

Online and hybrid seminars

With Prof. Dr. Christian Johner

Transcript

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Medical Device Insights, a podcast by the Johner Institute for medical device manufacturers, authorities and notified bodies.

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Does it also move from web conference to web conference?

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Are you already tired of go-to meetings, Zoom, Google Meets, and Microsoft

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Meet teams.

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At least that's how we feel and many suffer from the so-called Zoom Fatigue.

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In this podcast today, we want to shed light on what things go wrong and can go wrong in these online and hybrid conferences and how you can manage to get applause in the end from the good flow of these communication settings.

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I am Christian Johner, Director of the Johner Institute and I would like to welcome you to this podcast.

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Yes, so this is about hybrid seminars and I would like to briefly tell you how we have taken this path to these hybrid seminars, what experiences we have gained as providers, but also as participants in this format and what tips I would like to give you so that it does not happen.

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It started with us, as probably with everyone, with Corona.

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In March, I had my last risk management seminar in person.

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A week later, none of this was possible anymore.

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We had the shutdown.

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We then switched to online within a week.

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At that time, we used go-to meetings and the participants were very happy because we reacted so quickly and the seminar was not cancelled.

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But we wanted to develop it further and that affected the technology.

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So we then bought better cameras, better microphones and better headsets.

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But we were still not completely happy with that, because we wanted to create a good video signal, so not 1, where you then drag the speaker's desktop or we wanted to achieve that we see the presentation at the same time, but maybe also the speaker in Picture in Picture Mode.

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And that was the time when the first video editing desk found its way here.

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We were already quite far along and probably further along than most others, because what we observed frightened us.

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So we were in web conferences, because he couldn't log in at all or if you wanted to log in yourself, then somehow the program was not available.

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There were speakers where the image or sound froze.

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Some speaker PCs were then also more concerned with synchronizing a cloud service somehow.

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The computers then reacted correspondingly slowly.

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Embarrassing moments, perhaps included, when some e-mails from the wife were just coming in, which

were then nicely recognizable in the pop-up window.

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So, the list of embarrassing situations, technical disasters is almost endless and more than 40 of these embarrassments, mistakes and problems

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I have summarized it for you in the latest technical article.

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So take advantage of it, because you can, so to speak, create a perfect checklist of what you want to pay attention to if you want to hold web conferences, seminars or other meetings yourself.

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For us, this continued, because the online seminars were not enough, because we not only offer seminars, but also courses of study and with Corona

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After a while, it was possible for us to hold courses of study on a small scale again, but only on a small scale.

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That means not with all 18 participants that we are allowed to accept here per course of study or who are allowed to participate here.

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And so we now had the situation that we have participants on site and participants who did not want to come, were not allowed to come or could not come, i.e. did not want to, for example, because they did not expose themselves to the danger.

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who were not allowed to come, for example because of the employer, or because we were not allowed to handle 18 participants here, or who could not participate, for example because they had taken over the homeschooling.

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So we were in a situation where we had participants both on-site and remotely, and that was the moment when we developed the technology.

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So it came to beside the

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Video editing desk, also a second camera, a second microphone was added so that we could record not only the speakers, but also what was spoken in the room.

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We were also lucky that we had a student with us, i.e. in our part-time master's program, who also enjoyed operating the technology.

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But we then continued to learn, we found, for example, that what takes place in the room is for the remote participants

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is not so well perceptible, because the room microphone transmits everything and thus all the background noise and that makes it extremely exhausting for remote participation, then always filtering it out, also to compensate for the volume differences, so to speak, mentally, that people who are further away from the microphone in the back of the room are harder to understand than people, who sit right next to the microphone.

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The whole move of chairs was the other way around

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Leafing through documents, then again an accompanying or a noise signal, which simply requires a lot of effort from the remote participants and also leads to faster fatigue.

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That's why we have further developed the technology, then set up intercom stations for each participant, as you may know it from the Bundestag, so that really only the respective signal of the questioner was then recorded.

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We have created one for the

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Remote participants also introduced movable cameras, so that we really always see the person who is speaking.

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In other words, the lecturers who also move, who walk to a whiteboard, who sit in front of their computer, who want to move around the room, but also the participants who sit in different places.

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So with 2 movable cameras, which then depict it perfectly.

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We have also invested in a better sound system so that we can live in the

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the whole room can be heard very well, then the questioners of the remote participants can also be heard and they can integrate much better, because that's the big challenge of involving this remote team as well as the people who are on site.

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We are now at the next iteration stage and it is now precisely about this integration.

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For example, for the speakers we will

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Have one monitor where you can then see the remote participants in the respective conferencing tool and a second monitor that the participants in the room can then see in order to be able to perceive their remote colleagues.

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This means that everyone can see the remote participants from their seat and can then involve them much better.

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If such a monitor were only to stand in the back of the speaker, for example, then he runs the risk of forgetting the remote participants, because the face-to-face participants are much more present for him.

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But it won't end with the technology.

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We are also continuing to work on the didactics, because, as I described earlier, it is more exhausting for the remote participant in particular to listen, to filter out signals, to anticipate what is happening in the room, despite good sound and then suitable camera signals, we have started to

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to do shorter sprints.

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So that means 2030 minutes and then another break and then the next sprint, so that they have a better opportunity to recover.

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And we are also calling on them even more intensively to really cooperate.

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Because part of this problem cannot be solved by technology or by didactics, or only partially by didactics.

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This is the high degree to which remote participants are distractable.

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if someone is sitting in the room on site, there is a certain social pressure.

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Yes, the neighbor, the speaker, who prevent or make it less likely that someone somehow still has a phone call.

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So of course that won't work in the next room now, but making e-mails or somehow doing a job at the same time.

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Everything is possible at home.

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Yes, you have to turn off the camera and no one notices anything anymore.

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And this temptation harms everything, it harms the remote listener or listener, because they simply don't get everything anymore.

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But it also harms the team.

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because it means that the interaction no longer works so well.

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And these are not things that we cannot change now through technology, but only through agreed rules of the game.

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This includes shorter sprints, so that they have to make their phone call afterwards, which can then simply happen.

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They are in the domestic situation, i.e. that you can take care of the children again for a short time, but also in the request to let the camera in, so that we really work together.

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So, these are the next steps that we are taking right now, about which I also wanted to inform you now.

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If you would like to see it live for yourself, you are cordially invited.

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So, of course, you can participate directly in such a hybrid seminar, register for it or you can come by for a taster day.

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So, these are the days where you can study for free.

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They are only relatively rare, because we only

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18 places and only want to take one taster per study day with them.

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But if you want to see that or if you are even interested in your personal or professional development, then you can combine the pleasant and the useful.

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Just come by here.

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Yes, these are perhaps a few tips and thoughts on the subject of hybrid seminars.

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I think that you are doing so

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with good technology, with good didactics and with good rules of the game, which I have also summarized for you in this article, will be able to conduct efficient and effective conferences, web meetings, seminars, regardless of whether they are online or hybrid seminars.

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That was it until today.

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Thank you for joining us.

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See you next week.