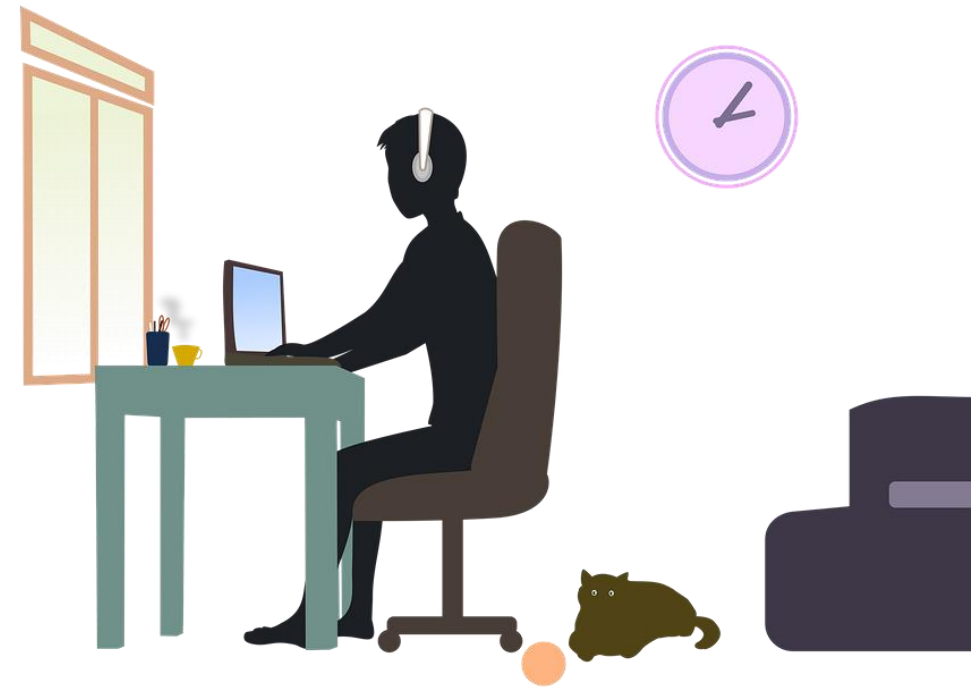Technology & Communications Webinar
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Remote Communications Tools

Your Hosts

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LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Defining Your Needs

- **What business needs to be done? What can wait?**
- **Do we need to provide a way for attendees to be included in the dialogue?**
  - Does that have to be verbally? Does it need video?
  - Can it be email or text, or can it be either?
- **Do we need to provide a voting mechanism?**
- **Do we need to present or share materials?**
- **Are we offering options for phone and computer-based participation?**
- **Are we making accommodations for members as needed?**
  - Have you accounted for members with hearing or vision impairments?
  - Have you accounted for members who do not have reliable access to a computer or internet connection?

Governance

- **According to Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, virtual meetings (such as teleconferencing, videoconferencing, and electronic or online voting) are not allowed unless provided for in the bylaws.**
- **Carefully review your League's bylaws and the specific wording around meetings and items that need to be voted on.**
  - What flexibility in location, format, or timing is offered?
  - Is this flexibility explicitly stated?
  - Are there provisions for emergencies or extraordinary circumstances?
  - What power is given to the President, Board, or members to alter the rules?
- **If a virtual meeting is not explicitly accounted for in your bylaws,**
  - Review the nonprofit laws of the state your League is incorporated in for further guidance.
    - These can usually be found on your Secretary of State's website or by googling "[State]'s Nonprofit laws.
  - Use BoardSource for further guidance or to "Ask An Expert"

Governance

- **Once you have determined that a virtual meeting is allowed or received the necessary permission to allow it:**
- It is essential to create a system that upholds all rules and laws around credentialing, voting, and presentation and debate of materials.
- Failure to do so could result in the meeting and all business conducted during it to be challenged as invalid.
- When considering technology, it is imperative to track and record
  - Quorum,
  - Voting delegate status
  - Votes
- It is important to allow for a means for all delegates to share their voice

Platforms: Free or Included

- **Many cell phones allow you to conference up to 5 people together.** The exact number varies by phone, carrier, and operating system.
- **You can have up to 32 people on Facetime and 50 on Facebook Messenger**
- **Google Hangouts** lets you video chat with up to 25 people.
- **Ring Central's** free plan lets you host unlimited 2 person video calls and up to 100 people for a 40-minute call
- **Zoom's** free plan lets you host unlimited 2 person video calls and up to 100 people for a 40-minute call.
- **Skype** is still great. Many of us have used skype to stay in touch with friends and family and it can still be used for internet-only "calls" at no cost for up to 50 people.

Platforms: Paid

- **GoToWebinar** (https://www.gotomeeting.com/). This service starts at $49/month per account and increases depending on what you need.
- **Ring Central** (https://www.ringcentral.com/) Ring Central's paid services is $14.99/month per account and goes up from there. It is well suited to meetings of 4-24 people but can handle thousands.
- **Zoom** (http://zoom.us). Zoom's paid service is ~$14.99/month per account and goes up from there depending on what you need.
- **Microsoft Teams** (formerly Skype for Business). If you are already and Office365 user, Teams can be a great option for up to 250 participants. It does not offer as many controls for larger events but is great for 15-50 people.

Other Options

- **Google Meets.** If you are a G-Suite user, you may have access to Google Meets which is the paid equivalent of Google Hangouts.
- **Join.me** has a low cost video and conference call options that ~$10/month may meet your needs. It is very similar to Zoom.
- **AnyMeeting** free and low cost webinars
- **FreeConferenceCall.com** (free teleconferencing; dial in numbers are not toll free). Due to high demand, it is recommended you start meetings at :05, :10 or15 minutes after the hour.
- **FreeScreenSharing.com** (free online meetings; uses freeconferencecall.com for audio)
- **ooVoo** (video chat for small groups)

Bottom Line

- Do as much as you can with the free or included services and via email/texting
- Use Ring Central, Join Me, or Zoom as a paid service
- If you participate in Tech Soup you may get discounts
- Use FreeConfrenceCall.com if you have folks with unreliable internet
- Be flexible. All of these systems are stressed and may become unreliable

Best Practices

- **Mute yourself if you are not talking.** Even small noises while you are not talking can degrade the audio quality of the person who is talking.
- **Use a microphone** or consider dialing in with a phone to improve your audio. Microphones on computers are often of very low quality.
- **If you are on video be aware of what is behind you.**
  - If you have a window behind you probably be a silhouette and not visible.
  - A high traffic area behind you may have children, pets, and housemates wandering through.
  - The art on your wall may say more than you are comfortable with in a professional context.
- If you are recording you **must verbally inform all participants that the conversation is being recorded**. Laws vary by state but it is a best practices regardless of the law.

Security Best Practices

- **Use waiting rooms.** Zoom and others have now enabled waiting rooms by default. This means the meeting host(s) have to move participants from the waiting room into the meeting. This helps prevent "Zoombomming".
- **Don't publish links/codes to your meetings on public sites.** Any one with a link can access your meeting. Using waiting rooms helps but not making the link available is best.
- **Know how to kick people out of you meeting.** Even with waiting rooms you may find an unwelcome guest in your meeting. Make sure you know how to remove someone.
- **Consider disabling file sharing and chat.** Disabling these features can reduce the mischief that can be done but these features can be valuable for working groups. You should make this decision on a case-by-case basis.

Social and Community Best Practices

- A little grace goes a long way!
  - Things will go wrong. Dogs will bark. People will forget to mute.
- The ideal conversational combination consists of four people.
  - Beyond four people virtual meetings need increasing structure including
    - Using the chat box for questions
    - Establishing an order to go around and solicit comments
- Consider how to make this meeting more than just a business meeting. This period is difficult and stressful for all of us and the community aspect of League gatherings is more important than ever. Ideas include:
  - Speeches from your League president or other board members
  - A keynote address or panel of speakers on League-related topic
  - Virtual networking hours
  - Celebratory videos or presentations

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Public Presentations / Events

Content

- Watch **lwv.org/covidguidance** for LWVUS-created presentations and resources
- Virtual High School Voter Registration Lesson: powerpoint presentation with notes for League leaders to present or to provide to teachers
- Tool kits and actions kits on LMS
- Best practices for election events coming soon!

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Public Presentations / Events

Tools

- Will you have multiple presenters?
  - Many of the meeting platforms Jason described: GoToWebinar, Zoom Video Webinars
  - Zoom + YouTube or Facebook Live
  - Lightstream Studio + YouTube or Facebook Live
- Will you just have one presenter?
  - Any of the above
  - Facebook Live, Periscope (Twitter), Instagram Live
  - Pre-recorded video

Resources

1. Go lwv.org/covidguidance
2. This webinar will also be available on the League Management site

Our Next Topic