



Reimagining Business and Leadership in an Online World

Presented for Seattle 4 Rotary – August 12, 2020 – by Steve Crandall, CEO, ProMotion Holdings

The trick today is “thinking inside the box.” The Zoom box. Success means learning how to identify your core competencies and reimagining delivery.



As CEO of ProMotion Holdings, which includes Prolumina Corporate Communications, Prolumina Litigation Communications, and Byers & Anderson, we’ve been providing remote solutions for decades. We’ve helped companies in the retail and wholesale, legal- including depositions and trials, educational, non-profit, and corporate and professional verticals successfully transition to online delivery. As you can see, it took a bit more technology in the old days. This was one of the first “broadcast” trials in the country.

Before we get into best practices and case studies, I’d like to share some of the benefits our clients have seen using remote solutions compared to pre-COVID delivery. While many people talk about “when things get back to normal,” I believe that we will not return to the way things were, but rather that this is the “new normal.” Not just because of the concerns about health and safety but because of so many other positive factors including, increasing comfort with technology, cost savings, and reduced stress including traffic, parking, and travel, among other benefits.

Let’s look at just one example—a typical attorney in Seattle making \$300 an hour. Assume they are in their office in the Columbia Tower and the deposition is taking place at Amazon and is scheduled to start at 9 am. Before the pandemic, it could have taken 45 minutes to an hour to go that far and find parking during rush hour. Getting back to their office at the end of the day could be just as challenging. Arguably that could have cost \$600 dollars just to get to and from the deposition. Attorneys, who have become familiar with the technology, have begun to realize that they can save \$600 dollars by switching to remote depositions that they can take from the comfort of their own office. For a profession that bills in 6-minute increments that is significant!

MAKING GENUINE CONNECTIONS IN A VIRTUAL WORLD

Zoom can be powerful tool for connecting with employees, members, customers, and prospects. In my own company, prior to the widespread adoption of Zoom meetings, we were lucky to get anywhere near our whole team together at our quarterly offsite meetings. Since the beginning of the crisis, we have held regular weekly all-hands meetings on Friday. Now these meetings have become something to which we all look forward. It makes us feel even more connected than our pre-COVID quarterly in-person. I personally feel like I see more of my staff, have a better understanding of the challenges and successes they face, and am more connected than ever.



Over the years, we have developed a number of in-person, organizationally important, rituals that reflect our culture and help our team bond. We haven’t been able to replicate all of these online but have begun to develop new Zoom rituals. One of these is our group hug that was started by our lead videographer. It has become an important ending to our meetings as a way to let each other know that we are here for each other during these particularly difficult times.

BEST PRACTICES USING TECHNOLOGY IN LEADERSHIP

Failsafe – For anyone who has hosted an important meeting, or been a featured guest using a personal or pro account, one of the greatest fears is that your internet, hardware, or software fails. Of course, we all know what happens then...everyone in the meeting gets disconnected! In order to prevent this, you will need a second email account and second device. This can be another laptop, tablet or even a phone. Zoom *webinars* allow for multiple hosts so this isn't an issue. In order to failsafe the meetings you host, all you need to do is log in on your second device and your second email. You should now see your two accounts in the gallery view. Once you transfer the host from your primary account to your failsafe, you're done. By having a second login, and then assigning that failsafe account the host, the meeting continues without interruption.

Sidebars v Breakout Rooms – In order to have fully secure breakout meetings, you could use the Zoom breakout rooms, but everyone will see that you have left the main room. Having a second Zoom meeting using another Zoom account allows your select group to meet incognito. Similar to above, you will need a second device. Unlike the failsafe setup, you can use the same email since this is a completely separate Zoom meeting. Potential uses would be, having a leadership room, a green room, or a technical room available to meet while the main room is running concurrently. Benefits over breakout rooms is that the leadership team or other participants don't disappear from view in the main room.

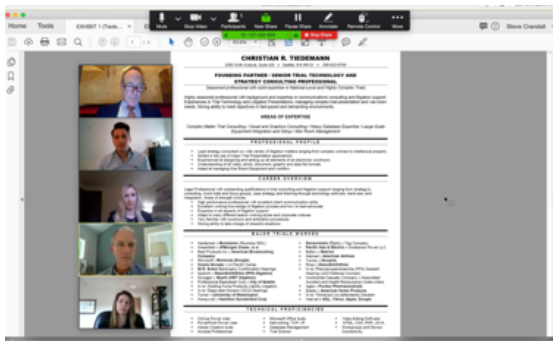
Screen Sharing – While built in Zoom screensharing is quite good, it can be difficult to quickly switch between different applications or views. Using a Blackmagic ATEM Mini, or another similar device, you can simplify screen sharing. When properly configured, the ATEM Mini is seen as just another webcam by Zoom and can be selected by toggling the up arrow next to "show or hide" your view in Zoom. This means anything that can be plugged into one of the 4 HDMI inputs can be immediately selected and shown in the Zoom room. You can even do fancy picture-in-picture effects not natively available in Zoom.

Greenscreen Branding – I use Zoom greenscreens to promote branding, showcase services, and support sales. I change my background depending on the audience. If I'm talking with a convention prospect, I might be in front of a prior convention my company supported—like the Rotary District Conference. If I'm discussing how we can help a wholesale and retail clothing company reimagine in-person sales meetings in New York City transition to online delivery, I might use a behind the scenes image of a Wolford clothing shoot we did.

CASE STUDIES

Retail & Wholesale – Union Bay

We have an ongoing contract with Union Bay to replace their traditional in-person sales meetings in New York, where they would introduce their seasonal clothing line to retail buyers, with virtual sales meetings streamed live from their Lake Union headquarters.

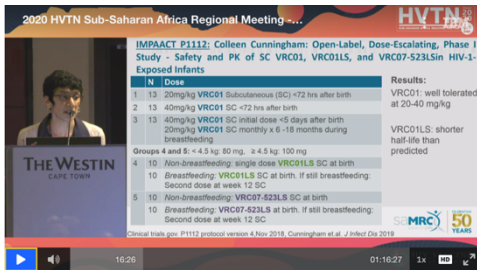
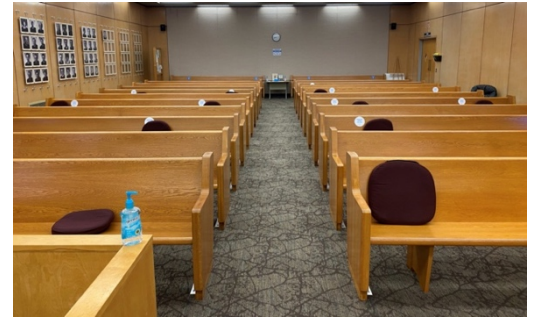


Legal – Remote Depositions

Our remote deposition business has exploded as a result of the pandemic. Holding depositions remotely allows discovery to continue while the deponent, attorneys, court reporter, and legal videographer remain safely at home or in their office. Exhibits can be shared, annotated, and marked—all virtually. As the example earlier showed, attorneys, court reporters, legal videographers and, even witnesses have come to appreciate the cost savings and convenience.

Legal – Digital Trials – Cox v DSHS

We provided remote technology support for Pierce County Superior Court where the Cox v DSHS trial just wrapped up resulting in a jury verdict of just under \$100M. This was one of the first jury trials in the country to resume after the pandemic effectively shut down the courts. We brought all the witnesses in remotely even allowing them to interact with exhibits in a way that the court and jurors could all see in real time.



Educational – Fred Hutch / WA Women’s Foundation

We have been the streaming partner for Fred Hutch and it’s highly secure and mission critical research conferences for a number of years. They were so pleased with our service that, in addition to conferences in Seattle and Washington, DC, they’ve brought us to stream their conferences from Cape Town and Johannesburg each year.

The conferences are streamed globally so researchers around the world could share research findings in a secure and collaborative environment. In addition to the live stream, we hosted the videos on demand (VOD) immediately after.

The WA Women’s Foundation puts on an educational program (Intersect) each year in the fall that is open to the public. Because they were uncertain if they could gather in person in November, they decided to host Intersect as a virtual event this year.

Non-Profit – Washington Festival and Events Association

We helped Washington Festival and Events Association flip their scheduled in-person convention to a successful virtual event. The exceptional part of this was that until the Governor issued the stay at home order on the Friday before the conference was scheduled to start Monday morning in Bellevue. We managed to pivot the entire conference to virtual in less than 72 hours.



Corporate & Professional – NSA

We just finished producing a virtual conference for the National Speakers Association’s annual convention. Its members are among the top keynote speakers in the country, so the production values and engagement were high. Some of their members earn well over \$1M dollars in speaking fees a year and expected outstanding results. We exceeded expectations.

So, what do these all have in common? They all identified their core competencies, competitive advantages, and value-added services and then thought “inside the box” to reengineer and reimagine service delivery. Even things that we might never have suspected could be done remotely.

EQUIPMENT

While it’s impossible to make recommendations that fit everyone’s needs, besides the basics—which include one or more devices—here is what I use: A Lume Cube (or two), a Blackmagic ATEM Mini or Mini Pro, a Baseus Bolt HUB for iPads and a greenscreen.

