VCSA Professional Development Committee: Webcast Best Practices

The Presentation
- Use slides or other visuals to illustrate your points.
- Create an accessible presentation such as using larger fonts and alt-captioning images. If you are willing to share your slides via email with attendees after the presentation, providing a transcript or using the notes field in the PowerPoint or Google Slides is helpful for accessibility, but not required.
- In an online environment, include more slides than you might consider for an in-person presentation, because dynamic visuals help to keep the audience's attention. Content and text on each slide should remain limited. Be sure to credit any images you have used.
- Finish your presentation with your contact information and recommended resources.

Keeping Your Audience In Mind
- Consider engaging your audience with polls, chat, or other interactive methods, but be sure to test these in advance. Check the attendance limits on active learning software and polling programs. For example, the free version of Poll Everywhere is limited to 50 responses.
- **Be prepared, but do not read from a script.** It's helpful to have notes or an outline, but make sure you know the content well enough to be casual and flexible with your presentation, in order to better engage the audience. Audiences typically do not want to feel like they are just watching a video (no interaction).
- Practice your presentation repeatedly, ideally with all your panelists (if applicable).
- If planning on show casing a technology or library resource, make sure to demonstrate it during our practice presentation, to ensure it works as expected.

Local Considerations
- Know the environment where you will be conducting the webcast, and use a trusted computer.
- Close out of other computer applications while presenting, in order to help with bandwidth and decrease distractions.
- Use a headset or headphones to reduce background noise while presenting. When not speaking (such as on a panel or during introductions), mute yourself.
- Silence phones, if possible.
- If using a webcam, be conscious of your background and lighting. Turn your webcam on while presenting and off while others are speaking. If presenting from home, be cautious of pets and other possible disturbances.