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Welcome to the New York Network and to the world of satellite videoconferencing - an interactive medium that gives you the ability to reach audiences across the state, country, or even the world - simultaneously!

Over the past decade, the New York Network (NYN) has produced and delivered thousands of live videoconferences throughout New York State and beyond. If you're interested in delivering an effective message with lasting impact, this videoconference handbook is a great place to start. When you're ready to take your project to the next step, our dedicated and experienced staff will assist you in planning and coordinating your first program. NYN is a powerful communications resource that's ready to work with you to create an effective videoconference. If you're ready to learn more, turn the page and let's begin!

Why Videoconference?

Videoconferencing can be described as a communications tool that shrinks time and distance. Unlike a traditional conference, which requires participants to meet at a designated (often remote) site, videoconferencing allows registrants to participate from many different locations at the same time.

Typically, a presenter or panel of presenters deliver a message “live” from an NYN studio to multiple receive sites simultaneously. Each site has access back to the studio through a toll-free phone number, allowing participants to interact with the presenters on the air. This interactive format (one-way video, two-way audio) combines the dynamism of television and the efficiency of the phone call to provide a powerful, cost-effective means of reaching large groups.

Videoconference Advantages:

- **interactivity**—not a passive medium
- **immediacy**—reaches multiple sites simultaneously
- **expediency**—top-level experts can reach wide audiences
- **longevity**—broadcast can be taped for future use
- **cost effectiveness**—\$\$’s saved in time and travel

Components of a “TYPICAL” Videoconference

Program Open

A well-produced open is a great way to grab your audience’s attention from the very start! An open is a short (20-30 second) pre-taped segment identifying your videoconference by title and sponsoring institution(s), usually accompanied by background music.

Welcome and Introductions

At the conclusion of your program open the scene shifts to the “**live**” studio where it’s customary for the moderator to say a few words of greeting, introduce any guests in the studio, and acquaint participants with videoconference logistics, handout materials, and the program agenda. An experienced **moderator** is a **key** ingredient in producing an effective program, and we’ll discuss the moderator’s role in more detail later on.

Content Presentation

Information is presented to participants at the receive sites. Depending on your topic and audience, this can be accomplished in a variety of ways.

Roll-ins

Usually similar to a “news report” from the field, a roll-in can illustrate content in a “real world” context. Pre-production of roll-ins is essential and may be expensive. A roll-in could also be a presentation by an expert who is unable to be “live” in the studio.

Panel Discussion

Expert presenters deliver and discuss material and field questions from remote sites.

Live Satellite Feeds

When you must have a leader in the field in your program, but he or she is unable to travel to Albany, it is possible that a “live” satellite feed could be arranged. Again, advance planning is paramount and the cost of a live feed may be relatively high.

Site Activities(optional)

Your videoconference doesn't have to be passive viewing experience. Many types of training can involve on-site activity sessions during which participants brainstorm, work on problems, repeat for themselves exercises they've seen demonstrated on-air, etc. These can be short, participatory sessions. If your videoconference involves a live audience, both they and viewers at remote sites can participate in these activities simultaneously. Obviously, it's very important to make sure site facilitators are prepared to lead these sessions.

Live Audience Participation (from the broadcast studio)

Having a studio audience (whether large or small) can add a great deal to your program, and NYN staff will be happy to discuss this option with you.

Break

If your videoconference lasts more than 90 minutes, you may want to give both your presenters and those watching a short "stretchbreak." A break is also necessary if you have different studio presenters planned for different portions of your show, or if you are changing sets. Break time can be utilized efficiently by having participants prepare questions for the presenters or fill out evaluation forms. Important dates, phone numbers etc., can be displayed on the screen during this time.

Q & A

This is an opportunity for participants at the receive sites to get involved and have their questions answered by your expert presenters.

Close and Credits

The final portion of your show, during which appropriate thanks are expressed and participants are reminded of future events. Credits display the names of persons and agencies responsible for the videoconference.

Planning Your Videoconference

Scheduling

Once you have decided that videoconferencing is the right tool for you, it is never too early to begin thinking about dates. As more and more people become aware of the advantages of videoconferencing, our calendars begin to fill up months in advance. You'll need to book both studio and satellite time for your **“live”** event. In addition, you will need one or more days of pre-production, depending on the complexity of your show. And unless the facilities where participants plan on viewing the videoconference are already equipped with satellite dishes, or “downlinks,” you will need to book local receive sites.

New York Network’s satellite network is commonly referred to as SUNYSAT. SUNYSAT downlinks are located at each of the 64 campuses of the State University of New York, including all community colleges. NYN has also identified over 100 additional sites that are capable of receiving the SUNYSAT signal in every region of the state. It’s *important* that you sit down with our staff as early as possible to discuss possible receive locations. National distribution of your program via SUNYSAT is also possible.

Pre-production

Your videoconference will, most likely, contain several elements which will need to be created in advance of the “live” broadcast (program open and close, taped roll-ins, graphics, teleprompter script.) It is very important to schedule production time well in advance, and to consult with NYN staff about production needs. Television “magic” happens only when technical professionals and content experts work together as a coordinated team. Choosing and combining all the different elements that will make your production unique can be extremely rewarding - but it will take time, decisiveness, and the ability to work closely with a technical team. Find out what you need to do before you arrive at NYN for pre-production.

Content Development

You probably already know that how information is delivered can be just as important as what you need to say. This is especially true when you are working at a distance. Presentations should be designed to take advantage of the visual medium i.e., to be as illustrative as possible. When appropriate, site participants should be involved in local activities. Your program must begin and end exactly on schedule, so every element of your videoconference should be carefully timed. Keep the above in mind, but don't be afraid to have fun!

Written Materials

In most cases you will want to present each registered participant with a packet of videoconference materials containing any or all of the following:

- T program agenda
- T "Hard" copy of graphics to be presented during the videoconference
- T relevant "extra" information – agency contacts, phone #'s and/or reading list for further information
- T paper for notes and/or phone-in questions
- T evaluation form

Packets should be created and a master copy mailed to site facilitators early enough to allow for local duplication.

Site Coordination

Early in the planning stage you'll need to identify one or more persons who will function as local site facilitators at each receive site before, during, and after your videoconference.

Before the event they will interface with local technical support, ensure that the videoconference room is adequate and comfortable, and familiarize themselves with topic material and program format.

During the videoconference, local facilitators hand out written materials, coordinate on-site activities, and help ensure that call-in segments go smoothly.

Following the videoconference they collect and forward evaluations, and provide follow-up for participants seeking more information.

You may want to schedule a training session with facilitators prior to your live event. Good site facilitators are key to your videoconference success.

Participants

Once you've identified the goals and program content of your videoconference, you can begin developing a list of presenters with the expertise and skill to make an effective television presentation. Presenters with a national reputation, while desirable, are not always necessary for a successful session. Presenters who are knowledgeable and can be identified with the subject matter through a local and/or statewide constituency can be just as effective, and may be more readily available. The most important thing is for you to find those experts who will complement each other in speaking to different aspects of your topic, while avoiding redundancy.

Moderator

With the rare exception of a single lecturer, all videoconferences require an experienced **moderator** to keep your show running smoothly. This key participant may be a member of your agency who has on-camera experience, or a hired professional. The moderator, as the program "host," sets the tone of the show, keeps things running on schedule, makes sure there are no awkward pauses, fields incoming questions, and ends the program on time.

Clothing

First-time participants should take note of the following clothing tips:

- T dress comfortably, be certain to have a place to attach a microphone**
- T wear “warm” colors, pastels, earth tones that can be accented**
- T don’t dress too warmly, the studio environment is a “hot” one**
- T don’t wear jewelry that “clinks”**
- T don’t wear, shiny, satiny, or highly reflective materials.**
- T don’t wear high contrast (black suit, white shirt)**
- T don’t wear busy designs (stripes, checks, floral prints)**

Make Up

Having participants sit down with a make-up artist before going “on-air” is both a technical and aesthetic necessity.

- T technical** - to dull hot spots, baldness, shiny noses
- T aesthetic**- to add color, smooth complexion, cover 5:00 shadow

How you appear on camera will often dictate your effectiveness in the eyes of the audience. *Having a good make-up artist on board is another key to videoconference success.*

On the set

Some handy tips for first-time presenters:

- T when presenting information- speak directly to the camera (the camera is your connection with the audience)**

T know time cues

T stay seated while wearing a microphone

T be aware that the microphone is always on

T don't look at the TV monitor (you'll be looking at yourself)

Coughing, rustling papers and excess fidgeting will be picked up and heard on the air.

A short but thorough rehearsal is essential to success of your show.

Schedule ample time to put participants at ease and “get the bugs out” before you go on the air.

Format

How you decide to deliver the information contained in your videoconference will be dictated by two considerations: what you need to convey and to whom you need to convey it. Can a portion of your program content be shown on tape? Can important points be outlined and rendered into graphics? Your choice of format will ultimately affect the pacing, interactivity and time management of your show. Another format consideration applies directly to the studio.

Will you use:

T a single presenter using a lecture format (with or without a studio audience)

T a panel of experts engaged in a moderated discussion

T a studio “workshop” including “live” audience participation and demonstration

T a roll-in to provide a view from the field

T a combination of the above elements

Don't be afraid to experiment with different formats.

Be a pioneer!

Production Elements

Rundown

Once you've decided on how you plan to present your information, the next step is to organize it into a time line or "rundown" This outline is an estimate of how the program time will be spent, allotting specific blocks of time for specific segments (*see sample rundown at the back of this handbook*). It's important to create a time line that's realistic. Don't try to cram too many different elements into a show, and be prepared to fill in extra material if a segment takes less time than planned. This becomes much easier if you segment the videoconference into relatively short blocks of time which can be added or deleted. Careful planning will help you make optimal use of precious air time, but remember, this is **LIVE TV**. ***Flexibility will save the day when the unexpected happens.***

Pacing

Even the most interested viewer has difficulty concentrating for long periods of time on a static image. Keep your videoconference lively by adding, graphics, pre-taped "field" segments, and interactivity.

Although you need to keep the show moving along, ***remember to keep graphics up long enough for your audience to take notes.***

Graphics

Graphics are pre-rendered video pages of text and/or images that highlight or illustrate key points in a presentation. Graphics visually reinforce the most important points in a verbal presentation; they also give presenters a break from being "on camera" for extended periods of time. NYN can transfer images and slides onto a format compatible with our production equipment, or we can create them from scratch.

Note: The time NYN production spends creating graphics, and, consequently, their cost to you, can be lessened greatly if you take the time to prepare them beforehand. With direction from NYN a client can prepare their own graphics using *Microsoft PowerPoint*. *PowerPoint* is a presentation software package that many of our clients use to create their own graphics.

Graphic Guidelines

Layout Size

- Aspect should be 8½ by 11" landscape sheet of paper.
- Allow 1" margin on all sides.

Composing your Graphic

- Keep your graphic simple.
- Allow for a font size of at least 24pt.
- Don't clutter your graphics.
- Use colors that are easy to read
- Make sure your background color and text color contrast.
- Combine charts and graphs where necessary.

Words of Caution

Keep your graphics legible and concise.

Don't go overboard - your graphics should be an enhancement to your presentation, NOT the presentation itself.

Interactivity

No matter what form it takes, fostering interaction is extremely important in ensuring that both viewer and presenter come away with a "positive" videoconference experience. Remember, a typical NYN videoconference is set up in a one-way video, two-way audio configuration. Your audience will be able to see and hear *you*, but you will not be able to see *them*. Therefore, that you'll need other ways to gauge their interest and understanding of the material being presented. The most common form of interaction is via *telephone*, however, more and more videoconferences are incorporating *faxed-in* questions into their Q & A segments as well.

Venue

Most NYN videoconferences originate in one of our studios in downtown Albany, New York. The studio can comfortably accommodate up to seven people on camera at one time. If the format you choose requires you to use more space, special arrangements can be made. Just remember that such accommodations **require special planning and extra time.**

Teleprompter

You may want to script certain parts of your videoconference, such as opening and closing salutations, introduction of guest speakers, and program transitions (lead-ins to breaks and Q&A segments). This ensures that important information such as job titles, dates and titles of upcoming events, etc. will be conveyed accurately. Teleprompter copy should be prepared using ASCII text format. It is best to provide the Network with the prompter script before the day of the show.

Character Generator

This piece of professional equipment adds text in an assortment of fonts over whatever else is displayed on the video screen. Your program title, closing credits, the name supers that appear on the screen to identify speakers - all are created by this machine. It can also be used to display important telephone numbers and identify the sites from which “live” phone calls originate. All the copy for the character generator should be prepared before you arrive for scheduled production.

Video Roll-ins

A roll-in is a pre-taped video segment which is incorporated within the body of a “live” program. A roll-in allows you to: demonstrate something that cannot be done “live” or in the studio; show how an agency or individual uses a technique or performs a task in the “real world”; include an event that took place at another time or place; or include a guest who was unable to schedule a “live” appearance.

Inclusion of one or more roll-ins in your videoconference can greatly enhance your presentation, but they require careful planning and can be expensive. If you are considering this option, be sure to discuss it with the NYN staff as early as possible.

ELMO

ELMO is an overhead camera with direct input to the studio control room. It can be used effectively for displaying photos, charts, forms and transparencies, as well as three-dimensional objects, or for writing or drawing diagrams as part of a presentation. It is simple to operate and is usually manipulated by the presenter.

Scan Converter

A device that allows the output from a computer to be displayed cleanly on the air. If your presentation requires use of a computer, please let NYN know as early as possible.

Taping

You will receive a **mastercopy** of your videoconference on a tape format that will permit you to make high-quality copies of your show. You may also receive a maximum of ten VHS copies of your videoconference to take home immediately if you prearrange for this to be done. NYN will assist you in identifying vendors to make additional copies after the videoconference.

Toll-Free Phone Line

NYN has a toll-free phone line that can accommodate up to five callers at the same time. After a short wait on “hold,” during which they are able to hear the program on the phone, participants are able to speak directly with studio participants and can be heard clearly over the air. Your agency should designate two people as “telephone operators” during the interactive portions of your videoconference.

The following simple “phone rules” should be emphasized to both site facilitators and participants, and should be strictly observed, since they will make a difference in the quality of the interactive portion of your show.

T don’t use a speaker phone

T shield the call-in phone from the TV monitor, or make sure the volume on the monitor is turned down when the call is on the air

T speak clearly, directly into the mouthpiece

T if put on hold, be attentive, listening for the moderator's cue that it is your turn to speak

Special Considerations

Funding sources and/or program content may make it necessary for your videoconference be either captioned for the hearing impaired, or include a sign language interpreter. If you require either of these services, please inform the Network as soon as possible, so that we can help you arrange for them.

In rare instances, circumstances may dictate that a special guest or presenter participate from a site other than an NYN studio, or that a certain receive site send a video signal to be mixed into your program. With adequate preparation time, such accommodations can often be made. Again, ask early.

The Production Team

Watch the credits roll at the end of a television broadcast, and you'll get an idea of just how many specialized jobs go into creating this type of show. Your production team will consist of you (perhaps other designated members of your organization), and NYN's production personnel. On the next page, you'll see how your responsibility as primary producer, fits into the overall videoconference picture.

Catering

If your event is scheduled near lunch or dinner time, you may want to consider providing food and drink for your presenters. NYN will be happy to recommend or arrange for this service.

Your Role as Producer/Coordinator

Schedule satellite time, receive sites, pre-taping of roll-ins and VIP segments, pre-production at NYN and rehearsal and “live” show time.

Delegate when necessary to prevent being overwhelmed.

Coordinate site facilitators, print handouts, arrangements for guest presenters, etc.

Consult with NYN about venue, program format, equipment needs, etc.

Arrange for moderator, captioning or sign interpreter, catering, and other special needs.

Assemble copy for graphics, teleprompter, open, closing credits, site lists and name supers.

Develop a “rundown,” or time schedule for your teleconference that lists each component of your broadcast (“live” presentations, pre-taped segments, Q&A sessions) allotting appropriate time for each.

Preside in the production control room during pre-production and the live broadcast.

Follow-up on your success! Collect evaluations, distribute copies of the program, and answer questions not covered during the videoconference.

Client Checklist

Program Title: _____

Program Date: _____

Program Time: _____

- ' Identify your audience.
- ' Develop an outline of your videoconference.
- ' Develop associated print materials.
- ' Determine how long your Videoconference be.
- ' Decide how many guests you plan to have on the set.
- ' Determine where your Videoconference will originate.
- ' Choose a moderator for your videoconference.
- ' Determine the downlink sites.
- ' Graphics (PowerPoint?)
- ' Videotape roll-ins.
- ' Determine the breaks, if any, during your videoconference.
- ' Closed Captioning.
- ' Catering.
- ' Makeup.
- ' Teleprompter.

Sample rundown

<i>Cue Time</i>	<i>Segment</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Notes</i>
10:00:00 AM	00:00:45	01:59:30	Open with NYN ID	Questions/Fax's will be welcome throughout the entire program.
10:00:45 AM	00:01:00	01:58:45	Opening comments from moderator Introduction of panel/guests	Prompter for opening, none for introduction
10:01:45 AM	00:10:00	01:57:45	Sara Hill (Presentation)	Strait talking head / Panelist seated front screen right
10:11:45 AM	00:00:10	01:47:45	Moderator intros video 1, "Teen Violence"	Prompter
10:11:55 AM	00:06:00	01:47:35	Video 1, "Teen Violence"	During Video Chris Conto will exit and Randall Lex and Karl Diehl will be on set
10:17:55 AM	00:00:10	01:41:35	Moderator intros Chris Conto	Prompter / Panelist seated front screen left
10:18:05 AM	00:25:00	01:41:25	Chris Conto	PowerPoint is needed for Chris's presentation
10:43:05 AM	00:00:10	01:16:25	Moderator intros Karl Diehl	Prompter
10:43:15 AM	00:05:00	01:16:15	Karl Diehl	PowerPoint is needed for Karl's presentation and will introduce his own video
10:48:15 AM	00:16:00	01:11:15	Video 2, "Guns in Schools"	
11:04:15 AM	00:02:00	00:55:15	Karl Diehl cont.	PowerPoint is needed for Karl's presentation and will introduce his own video
11:06:15 AM	00:10:00	00:53:15	Video 3, "Violence Prevention"	
11:16:15 AM	00:02:00	00:43:15	Karl Diehl cont.	PowerPoint is needed for Karl's presentation and will introduce his own video
11:18:15 AM	00:40:00	00:41:15	Video 4, "Family Solutions"	
11:58:15 AM	00:01:00	00:01:15	Moderator closing prompter, thanks	Prompter
11:59:15 AM	00:00:15	00:00:15	Credits	Live over studio / in studio light cue
11:59:30 AM	00:00:00	00:00:00	BLACK	

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