Teleseminar Preparation Checklist

Three Weeks Before

- ❑ If recording the teleseminar for use in your affiliate support area, make arrangements with the recording company and test sound quality.
- ❑ Estimate the number of dial-in listeners, and obtain a teleconference number with general listener pass code.
- ❑ Obtain a special access code for the host and special guests. This allows you to mute listeners so background noise or interruptions are filtered out.
- ❑ Set up an auto-responder so you can register affiliates, track their numbers, and send them reminder messages.
- ❑ Compose and load reminder messages to be sent immediately and at two weeks, one week, two days, and one day before. Also plan to send a special email on the day of the teleseminar.
- ❑ Determine topics and order of discussion/presentation.
- ❑ Contact any potential special guests, interviewees, and backup attendees for availability. Be sure to confirm participation by telephone and in writing.
- ❑ Finalize the date and time of the teleseminar.

Two Weeks Before

- ❑ Sketch out on paper the schedule of the call, indicating how many minutes you wish to allow for each participant and discussion item. Keep the entire call to about 45-50 minutes.
- ❑ If using a recording service, confirm that a time slot is reserved for you on the appropriate date and that differences in time zones are correctly understood.
- ❑ Announce the date, time, and topic of the teleseminar in your affiliate support center, newsletter, and blog. Spell out the time in all relevant time zones. If seats are limited, ask affiliates to register via the auto-responder.
- ❑ Ask affiliates to submit questions via email or online form. Set up a special email address to collect email questions.
- ❑ Draft questions and send them to interviewees or guests. Ask them to send you a bio so you can draft introductions.
- ❑ Schedule a time to chat briefly on the telephone with guests/interviewees.
- ❑ Send a reminder to affiliates who have signed up to attend.
- ❑ Send an update to affiliates who have not yet signed up.

One Week Before

- ❑ Revise questions and topics and send to interviewees/guests. Be sure to add any questions that affiliates have submitted.
- ❑ Draft your basic script: greeting, introductions, announcements, closing, thank yous.
- ❑ Call interviewees and guests to see if they have received the topics/questions. Revise if needed.
- ❑ Contact your substitute guests/interviewees if it appears you'll need them.
- ❑ Send a reminder to affiliates who have signed up.
- ❑ Send an update to affiliates who have not yet signed up.

Two Days Before

- [ ] Confirm that the interview will be recorded at the correct time.
- [ ] Remind guests/interviewees of the date, time, telephone number and access code they will need to dial. Make sure everyone is clear on time zones. If you do not receive confirmation from them via email, call them.
- [ ] Refine the draft and timing of your script and make any necessary modifications to introductions or announcements.
- [ ] Send a reminder to affiliates who have signed up.
- [ ] Send an update to affiliates who have not yet signed up.

One day Before

- [ ] If you haven't received confirmation from your guests/interviewees, call them and/or arrange for substitutes.
- [ ] Send a reminder to affiliates who have signed up.
- [ ] Send an update to affiliates who have not yet signed up.
- [ ] Rehearse the teleseminar. Time your introductions, announcements, questions, and closings to make sure you allow enough time for guest answers, as well as questions from affiliates.

Teleseminar Day

- [ ] Send final reminders to all affiliates who signed up.
- [ ] Double-check recording and telephone number pass codes.
- [ ] Organize any affiliate questions that were submitted, and make notes about your answers.

Script Tips

- Start by introducing yourself and thanking attendees. When introducing guests, thank them for being on the call, then describe their qualifications. Avoid long introductions. Instead, give your guest a moment to talk about his/her background and experience.

- If the teleseminar is a question/answer session, lay some ground rules. Answer pre-submitted questions first, then open it up to follow up questions. If it's a free-form session, limit questioners to 30 seconds, and let everyone know how much time is left at 10-15 minute intervals.

- The best seminars flow like everyday conversation. To make an interview more conversational, keep questions short and open-ended (not simply yes/no). Have follow up questions prepared to keep things flowing. To keep affiliate question/answer sessions flowing, have listeners send questions in advance via email so you can organize them into a logical flow.

- Don't be afraid to ask guests or participants to clarify or expand if something they said isn't clear. Keep a pen and paper handy to jot down ideas for follow up questions. Some guests will answer a question before you can ask it. Either ask them to expand, or move on to a new question.

- Try to keep the call to about 45 minutes. When you contact guests/interviewees, tell them exactly how much time you have allocated for them. Send them questions in advance so they can prepare focused answers.

- If a large number of affiliates are participating, have them submit questions via email to prevent the conversation from going off on a tangent. If you record question/answer calls, offer them to all affiliates. This way you can avoid repeating the same material in each call.

- Leave time for guests/interviewees to mention key points that you may not have covered in your questions. If you don't have time to cover all the questions from your affiliates, reserve them for a future call and be sure to schedule it for the near future.