Rethinking Conferences and PD Events

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Leadership Institute
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What's Your Story?
Offerings? Frequency? Successes? Challenges?

CEC’s Professional Development Needs Assessment
- Conducted via third-party consultant, Dec. 8-22, 2017
- Sample audience included:
  - Administrator
  - Teachers
  - College/University students
  - Paraeducators
  - Higher Education personnel
  - Early Interventionists/related service providers
- Study sample comprised 49,784 records | 6.2% response rate
  - CEC members
  - Non-members
  - Lapsed members
Respondent Demographics

Survey questions were unique to respondent demographic, and spanned topics from PD topic, delivery, format preferences to licensure/recertification requirements.

- Teachers made up the largest portion of respondents (34%), State/District Administrators a close second (28%), and “Other” (including college/university faculty, educational diagnosticians, and transition coordinators) third (22%).

Respondent Demographics

- The majority of teachers responding had been teaching for more than 20 years, with the average tenure just over 14 years
- Administrator respondents averaged about 11 years experience as administrators, with an average of 11 years of additional experience as teachers
- Almost 90% of survey respondents were female

Response Themes

- Those who preferred “live” course cited that the interactivity inherent to live courses were the primary reason for this preference
- Those who preferred “online or blended” courses cited varied reasons (self-paced, decreased out-of-class time, etc.)
Response Themes

PD Topic Preferences: Top 5

- Developing Meaningful Behavior Intervention plans (58.3%)
- Specially Designed Instruction (52%)
- Developing and Documenting Student Plans (48%)
- Collaboration and Co-Teaching (43.6%)
- Supervising Paraprofessionals (42%)

* Most common “other” response was variations of “Family engagement/Working collaboratively with families”

Response Themes

Acquiring PD

- Nearly 9 in 10 respondents said their state, province or district allows them to obtain PD hours from outside agencies (like CEC or its Divisions/Units) to count toward annual recertification requirements
- School or district in-services/state conferences were the most common PD activities cited in the past 3 years.

- Who pays for PD costs (registration, travel, etc.)?
  - The school/district pays for all PD costs=34%
  - Respondent pays for all PD costs= 30%

Using the Assessment Data

As a component in PD/content planning

- Historical attendance data
- Indicators of interest in topic areas across CEC's products/services
- Association industry trends & best practices
- Emerging trends in Special Education
Scan of PD Strategies: Association
Report by the Association for Learning & Technology (2017) : 237 survey responses from professional associations on PD strategies
• 92.6% use technology for learning
  • Webinars: 91.4%
  • Asynchronous e-learning courses: 72.8%
• Emerging learning trends
  • Flipped classes, microlearning (highest adoption rate in 2017-2018) mobile learning, micro credentials (10%), and MOOCs (under 10%)
• Almost half (48%) have increased net revenue from PD offerings
  • 70% offer PD to support a credential
• Business models for PD divided: PD as a revenue stream or benefit of membership

What Does it All Mean?
How can we use this information in planning PD/Conferences?
  • Marketing: communicating differently with different audiences
  • Membership/Value: better understanding member needs and priorities
  • PD/Convention: clear priorities of content and needs across our audiences

Making the most of this information
What is your Division/Unit doing that mirrors/differs from other Associations?
### General PD Design
- Have a Program Concept, and make sure every component of the program contributes to your concept (know your brand)
- Communicate your program concept to potential attendees
- Relay your concept to your speakers/presenters from the CFP → execution
- Lay out expectations/concept in CFP
- Reimagine concept in speaker prep efforts
- Content & presentation reviews
- Helpful checklist for selecting/planning sessions and program content:
  - Relevant?
  - Current?
  - Tailored?
  - Professional?
  - Engaging?

### Tips for PD Planning
- Understand adult learning principles and prepare others to do the same
- Adults need to know what's in it for them (relevancy)
- Adults bring their unique personal and professional experience to learning (individualized)
- Adults need solutions to real problems (actionable strategies and resources)
- Adults retain better when knowledge is gained through experiential learning
- Motivate volunteers to lend content expertise, not conference/event planning or execution
- After session selection and prep, there's still more to do.
  - Design evaluations that give planners the information they need most.

### How to Best Deliver Your PD
- **Costs**
  - For the attendee
  - For your Unit/Division (HR, design, travel, space, F&B, onsite execution, webinar platform fees, presenter honorariums, etc.)
- **Time commitment for staff/volunteers**
  - CEC convention has approximately 125 volunteers, 6 temps, and 20 staff on-site, plus over 500 volunteers pre-convention
  - Webinars possible with 1 staff manager, a presenter and marketing support
- **PDHs/CEUs**
  - Does your state/province (or the host state) allow attendees to claim PDHs?
- **Content**
  - Which delivery format best complements the content and learning goals?
**Live vs. Online**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Live</th>
<th>Online (Webinar)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Typically ½ or full day of learning</td>
<td>Typically one hour in length</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best for group learning &amp; interaction</td>
<td>Best for individual learning &amp; convenience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best for deep-dive learning</td>
<td>Best for focused, actionable learning (or calls to action)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typically higher investment for attendees &amp; org (flexible)</td>
<td>Typically lower investment for attendees &amp; org (more flexible delivery options)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Webinar Planning**

- Business models:
  - What do your members need most?
  - What content can be effective in a webinar format?
  - What resources can you provide to continue the learning?
- Selecting the right platform for your size/needs/purpose:
- Determine ONE person to manage the webinar process:
- Registration/communication management:
- Marketing plan:
- Speaker management:
- Customer service & troubleshooting:

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**Selecting a Platform/Subscription Plan**

- Attendee volume → Is the platform priced by “seats”?
- Registration functionality → What do you need?
- Pricing plan → Monthly/annually/by event
- Time limits on events
- Recording capabilities
- In-webinar chat/attendee communication options
- Evaluation capabilities
- Analytics & reporting options → What do you need to know?

This list and comparisons of popular 2019 platforms on your handout.
**Tips & Notes: Registrations**

How will registration be handled? Directly on platform or through another system?

**CEC trends:**
Marketing success: Emails 3 weeks and 1 week to a few days out
Week of = registration peaks
CEC average attendance rates:
- Free webinars: 35-40% of registrants
- Paid webinars: 80-85%

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**Running the Webinar**

Determine ONE person to moderate/manage the webinar
Schedule a practice-run (iron out the plan with presenter—webcams, slide advancement, etc.)
Decide when slides/handouts are due
Determine how attendee questions will be handled (by whom, chat box only, etc.)
Have a back-up of slides & videos
Know if captioning (or other accommodations) are needed
Log in early (troubleshooting)
Evaluate program/Follow-up with attendees

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**Who’s seen a “Bad Webinar?”**

Tell us your horror stories...
Webinar Best Practices

**DO:**
- Limit your presentation time (approximately 1 hour)
- Test-drive your presentation
- Remind participants to mute themselves
- Close programs that have alerts
- Have handouts available
- Be prepared for technical questions

**DON'T:**
- Speak too quickly/rush
- Have too much text on slides
- Expect too much interactivity
- Forget accessibility needs
- Forget about good adult learning practices
- Neglect to evaluate all facets of the webinar

Resources

- Velvet Chainsaw Midcourse Corrections blog: [https://velvetchainsaw.com/](https://velvetchainsaw.com/)

Questions?