

REDBACK CASE *Study*

Sugar Research Australia



MANAGED WEBINAR

CASE STUDY

The Case

Name: Andrea Evers

Organisation: Sugar Research Australia (SRA)

Position: Marketing Manager

Industry: Association

The Challenge: Going digital without alienating our conservative members

The Solution: Redback Managed Webinars

The Situation

Sugar Research Australia (SRA) invests in and manages a portfolio of research, development and extension (RD&E) projects that drive productivity, profitability and sustainability for the Australian sugarcane industry. An industry-owned company, they are funded by a statutory levy paid by grower and milling businesses.

Traditionally, SRA used a blended approach in order to communicate with their key stakeholders. A combination of face to face seminars, online publications and hard copy newsletters were created on a regular basis. While this method proved to be effective, Marketing Manager, Andrea Evers says they needed to find another way to educate and engage their members – a way that would take up fewer resources both physically and financially. “Travelling to and from regional locations to present in a face to face capacity was becoming incredibly costly – we needed to find another way. In saying this, our industry is quite conservative and the majority of our members are 65 and over – we knew digital was the answer but we needed to ensure that we didn’t alienate our members.”

The Solution

In 2013 Andrea decided to launch a webinar pilot program aimed at members who were based in an office environment with easy access to the internet and who had a higher degree of technical knowledge. She also decided to use the Redback Managed Webinar solution to assist with the rollout. “We had never been involved in running webinars before so we wanted to make sure we had the support we needed. We were dealing with people who had never taken part in any conferencing whatsoever so in order for this to work having technical support and knowing that someone would pick up the phone at the other end were both critical elements.”

In light of this, a branded testing page was created to ensure that all registrants could test their system before the webinar and could be guaranteed access. “I definitely think that this contributed to the success of our series,” states Andrea. **“It meant that any technical issues were dealt with before the event which gave us, and our members, complete peace of mind.”**

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The Result

The first webinar attracted 44 registrations and feedback from those online was great – ‘we love the webinars, they’re informing us in a way that we want to be informed,’ one attendee said. Feedback from those joining the webinars is incredibly important for Andrea as it is how she measures her return on investment. “For us it’s all about the satisfaction of our members – if our levy payers are happy then that equals a successful outcome and tells me that we’re onto a good thing.”

The success of the webinar program also means that SRA will launch phase 2 of the series which will see them targeting younger members. “I’m excited to run more webinars and see where they go. However, I think I’ll stick to the managed solution – it’s easy and it’s nice to know someone is in the background looking after everything.”

When it comes to advice for those looking to launch a webinar series Andrea says it’s about having confidence in your decision. **“There is always going to be scepticism at first. It’s important to stand by your decision, cover all bases and ask the right questions – I truly believe that anyone starting to work with the Redback team should be confident in their expertise and exceptional service.”**

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