



Globus

**Globus enjoys smooth sailing
with travel agent events
hosted on GoToWebinar**

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*Alleigh Allie
Training Specialist.*

GLOBUS.
family of brands

globusandcosmos.com

Since its modest beginning in 1928, when the company founder bought a rowboat (on credit) to transport travelers across Lake Lugano in Switzerland, the Globus family of brands (Globus®, Avalon Waterways®, Cosmos® and Monograms®) has become the leading operator of guided vacations worldwide. Today, it remains family owned.

Globus operates 32 offices around the world and provides escorted tours for 500,000 people each year, visiting more than 70 countries on six continents. Alleigh Allie, the company's training specialist, must make sure that thousands of travel agents worldwide who sell these tours are kept well informed about the latest itineraries in more than 400 travel packages. Since 2004, Allie has been conducting as many as 15 webinars every month, each attended by as many as 150 travel agents. Each webinar lasts an average of 45 minutes and includes an interactive "Show and Tell" for the featured tours.

The challenge: improving audio quality to enhance webinars

Initially, Globus chose a web conferencing solution that turned out to be complicated and unreliable. Not only was the system frustrating for employees to use, but more ominously, it was reflecting poorly on the company. "The old system wasn't user friendly for the webinar leader or the attendees," Allie said. "We were constantly receiving complaints from travel agents because they couldn't hear, the audio quality was poor, the lines had static and they couldn't get connected to the conference bridge." These webinars are essential for educating travel agents about the company's newest travel offerings. Globus was concerned that the information was not being communicated effectively, with potential negative impacts on revenues and its overall reputation in the industry.

One of the main drawbacks of the previous solution was its inability to synchronize audio and video recording of the webinar for posting online. Globus makes its webinars available on demand to accommodate agents who were not able to attend the live event. To solve this problem, the company wanted to find a service with integrated audio. Other goals were improved ease of use for webinar presenters and attendees, high reliability and excellent audio quality.

"There was no question that we needed to make a change," Allie explained. "We simply couldn't work around all the problems we were experiencing, and something needed to be done."

Implementing GoToWebinar with OpenVoice Integrated toll-free audio

Determined to find a better web collaboration solution, Allie began attending online events hosted on competing systems. “I evaluated many different conferencing solutions, looking for the highest sound quality and greatest ease of use. Once I experienced GoToWebinar with the OpenVoice toll-free audio option, I realized it was the solution we needed to solve our conferencing problems.”

Globus made the switch to GoToWebinar with superb results. This solution gives webinar organizers several audio choices to offer to attendees: Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) through their computer mic and speakers, toll phone numbers and optional OpenVoice toll-free audio conferencing—all of which work together seamlessly. Other important features of GoToWebinar include a hosted registration page and invitation email that can be branded with the Globus logo, self-service registration and a one-click connection to the event for attendees and rich functionality for the presenter.

“GoToWebinar delivers so many features that we have come to rely on—things we didn’t even realize were possible,” Allie says. “We can mute entrance and exit beeps, something the old system couldn’t do. We now also can mute participants to cut down on background noise. When you have 150 attendees on a call, it’s vital to control the amount of ambient noise so that everyone can hear the presentation and focus on the information being provided. The service is simple, works well and makes things a lot easier for me.”

One of Allie’s favorite features is one-touch recording of the webinars for posting on the Globus site. Travel agents have the flexibility to listen to these recordings at their convenience, helping Globus expand the reach of the webinar to the broadest audience.

Equally important, the solution is highly reliable, ensuring easy connectivity for attendees and high-quality audio backed by responsive customer service. “We rely on this tool as a solid hosting platform for our events. We know attendees will enjoy an excellent experience, and that level of confidence removes a lot of pressure.”

A sound investment

In addition to enhancing its webinars with the ease of use and many features of GoToWebinar, Globus overcame the cost barrier of toll calling, which previously deterred some travel agents from attending the webinars. “We now offer toll-free numbers to attendees across the United States, making our events even more attractive to our agents.” Globus uses an average of 8,000 minutes of OpenVoice toll-free audio service each month.

The company itself also benefits from the cost-effective, flat-fee pricing structure of GoToWebinar, which permits unlimited events to be conducted each month. “This year alone, we’ll save about \$5,000 in operational costs compared to our previous solution,” Allie said. “These are savings that can be redirected to other corporate initiatives.”

Key benefits

- Provides reliable, high-quality web events
- Increases webinar attendance with OpenVoice toll-free audio
- Reinforces corporate reputation for excellence
- Enables on-demand recording of the events

She noted that there are many productivity benefits associated with GoToWebinar, including the ability to quickly schedule an event with audio information automatically shown in the Outlook calendar and on invitation emails. “GoToWebinar with OpenVoice toll-free calling saves us so much time that we used to spend setting up conferences, fielding complaints and trying to manage schedules for 150 agents to make a webinar happen. It’s so much more efficient and convenient for me and the agents.”

Most importantly, GoToWebinar helps to enhance the company’s reputation for smooth, effortless logistics and the use of leading-edge technologies. “We depend on our travel agents to recommend our tours to customers, so it’s essential to maintain a positive corporate image. When people attend our webinars, they can see that we emphasize service, high quality and excellence,” she says. “That kind of benefit is priceless.”