Adobe Connect best practices

Technology alone does not guarantee successful online learning or collaboration among faculty and students. However, when you leverage it properly, technology can offer huge possibilities for improving communication and learning.

This document identifies a collection of best practices for using Adobe Connect. You’ll see some innovative ways to use Adobe Connect in education and explore a process for successful online teaching and collaboration.

Plan for success

Create a master learning plan before developing content, creating courses, or scheduling classes and meetings.

- Start with a simple but flexible learning plan you can modify as you become more familiar with Adobe Connect. You will undoubtedly find ways to incorporate this program’s capabilities into your learning plan.
- Include a list of presentations and courses you plan to develop (for the semester, quarter, or class).
- Plan a directory structure for storing presentations and courses in Adobe Connect so you can easily see which files pertain to each class.
- Identify your target audiences and develop goals and learning objectives accordingly.
- Create a development calendar showing presentations, courses, live meeting sessions, and meeting content that you will develop.
- Help faculty and administrators work together to define roles and create a network of content producers, online class or meeting leaders, and Adobe Connect administrators. Faculty usually don’t want to be burdened with setting up and managing user accounts, online content, courses, curriculums, events, meetings, and seminars.
- Assign these tasks to a qualified learning coordinator or assistant who is a member of the Adobe Connect Administrators group.
- When planning an online class or meeting, test the performance and pacing of your presentations by setting up a “participant” computer nearby. This allows you to see what the remote participants will see during the online meeting or training session.

Make class presentations available to a wider audience by using Adobe Presenter

Using Microsoft PowerPoint and Adobe Presenter, you can publish media-rich Adobe Presentations your audience can view by using any standard web browser. Publish the Adobe Presentation to your Adobe Connect Content library and then send learners the URL or link for viewing.

- Make sure each slide stands on its own. You will not be present to answer questions when students view your Presenter presentations.
- Narrate your presentations whenever possible.
- Use Adobe Flash to create conceptual animation designed to aid communication.
- Include PowerPoint speaker notes that contain the text of the narration. Because these notes are visible from within the self-running presentation, your presentation will be more accessible to hearing-impaired users or to users without sound on their computers.

Create online courses, curriculums, and virtual classrooms by using Adobe Connect Training

Using Adobe Connect Training, you can mix and match reusable online learning content such as Adobe Presentations, PDF documents, and Adobe Captivate simulations to produce complete online courses and curriculums.
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- Create reusable online content and then add this content to the Adobe Connect Content library. This reusable content can be added to persistent online virtual classrooms or meeting room layouts.
- Include presentation quizzes. Quizzes offer users a chance to check their comprehension, and they help faculty measure the success of courses.
- Avoid changing a quiz once you make your presentation available. Doing so could give some users an unfair advantage.

Extend the reach of your classroom by using Adobe Connect virtual classrooms or meeting rooms

Educators are expanding the reach of their lectures to reach a globally dispersed audience. Using the Adobe Connect Training application, you can set up reusable virtual classrooms and then lead classes in real time over the Internet. You can use features such as text chat, application sharing, polling, and small group breakout rooms to maintain interactivity and student participation. If you have not licensed the Adobe Connect Training application, you can also use Adobe Connect meeting rooms as the virtual classroom.

For virtual classrooms or meetings where each participant is using a different computer to connect:
- Suggest that students review reading assignments or other materials prior to class to promote greater understanding, discussion, or collaboration during the virtual class.
- Send participants a list of ground rules for participating in the virtual class.
- Create an attendance sheet of enrolled participants to determine when all or most of your registered students have arrived.
- Preload materials (content) into the virtual classroom before class.
- Encourage student participation by using chat and polling features.
- Allow for small-group discussion and collaboration by using virtual classroom breakout rooms.
- To avoid technology barriers to successful communication, arrange a conference call as a backup or alternative to using the built-in Adobe Connect voice feature (VoIP).
- Promote students to the role of Presenter, allowing them to be more active in the session.

For virtual classes or meetings where an entire class will share a single computer to connect with a remote individual or group:
- Prepare the physical classroom to limit distractions such as noises, phones, and visitors.
- Establish ground rules with the class or group before the session begins.
- Project the computer monitor to a larger viewing screen.
- Consider using a handheld (wireless) microphone that can be passed around the class for increased participation.
- If using a video camera, establish a wide shot of the entire class or consider setting up a “hot seat” in front of the computer video camera or microphone and calling on participants to interact one at a time. If creating a video wide shot of the entire class, make sure the classroom has adequate lighting.

Collaborate with other faculty, students, or parents by using Adobe Connect meetings

Adobe Connect meetings aren’t just for leading classes. Faculty from around the world can meet online to share ideas and research.
- Hold faculty meetings, peer reviews, online conferences, and more.
- Schedule group sessions or private office hours by creating your office in an Adobe Connect meeting room, then wait for students or parents to join the meeting.
- Conduct tutoring sessions between professors and teaching assistants inside an Adobe Connect meeting room.
• Schedule online portfolio reviews so students can share their work online and receive feedback from a larger audience.

• Although you can promote participants to the role of Presenter beforehand, a good idea is to designate only one meeting leader.

• Have other faculty enter the meeting as participants and then promote them to the Presenter role as needed from within the meeting room.

• To avoid technology barriers to successful communication, arrange a conference call as a backup or alternative to using the built-in Adobe Connect voice feature (VoIP).

Promote student workgroups by using Adobe Connect meetings and virtual classromms

Using document sharing and Adobe Connect breakout rooms in an Adobe Connect virtual classroom or meeting room, students can present and share their work with other meeting participants.

When leading a virtual class or meeting, use the breakout feature to divide students into smaller workgroups during an online class or meeting. Smaller groups can interact privately and then rejoin the larger group for follow-up discussions.

Manage large and small collaborative learning events by using Adobe Connect Events

In Adobe Connect, the Event Management tab enables users to manage the full life cycle of large or small events, including registration, invitations, reminders, and reporting. You can use Event Management with meetings, seminars, presentations, and training.

An event generally involves many participants, so it requires careful pre-event planning and post-event management. For example, event hosts may want to accept or reject participants after they register. Because the appearance of the event may be critical, hosts may want to apply special university or college branding.

Conduct one-time meetings with non-collaborative large groups by using Adobe Connect Seminars

With Adobe Connect Seminars, users can conduct a special kind of meeting. Like a meeting, a seminar is conducted online in real time and provides a virtual room in which a presenter can show slides or multimedia presentations, share screens, chat, and broadcast live audio and video.

A seminar takes place only once and is conducted within an Adobe Connect meeting room.

Adobe Connect seminars differ from meetings in key ways. A meeting normally has no more than 10 people and can be recurring. A seminar includes a minimum of 50 participants and usually involves little or no audience participation. Also, seminars can be created only in a shared area, while meetings can be created either in a shared area or in a user folder.

You could consider holding a seminar when

• You are hosting at least 50 participants.
• The meeting is a one-time event.
• The meeting is non-collaborative, with little audience participation or interaction.

Gather research data by using Adobe Connect polls and surveys

You can design polls for gathering information at various times during a virtual class or meeting session. Polls offer an excellent way to gather information about enrolled learners and meeting participants. You can also use Adobe Presenter to add survey questions to a presentation. Surveys prompt students for feedback at key points in the presentation.

• Use reports to view detailed information on course and meeting survey and polling results.
• Use a combination of surveys and quizzes to create pre- and post-training assessments during Adobe Connect Training courses.
• Use a combination of surveys and polls to create pre- and post-meeting assessments during Adobe Connect virtual classes and meetings.

Assess knowledge and learning performance by using Adobe Connect reports

Adobe Connect offers a wide range of reports for evaluating users, courses, and meetings. These reports offer you the most value if you have sufficient data to evaluate.

• If you plan to use a presentation as learning content in an Adobe Connect course, be sure to create a comprehensive quiz that maps directly to the learning objectives of your course. This allows you to measure student performance accurately by running detailed user and course reports after class.
• During virtual classes or meetings, be sure to include several carefully written polls.
• Design polls as pop quizzes or course exams to administer in a virtual class or meeting. Use the results to measure success by running detailed reports.

By following these simple guidelines and suggestions, you can maximize your investment in Adobe Connect, avoid common mistakes, and be quickly on your way to successful online teaching and collaboration.