transcript and in the captioning. So, keep that in mind.   
  
And then, also, one thing that I know that I have learned in hosting events is that it is always really nice to have some sort of backup. So, I will often have, even if it is just a meeting, one or two folks on who can just help sometimes, maybe the captioners running a little bit late. Maybe that person can reach out and just make sure that they are coming and we are all set.   
  
Or, if something goes wrong, of course you do not want anything to go wrong, but sometimes you definitely have to plan for that in all of your trainings and meetings. So, it's nice to have that support. And I know Tim mentioned that as well.   
  
So, awesome, awesome questions in the Q&A, keep them coming in.   
  
We will go into the next question.   
  
This is a really great one. A lot of things are virtual, so what can we do about virtual burnout and what methods can use to make virtual event fun and engaging? Mary, I will turn it over to you.   
  
MARY WILLARD:   
Thank you, Brooke. I will start this off, again, this is Mary.   
  
I want to be honest with everybody. This is difficult for everybody. No matter how much we try, an online event is just not the same as in person.   
  
But there are a few things that we have learned that seemed to help. I think... This will not be a surprise to you all, but making sure to set time aside to do activities or icebreakers if you are doing a small group event with that is possible.   
  
I know a lot of CIL's for example, who do energizers or virtual icebreakers. One of my favorite ones is to grab something next to you on your desk. It does not matter what it is, and tell us why it is there.   
  
I've seen everything shared from a pencil to a cat it is a nice way to get to know the other people that you are working with. There are a ton of resources out there on icebreakers. I will share some for that website. You can Google icebreakers and find a million of them.   
  
Actually started googling "great virtual icebreakers" and there are a lot of good content on that as well.   
  
The other thing that I wanted to mention is that there are lots of fun add-ons that you can use. So, these are websites or other programs that can integrate with Zoom that make it fun. I know that somebody mentioned Kahoot. It is basically an online website that is meant for teachers, but we can use them for fun games and quizzes.   
  
I've also seen online bingo, online Jeopardy, I've seen folks send me a website for an online karaoke website. So, it has the video with the lyrics right there for you. And then you share your screen and turn on the captioning. And it is a lot of fun.   
  
I've also seen folks who just use their whiteboard. So, zoom has a whiteboard feature. And you can do word puzzles. We used to call it hangman, I know that is not PC, but I do not know what it is called now. But as long as you are visually describing what is going on so that everybody can stay engaged, that can be really fun.   
  
I wanted to mention how important it is to set time aside for what they call energizers. So, this is a movement break. I seen somebody do something as simple as the "seventh-inning stretch" where you just have folks move their face or their hands or their nose, whatever their ability is. Just move it in a silly way for a few seconds to get out of the zone.   
  
I've also seen folks that will lead, in the middle of their event, they might lead a progressive relaxation or a meditation type of activity where you just all take some deep breaths together. You know, maybe try to visualize yourself in a meadow or whatever your happy place is. Something to break up whatever it is that you are doing. Trying to make Zoom a little more fun.   
  
CIL are doing a lot of cool things. Especially with training. That is when you can do online Jeopardy. I actually had an IL Centre, this was really cool, I thought, what they would do is that they would work with the local door â€“ or Jimmy John's and they would actually have lunch delivered to the participants at the same time. And then they would save 30 minutes at the end of the event for having lunch together and chatting and having free discussion.   
  
So, just getting to share about your day, what is something great that happened to you this week. It's that people can get to know each other a little bit more. Kind of have that informal downtime that we used to have in the "real world."   
  
And then along with that, I just wanted to mention that if you are running an event like, let's say it is a peer support group or IL skills training, I think it is really important to leave time at the beginning. So, I always join early so that if folks want to join early, they have time for that small talk. And then, I always have a parking lot discussion at the end. So, I see a lot of CIL's do a lot of parking lot discussions where maybe you are having an IL skills training today, all about housing. If somebody really wanted to share with you something great that happened to them on their weekend, and so, you put that in the parking lot and you save time at the end to share it. It creates group cohesiveness.   
  
I will turn it over to Sierra or Tim because this is my favorite topic and I could go on forever.   
  
SIERRA ROYSTER:   
I was going to add a few things. One of the big things they were talking about â€“ the youth coordinators were talking about was (Unknown Name) which is an interactive PowerPoint presentation. It is not a Google point, or PowerPoint. It is something very interactive.   
  
Incorporating parts of your day that you may be doing with your consumers. There are some places that have been doing dance parties where there is not talking, you just happen to be together, you are playing music and everybody's doing their own thing. Or workout groups. If you will throw in a workout anyway, do it all together. Put together an accessible workout or have a trainer that is able to join and can do seated yoga or seated Zumba, or whatever it might be.   
  
We have heard about art classes done online, cooking classes where there is actual bags delivered to people's doorsteps with the materials they need. And we all do it together. Wine and design is one of the big things I have heard of as well. You can get the materials to actually paint and paint altogether. Online to create whatever that looks like. You do not have to do it with wine, or you can!   
  
One of the big things is movies. We have seen a lot of people share movies online. I will say â€“ Netflix and Disney plus, and Hulu, all of those pieces, there is a workaround for making sure it lets you screen share. A lot of times, we have seen some organizations have contacted the company to let them know they are a nonprofit and have been able to screen share with no issues beyond that. That is something else.   
  
The other thing for burnout as well when we are planning our conference, or a bigger event, we like to put more time and between presentations. We understand an eight hour day is very, very normal. If we were going in person. That is something you can expect. Virtually, that's a lot. We did a 30 minute breaks within our sessions, and we have done all day events were it has been a virtual shops and we divide that up into 30 minutes.   
  
That helps us facilitators to make sure we have time to do everything we need to do between. And actually take a breath at the same time. That is something we have done. The other thing we try to do is pull people off of Zoom, not everything is on Zoom. This past year we had a slack channel where people could connect on that which is an app you can download. It provides the ability to message one another, last year we used discord which is technically a gaming system, it is an app but it allows you to have chat as well.   
  
Using social media, and creating conversation on Facebook, or Twitter feed, or anything like that to pull us away from this piece is sometimes still virtual â€“ but in a more typical way that some people are already joining in on their phones. So, it's a little more informal.   
  
I was just going to say â€“ one of the things we have done is really awesome, our MC all the time. And our musician. He did a sing-along with (Unknown Name) this past year, we have done some sing-alongs there. And sometime to socially hang out. I know Mary mentioned that as well.   
  
The other thing I have seen is where you may send an email and say, "We are meeting at this point and time. Before you do that, this is what you have to do." Maybe it is collect five things from outside you love about the season right now. You devote things that are away from the computer, and engaging whether it is in your home, or in your yard, or down the street, whatever that looks like. But ways for people to have to be assigned to go away from the computer because that forces them â€“ and that gives us something to talk about when we come back together if it is Zoom.   
  
These are a couple of things we have seen making sure I got all the other things. Mary mentioned a lot of them. We have had them send us A to Z recreational activities that can be done online. Goldendoodle was the one we have seen where it has little snippets for virtual platforms. Some of it is very young audiences, some of it is general audiences. Those are all things we have seen or heard, or used!   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
This is great. Also, I wanted to share something. Mary dropped this in the chat. This is Brooke. Mary said, I have heard of CIL's who start with a funny meme or you start a fun game where you put a picture up and the audience comes up with the tagline and thumbs up on the best one. That's really fun.   
  
Tim, would you like to add anything in?   
  
TIM FUCHS:   
I would be happy to. A lot of what I will say here is affirming, or expanding on some of the things that Mary and Sierra already shared. We do take a different approach to this NCIL anyway, we have eschewed the social aspect. We have not found good solutions we thought were fully accessible, so, we have mostly handled this through creative scheduling. I will talk more about that in a minute.   
  
First, I want to affirm for everybody what a challenge this is, like Mary said when she started. There is so much competition right now, you know? We are not competing with other organizations, and the rights and justice space, we are competing with absolutely everything. The schools we go to, or our children might go to, trying to interface with local, and state government right now. Absolutely everything!   
  
A lot of it is still virtual. So, just acknowledging that and remembering some of this virtual burnout â€“ it does not come down to what market we might use, it is the new reality. I think it's also important to remember the increased access we have had. There are other people for whom technology is less accessible, I get that, and we can talk about those challenges.   
  
But when we think about accessing the virtual space, there are real issues with accessing physical spaces as well. So, is it really any more difficult to figure out giving people access to a landline to call in, or a tablet to participate than it is to figure rural transportation issues? I'm not sure it is. Different challenges, still challenges â€“ but just acknowledging that and the fact some of this is an opportunity.   
  
We approach these things through scheduling, we do not do more than 90 minutes ever for anything without a break. We do have longer events. They will not come without a 30 minute break. Anything over three hours, we prefer a very long one hour break before we resume. You can look at the virtual trainings we have done, you can look at the NCIL conference, some of them cascade over a number of days and that's hard for people as well, that's a whole other conversation.   
  
The reason we do that is for us, a full day is four hours. Maybe five. That is with breaks, and all that. Like Sierra said it â€“ you have the audience, you have your staff, you have everyone for whom this is exhausting. We are also finding that people are not â€“ or maybe cannot clear their calendars the way they used to for events. You know, we used to say, "This is my training, I am here at this all-day meeting, and you put it on your calendar and know you will be there and focused on it." And yet, now, we are expected to participate in these virtual conferences and meetings, and keep up with our inbox, and last year, make our kids lunch and feed ourselves and do these things during the day. That's part of I we take these long â€“ I almost said generous breaks, they are necessary breaks because you are not going to be able to focus on the virtual environment if you do not give people time to deal with everything else going on.   
  
We use breakout rooms a lot. We find that small groups are really good way to get people engaged. Like I said, for these larger events, several hundred people connected, we love the webinar platform. For small meetings, we use breakout all the time. Something somebody may not want to share with 40 people, they will be happy to share with four people. It shifts the whole energy of the space so we really like the breakout rooms.   
  
For us as a national association, we have to consider time zones. That will not apply to you all as much doing local, and state work, something to be mindful of. It dovetails with the whole conversation if it's not about time zones, it might be about who is our audience, and when will they be available?   
  
If you are doing something with youth, you may not want to do when they are in school. These conversations have existed around who your audience is, what will be accessible for them, and really â€“ what can you do to shorten or simplify your event? Is there something you can take care of ahead of time? Asking people to review materials, you know, holding some of the business virtually, or having people provide input virtually so your meeting can be shorter and more efficient.   
  
Again, this has impacted everything and yes, these events are important. They have value. If you take a 60 minute event and make it 30 minutes, maybe it will be easier for people to remain engaged and sign up for. Anyway, thank you for listening. Just some things I wanted to share. I can't wait to get to these questions. There's some great stuff coming into the Q&A.   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
Thanks everyone for sharing. It is definitely very challenging right now, everything is virtual. A lot of great questions in the Q&A. Let's start with the first one! From anonymous: do you ever use Eventbrite for marketing outreach and registration? Using the Zoom link. If so, have you experienced any barriers? So, Tim, Mary, Sierra? Any experience with Eventbrite?   
  
TIM FUCHS:   
This is Tim, we have not used Eventbrite. I have used it on the customer side, on the attendee side, we have not used it. It is one of many what we call "ticket based registration systems' where you sign up, you get a ticket automatically, I think one of the things to be aware of if you use the systems there is pros and cons to all of them. Make sure they provide a method for asking about accommodations. Right? Some of them are customizable than others, we have seen improvement in the last couple of years that is something I would be mindful.   
  
Make sure nothing you are using is requiring a capture. Captcha is when you try to register for something and it says like all the stoplights in this image. And type in the letters, and it is drawn and unclear. These are security things meant to prevent robots, but they can prevent people with disabilities from registering. Make sure none of those things are included when you use them.   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
Awesome. Thanks, Tim. Right, we have another question from Aaron. It says: if our CIL cannot afford ASL interpretation for every meeting, what is the next best option?   
  
MARY WILLARD:   
I can take this. I just wanted to first â€“ this is Mary. I wanted to mention on the -- Eventbrite question, (Audio breaks up) they have experience with Eventbrite and they learned their platform is inaccessible to people using a screen reader on desktops, she believes. So, I thought I would add that in.   
  
This is Mary. I wonder if you have seen the audio transcribed on your zoom platform. It is auto captioning. You have to make sure this is enabled in your back end settings.   
  
I want to say that if somebody uses ASL, captioning might not work for them. So, I always just say, meet with the consumer and find out what the best option is for them.   
  
I know some states, for example, I worked with a woman in Delaware who has an ASL interpreter through some program that she is a part of their, that she can bring. So, if it is a smaller meeting, like, one or two people, maybe they might have their own through that program. I will have to follow up with her to figure out what it was. It was some program paying for it for her. She used it in another meeting that I saw.   
  
Sierra, go ahead. Sierra is actually my expert. She does all of the ESL stuff for APRIL.   
  
SIERRA ROYSTER:   
We are spending a time talking about virtual platforms and other these different platforms that have the video capability. It is fantastic. But let's not forget, not every meeting has to be a virtual video meeting.   
  
Go back to a conference call meeting if that is what it means to be... If you cannot afford an ASL interpreter, then you do not really need the ability to see anything. Besides the great addition of grading to see faces and interact with one another, have everybody call into a conference call line and that person can use a video relay where they are still able to access ASL if that is what they need and still be able to participate into the meeting.   
  
So, we have been thrown into this virtual world and sometimes, we forget some of the stuff that we did before had worked. We do not have to throw it out with everything that is new.   
  
I would suggest making sure that you have that need for it first and then come always checking with the deaf person on what their accessibility needs are.   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
Sierra, but is an excellent point. We have another question from Ashley.   
  
QUESTION FROM FLOOR:   
One question I have is around leg which access for individuals where English is a second language. How can one integrate that into zoom in a way that is accessible for participants?   
  
TIM FUCHS:   
We had a good experience with this in our 2021 conference. Zoom makes it easy. You have to set it up in your studies, but when you create the webinar, you can do it there. It is as easy as checking a checkbox that says enable language translation. From there, your language translation vendor should be able to support you and telling you exactly what you need to do. Usually, they will want to join in a little bit early, just like what we recommend with your interpreters and captioners. They will usually be able to walk you through the process.   
  
In our experience, it took about two minutes. It was very easy. From there, there was seamless language translation available.   
  
One thing that is critical especially for large audience events is to be very specific about the language options that you are offering or, I should say, the accommodation needs of your audience.   
  
If you have a deaf person join who is not a native English speaker, and your providing audio language translation, that is not going to be much help to them. So, for instance, what we did with our conferences that we had simultaneous English language cart captioning, banish language CART captioning, English audio and Spanish audio. Each of those was provided by different vendor or speaker. So, be mindful of disability access when you're thinking about language access.   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
Thank you, Tim. Mary, Sierra, would you like to add anything?   
  
MARY WILLARD:   
This is Mary. No, we are good. Tim is going to teach me all about this (Laughs).   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
Same. I've reached out to Tim already for help.   
  
We have a question from Theo.   
  
QUESTION FROM FLOOR:   
Will you speak of things to ensure security like avoiding interruptions and/or hackers.   
  
TIM FUCHS:   
When the whole zoom bombing thing happen, when people were breaking into events and taking over, we did a very low-tech solution from day one. That was, for all staff that had access to the zoom account, if anyone zoom bombs your event, shut it down immediately. Do not forget that you can always end the event.   
  
Since then, zoom us taking a number of steps to control this. I think, for their own business interest, they were not happy with the press that this got. This is not something that just happens in Zoom. Using passcodes and everything. We have access concerns about using passcodes. But we have not had a large access problem when we used passcodes.   
  
A lot of that has got to do with embedding your passcodes in your event so that it is just a one click experience.   
  
But just having a policy and procedure for your staff, you know, very clear procedure about what protections you have and what to do if somebody takes over the event. You can also restrict access. This is another reason why we like webinar because unless you are in the pen a stream, you cannot take over the event.   
  
So, just some tips. Again, we can talk about this a lot longer. If your specific questions about security, please reach out.   
  
SIERRA ROYSTER:   
I will jump in for a couple of things. On those admin things that Mary had mentioned, there are settings that Tim referenced, once you keep somebody out of her room, they are not allowed to come back in.   
  
Now, the problem with that is that if you accidentally hit the button and kicked them out and it was somebody that you needed in there or somebody that was dissipated, they cannot come back in. So, kind of weighing what you want to do. I will say that there was one organization out there at the very beginning of the zoom bombing stuff that told us that anytime they are running a meeting, they actually run it with a waiting room and not a passcode.   
  
Everything is open to the public and many of your meetings might have to be open to the public. So, if a waiting room, you can actually see that is coming in. And you can always ask, like, tell them and give them information to them do that waiting room.   
  
But a lot of times, if it is a hacker, they would come in with... It is something very provocative and inappropriate right there in the waiting rooms so, you can kick them out before they ever enter. That is in the meetings platform. So, there is that piece.   
  
Having somebody else be able to help facilitate some of those like muting and turning cameras off of individuals if need be, that is helpful.   
  
But that is what we have used to try to be preventative. Luckily for us, I'm knocking on wood now (Laughs), It has not been that much.   
  
Somebody hit unmute and, oh boy, we have seen and heard some interesting things. Also, if you're facilitating, know how to turn somebody's camera and microphone off, or have that other person who is helping you out do it.   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
We have a comment from Susie.   
  
COMMENT FROM FLOOR:   
There are people interested in the IL movement centers but they cannot take part in it because they are not able to access. Zoom is not available to them. They are becoming more isolated because phone is becoming obsolete. It is an access issue. There are hardly any landline phone. A lot of people are getting left out.   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
Tim, I will turn it over to you.   
  
TIM FUCHS:   
You raised a good point.   
  
For years, people with environmental sensitivities have been largely excluded from in-person events because of conference environment and the hotel environment with Wi-Fi and all of these things that make those places inaccessible. And yet, the new virtual environment often requires electrical equipment.   
  
This is really about an advocacy opportunity for maintaining access to land lines. And while it is not a perfect solution, I acknowledge that, one of the reasons why I have talked so much about telephone access to our virtual events today is because we recognize that whether you have an electrical sensitivity or whether you do not have access to high-speed internet, it is really important that you still be able to dissipate in our events with a simple telephone.   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
Thank you, Tim. Mary, Sierra, would you like to add anything there?   
  
MARY WILLARD:   
This is Mary. I think Tim really covered that well. Again, Susie, it is always good to hear your advocacy. You know, you are not alone, it is not only people with those electrical sensitivities. It is also a lot of our folks in rural areas. So, we have many CIL's who still just do IL skills training, for example, on the phone. And if that individual wants to participate, they might do what they call (indiscernable) or we can send them their materials on their porch or through the mail. So that they can follow along with printed materials and still participate much like Tim said.   
  
We have to keep landmines for everybody, especially those of us in rural and those who cannot use computers.   
  
BROOKE CURTIS:   
Thank you, Mary and Tim. Alright, and we have our last question in the Q and A.   
  
QUESTION FROM FLOOR:   
From Emily, how does the Zoom chat feature interact with screen readers? We have been told by folks who use screen readers in the past that the chat is too distracting and they say it is not accessible to have it on.   
  
MARY WILLARD:   
I can jump in, this is Mary.   
  
You are totally right. I think it can be really tricky. I will say this with the caveat that I'm not an individual who relies on a screen reader. So, what I have heard though is... And that's why we started giving folks the keystrokes. I worked with a young man who did use screen readers and he said if he just pressed alt H on his computer, it would shut his chat. And then he would not listen to it.   
  
But now, that means that he cannot participate with what is going on. That is why it is important to read out every comment that is in the chat. Like Tim said, we really try to minimize it and create spaces for specific things.   
  
So, when I set up my peer support meetings, for example, I encourage people, they want to say hello, "I see Tim on here, I want to say hi," if you are going to do some chit chat, please private message the other person so that it is not filling up everybody else's chat.   
  
And we also really encourage folks, you know, if you want to share this question then use the Q and A. If you create spaces where the chat is not where everything goes, I think that makes it a little bit more streamlined.   
  
SIERRA ROYSTER:   
I wanted to add one more thing to that. One of the feedback pieces that we have heard is that it also depends on what kind of device the individual is using. We are hearing that screen readers are also doing updates like zoom. So, some devices are syncing with it and then there are new updates and it is not syncing. Definitely, just ask, put it out there that you will be using chat and if they have any questions, we always (indiscernable) even though we are reading it as well.   
  
So, that is another piece: knowing what type of device they are using and being mindful of those updates if anything changes. But I think we were told that a lot of updates are coming in 2020 due to make it more accessible across platforms for resume in the chat. So, hopefully, fingers crossed.   
  
TIM FUCHS:   
I will quickly add, this is Tim.   
  
There is a lot of discussion around what is accessible and what is not. This is a great example, it is one of the reasons why love this question. Is the chat in new technically accessible for people who use screen readers? Yes. Is it also a pain in the butt? Yes.   
  
I do not use a screen reader, that is something that I learned from friends and colleagues. But there is a blurry line. And I think it goes to what Mary and Sierra were saying. Sometimes there is variation and whether or not it is an access issue, convenience issue. An update issue, or an issue with somebody's technical know-how. But at the end of the day, you want your events to be accessible and convenient for people. I think of it kind of like a customer service type of thing as well. So, there is variation.   
  
By the way, you can very easily, if you have an account, you can check if you and your staff are using the latest version by going to the zooms website and using a test. I would encourage you to do that. We've experienced nightmare perplexing issues because we were using the updated version but there was sort of a problem. So, we found that if you are having glitching issues, delete Zoom from your machine, go to Zoom .us and download it. It solved the problem overnight. There are somethings like that that are not ideal, not your fault, but it is still good to know that. I see that we are over time. So, I'm actually, if you don't mind, I will go ahead and close us out.   
  
You can see the link to the evaluation form. As I mentioned at the top of the call, when I close the webinar, the evaluation form will actually open on your screen. Please take a moment to fill it out. If you truly do not have time to do that, the evaluation link was also shared with you in the materials email that you received before the event.   
  
I've really enjoyed... I do not often get to present on the panelists side. I really enjoy that, Mary and Sierra, I cannot thank you enough for sharing your experience. Brooke, thank you for moderating. Thank you for all of you, we've had over 200 people connected. Please pick us up on our offer, we are all providers, were happy to talk to you about the details. Richard and let us know if you have any questions. If you have a question after today's event, my email is very simple. It is just tim@ncis.org. Send me a question. If they cannot answer it, I will send it to the other panelists.   
  
And then check out those checklists. We will put this up on the archive page. You will also be able to access the recording and transcript of today's event. Since we are over time, I will shut this down quickly. Thank you for joining, I hope you have a great afternoon.   
  
Live captioning by Ai-Media

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