

REDBACK CASE *Study*

Mental Health Professionals Network (MHPN)



MANAGED WEBINAR

CASE STUDY

The Case

Name: Nicky Bisogni

Organisation: Mental Health Professionals Network (MHPN)

Position: Clinical Liaison of Professional Development

The Challenge: To emulate our face to face meetings

The Solution: Redback Managed Webinars

There's no stopping these guys – 24 events in and their most recent webinar attracted over 1400 registrations! So how do they do it? Nicky chats to Sara Gonzalez about the importance of creating relevant and interesting topics and tips on how to generate engaging content before, during and after your webinars.

Briefly explain what MHPN does...

The Mental Health Professionals Network (MHPN) is a project funded by the Department of Health and Ageing and we've been going for nearly five years now. We're a networking project that establishes and supports interdisciplinary mental health networks across Australia. So far we have established 450 community networks, of which approximately 40% are located in regional, rural and remote locations.

How did your webinar program begin?

Our core business is to fund face to face networking but we also have a website and an online portal. The Department of Health and Ageing indicated that they wanted us to do something with that portal and while we weren't too clear on what we wanted it to do, we knew it needed to be an online networking activity. We thought we might run some webinars that would emulate our face to face network meetings. We didn't know how successful they would be but 24 webinars later that initial idea has pretty much remained the same.

You have a panel of presenters on your webinar and in some cases they have been fairly high profile, have you ever experienced any reluctance in getting them on-board and what tips would you have for others?

I always make sure that I am very clear on what I want my presenters to do. I tell them right from the beginning that they will be participating in a case study discussion, something that's not foreign to them. I also try and minimise the technical requirements that will be required – I've got Redback on-board to take care of that so my job is to make sure my panel is focused on their clinical role and input as opposed to the 'online' aspect. Once our webinars are over I sometimes get that told that I am

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You provide case studies to your participants during the registration process, do you find that this, along with other tactics contribute to the high levels of interaction and engagement?

Yes, I definitely think it does. Giving them a case study as a predisposing activity is a great way of engaging them from the beginning and ensuring that once they join the webinar they are familiar with the content. The second thing we do during the registration process is ask people to submit questions that they would like to have answered by the panel. I then collate the questions, provide them to our facilitator and have him ask our panel on the night.

So it really is about managing and preparing as much as possible before the actual event?

Correct, we also do technical briefings for our presenters and facilitators prior to each webinar; this gets them familiar with the technology but perhaps more importantly, comfortable with each other as a panel. Most of the time our presenters haven't met before, they are virtually a virtual panel! Holding a briefing like this one week before the event allows them to engage with one another and really does make a difference.

So apparently your previous webinar attracted over 1400 registrants and had an attendance rate of around 60% – tell us your secrets!

I think we have a really simple idea that we haven't over complicated and I think that it really resonates with participants and presenters alike. Like Redback, we are very customer orientated which means we only ever offer our webinars after hours. We know that much of our audience are in private practices so business hours are a chance for them to make money and not necessarily engage in Professional Development. One of the other contributors to our success is that we have been very good at recruiting recognised leaders in areas of mental health.

There's a certain intimacy about the webinar platform that enables people to think that they are privy to what is really a special conversation and I think that really resonates with people. The geographical reach of webinars enables those who previously wouldn't have access to PD activities in the comfort of their own home and after hours. I think these things combined really are the secrets to our success.

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