



AOS & SCO-SOC 2021: Guide for Virtual Oral Presentations

This document presents requirements and guidelines for preparing and delivering an oral presentation at the upcoming AOS & SCO-SOC 2021 virtual meeting. *Please read through this document carefully as you prepare your presentation.* The most important details are highlighted here:

1. **All oral presentations must be pre-recorded and uploaded to the conference platform, [EventPilot](#), between 26 July and 4 August, 2021.** Detailed instructions about [preparing](#), [delivering](#), [recording](#), and [uploading](#) your presentation are provided below.
2. **[Uploaded recordings](#) of standard symposium presentations and contributed oral presentations must be no longer than 12:15 (12 minutes and 15 seconds), and recordings of lightning symposium presentations are capped at 4:15 (4 minutes and 15 seconds).** [Guidelines](#) on how to use your allotted time are provided below.
3. Your pre-recorded oral presentation will be delivered automatically via EventPilot during [its scheduled 90-minute paper session](#). Meeting attendees will be able to add comments and ask questions about your talk in the session's chat box in EventPilot. **All presenters are expected to be online in EventPilot and available to respond to chat questions during their scheduled presentation.**
4. **A [live Question and Answer \(Q&A\) session](#), delivered as a Zoom Meeting, will be held at the end of each 90-minute paper session**, allowing conference attendees to ask questions and interact directly with speakers. Each Q&A session will have a moderator and a technical support specialist to coordinate and facilitate the questions and responses.
5. **All presenters are expected to be present during their scheduled live Q&A session and available to answer questions via Zoom.** Each Q&A session will be recorded, and recordings will be available for viewing by all registered attendees for 90 days after the end of the conference.
6. All presenters are required to complete the [AOS & SCO-SOC Presenter Agreement](#) regarding recording and availability of your presentation. **Please make absolutely certain that you complete the agreement before the 4 August deadline for uploading your presentation.**

Preparing your presentation

It is important to keep in mind several guidelines aimed at giving an effective presentation. Many of these guidelines are relevant to any presentation, but become particularly important for online presentations. An example slide illustrating most of the points below can be found [here](#).

- *Languages for text.* To facilitate accessibility and understanding by most or all participants, we are recommending (but not requiring) that all presentation slides present key points in two languages: English and one other (likely Spanish, but could be Portuguese or French). This will help facilitate understanding by those who are not fluent in whichever language you give your presentation. Alternatively, you can upload PDFs of your slides in other languages as supplemental resources in EventPilot. We recommend that you seek help with translation from fluent friends and online resources, such as [DeepL](#).
- *Aspect ratio.* You are not restricted in the aspect ratio you use for online oral presentations. However, we strongly recommend an aspect ratio of 16:9, as this nicely matches the dimensions of most computer monitors.
- *Colors.* Please use a color palette that will facilitate comprehension by people with red-green color deficiency or other forms of anomalous color vision. Recommended palettes and other tips can be found [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#), as well as at other sites. Note also that black/dark text on a white/light background is easier to read than light text on a dark background.
- *Avoid having too much content on each slide.* Spread content over several slides where possible or needed. Conversely, don't spend too little time on each slide, or you risk losing the audience. A good rule of thumb is to spend approximately 1 minute on each slide. Also limit the amount of text on each slide; use just enough words to make the key points, and avoid whole sentences. Use graphics rather than text where possible. Also, many participants will watch your presentation on a small screen, so use large fonts (18-24 point is good). Keeping the amount of text to a minimum will help facilitate the use of two languages (see above).
- *Plan a talk understandable in multiple modalities.* Some audience members will only be able to see your slides, but not to hear you. Some audience members will only be able to hear you (or to read the transcript afterwards, potentially with the help of Google Translate), but not to see your slides. Make sure your talk is as understandable as possible to folks who can only see you or only hear you.

Practicing and delivering your presentation

Possibly even more so than for a traditional presentation in front of a live audience, *practice is critical to giving a good online presentation*. After you've created your presentation, run through it several times to make sure that you can deliver it smoothly and also manage the screen sharing, recording (see below), and other technical aspects. The tips below will help you

prepare to give a smooth presentation. You can also get some good advice from the online video “Deadly Sins of Online Presentations” from EventPilot, available [here](#), as well as from several of the other helpful websites found in the appendix.

- *Use your computer.* Use the same computer that you will be using for the recorded presentation. If possible, do not use a phone or tablet or other mobile device.
- *Position yourself.* Your screen should be at eye level so that you are not looking down at it (if necessary, raise the computer using a stand or books). Your face should be well centered, and you should be standing just a tad further from the screen than you normally would so that your arms can be seen. Make sure that you are not backlit by a bright light (e.g., open window) behind you, and in fact it is good to have a source of light near the computer shining onto your face (if possible, natural light or light that is not too harsh is best).
- *Pay attention to your background.* It is best to have an uncluttered background that won't be distracting, preferably a blank wall. Consider using a very simple virtual background. AOS & SCO-SOC is recommending that you use the virtual background that will be made available from the [conference website](#) in July. Additional info about virtual backgrounds, including computer system requirements for using a virtual background, can be found [here](#).
- *Dress appropriately.* During your presentation you will be visible to the audience; please wear something that you would be comfortable wearing in front of an in-person audience. If you will be using a virtual background, it is best to wear clothing that is high contrast against your real background; this will allow the virtual background to look its best throughout the presentation.
- *Look directly into the camera as much as possible during your presentation.* If you use notes or a script, make sure that they are positioned near the computer camera so that you can read them without looking away. One handy trick is to place your notes directly behind your computer on, for example, a music stand or white board. If you have two monitors, arrange them so that your PowerPoint notes are on the monitor with your camera and the presented slides (to be viewed by the audience) are on the other.
- *If possible, use a headset.* The audio for audience members is far better if you use a headset with a microphone.
- *Use a timer.* Timing is critical for an online presentation. Use a timer (e.g., on your mobile device) to be absolutely certain that you can give your presentation content in the allotted time (12 minutes for standard oral presentations, 4 minutes for a Lightning Symposia presentation).
- *Introduce yourself and your title.* Begin your talk by showing your title slide and very briefly introducing your title and yourself. There will not be a moderator to introduce you or the title of your talk.
- *Don't rely too heavily on notes.* Practice enough that you don't need to read your notes, or at least enough that you don't seem like you're reading! It is far more engaging for the

audience if they feel like you are talking, rather than reading, to them. Keep in mind that when presenting, if you only have a single screen, you will not be able to use presenter mode and so will not have access to your notes. If you absolutely need to have notes, you should consider having a second monitor, or have the notes accessible via another means.

- *Practice speaking slowly and clearly.* Remember that you don't need to cram in every single detail, but rather focus on presenting the key points. This will help the audience follow your presentation. This also will facilitate closed captioning and make your presentation more accessible to participants who are hard-of-hearing, and to those whose first language is not the same as that being used during the presentation.

Recording your presentation

There are several different ways to pre-record a video of your presentation. **We strongly recommend the approach outlined below, which uses Zoom**, but other options can be found [here](#).

- *Minimize potential distractions.* Turn off the computer notifications that might pop up on your screen, and also set it to “Do Not Disturb” if your computer supports that (for Mac users, you can get info [here](#)). In fact, it is best to only have the bare minimum number of apps open on your computer (usually just PowerPoint, browser and Zoom), so turn off email and other things that may pop up during the presentation.
- *Closed captioning.* AOS & SCO-SOC strongly recommends that you use captioning, if possible, to increase the accessibility of your talk. If you are recording your presentation in Zoom, we recommend that you turn on the closed captions in PowerPoint or Google Slides when you record your presentation in Zoom. Here are instructions for turning on closed captioning in [PowerPoint](#) (not available in all versions) or [Google Slides](#).
- *Making your video.* These instructions are modified from those provided by ATIV Software (maker of EventPilot), and seem to work well. Tip: you may want to create a very short practice video first to practice before recording your whole presentation.
 1. If you haven't already done so, create a free Zoom account at <https://zoom.us> or use your institutional Zoom account.
 2. [Install](#) and open the Zoom desktop application on your computer
 3. Click on the "New Meeting" icon to start a new session
 4. Make sure your audio is on (the Mute icon should NOT have a slash over it) and, if you are planning to show your video during the recording, that your camera is on (the Camera icon should NOT have a slash over it).
 5. Click on the green **Share Screen** button
 6. In the window that appears, select the **Desktop** option to capture your entire desktop or select the specific application (e.g., PowerPoint, Google Slides) you

are using for your presentation. If your presentation includes embedded audio or video with sound, be sure to also choose the option to **Share sound** in the bottom-left corner of the share selection window.

***Note - the 'optimize video' option sometimes leads to black boxes over your slides in the recording, we suggest leaving this option unchecked.**

7. Once selected, click the blue **Share** button and the chosen screen or application will have a green border surrounding it to verify that it is being shared. You can now begin your presentation by going into Presentation mode in your particular application.
8. In the Zoom toolbar, Click **Record** (this icon is next to the Screen Share). Your recording has now started.
9. **Begin your recording by silently showing your title / author slide for 15 seconds!** These 15 seconds provide a streaming buffer for meeting participants with slow internet connections, and ensures that all participants will be able to hear and see all of your presentation.
10. After the 15 seconds have elapsed, briefly introduce yourself and your topic, and begin delivering the content of your presentation. There will not be a moderator to introduce you, so you will need to do this yourself.
11. When you're done recording, go back into your zoom toolbar and click on **Stop Recording** in the Zoom toolbar (located in the same place as the recording button)
12. At the top of your screen click **Stop Share**
13. At the bottom right of the Zoom application click **End**, then **End Meeting for All**
14. The Zoom app will begin compressing the screen recording and save it on your computer. If you are using an institutional Zoom account, you may receive an email with a link to your recording saved in the cloud.
15. After the presentation is saved as an mp4 file, you may be able to use third-party software (e.g., QuickTime Player) to trim or edit the recording to ensure that it does not exceed the maximum allotted time: 12:15 for standard oral presentations, 4:15 for lightning symposia presentations. Remember to check that the closed captions and any embedded audio were also recorded!

Uploading your presentation

In late July all presenting authors will be contacted directly by ATIV Software (maker of EventPilot) via email with detailed instructions about how to upload presentations. **Please strive to upload your recorded presentation between 26 July and 4 August, 2021.** Recordings that exceed the allotted time — 12:15 for standard oral presentations, 4:15 for lightning symposia — will not be accepted. You will login with the same credentials as you use to access

the EventPilot online planner. Your username will be your email, and your password is your last name as you entered during conference registration.

Presenting authors will also have the opportunity to upload supplemental PDF files, such as a PDF of the presentation slides. We recommend using supplemental PDFs to increase accessibility of your talk (e.g. a PDF of your slides in alternative languages, or a translated transcript of your script).

Preparing for your live Q&A session

It is critically important that you prepare your technology well in advance of the actual presentation date. In addition, you should watch the video from ATIV Software, the company that developed the EventPilot platform we will be using for our virtual conference; you can find that video [here](#), and other useful technical tips can be found [here](#).

- *Download the Zoom Client app onto the computer you will use for your Q&A session.* You can enter the Zoom meeting either through the Zoom Client or your browser. If you decide to use the Zoom Client app, you can download it [here](#). To avoid unnecessary complications, please ensure that your Zoom app or browser is up-to-date with the current version. We strongly recommend that you use a computer, rather than a phone or other hand-held device, for the Q&A session.
- *Ensure that you are using the most recent version of the [Google Chrome](#) browser or the [Zoom](#) desktop app prior to accessing the live Q&A session.* You will be able to access the Zoom for the live Q&A via the Chrome browser or the Zoom desktop app.
- *If possible, use a headset.* The audio for audience members is far better if you use a headset with a microphone.
- *Test and practice Zoom on your browser.* This is particularly important if you have not used Zoom much in the past. To do this, go to <https://zoom.us/test> and then click "Join." Familiarize yourself with the controls for audio and video. Practice muting and unmuting yourself, and turning on and off your video. Make sure that your headset speakers/microphone are connected properly. In general, make sure that you are comfortable with running Zoom.
- *Signing in for your Q&A session.* Your session will be a Zoom Meeting, and you will enter the Zoom Meeting through either the link in the email sent to you by ATIV Software (maker of EventPilot) or the link provided for the Q&A session in EventPilot. Clicking the link will open Zoom on your computer or in your browser. We recommend logging into the session 3 minutes early to let the moderator know you are present and make sure your audio is working.
- *Minimize use of other internet devices during your Q&A session.* If possible, make sure that others in your location aren't using the internet during your session, and turn off wifi on all devices other than those you will be using for your presentation, and/or plug

your computer into the ethernet with a cable. If you still are having trouble, try turning off your video, and only use audio for answering questions.

- *Minimize other distractions.* If possible, it is best to keep other human beings and pets out of the room during your session to minimize distractions. Similarly, it is best to have a simple, uncluttered background behind you, or a very simple virtual background (if your computer supports it). Turn off the computer notifications that might pop up on your screen, and also set it to “Do Not Disturb” if your computer supports that (for Mac users, you can get info [here](#)).

Appendix: Online resources

There are a number of online resources that provide input on how to give effective online presentations. Here are just a few.

EventPilot and Zoom Guides

Zoom Support: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/categories/201137166>

Zoom session virtual participant guide:

<https://ativ.freshdesk.com/support/solutions/articles/24000053016-zoom-virtual-session-participant-guide>

Zoom tricks to give a better presentation:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/10-best-zoom-tricks-being-better-virtual-meeting-silke/>

How to record a presentation ahead of time:

<https://ativ.freshdesk.com/support/solutions/articles/24000054732>

Optimizing PDFs for online use:

<https://ativ.freshdesk.com/support/solutions/articles/14475-optimizing-pdfs-for-mobile-use>

Speaker setup video: <https://vimeo.com/426002984/d562552461>

Speaker training - Deadly Sins: <https://vimeo.com/426034969/aaa7f983b1>

Other Guides and Resources

Best Practices For Virtual Presentations: 15 Expert Tips That Work For Everyone:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/maryabbajay/2020/04/20/best-practices-for-virtual-presentations-15-expert-tips-that-work-for-everyone/#42415f733d19>

Virtual Presentation Tips: <https://www.duarte.com/virtual-presentation-tips/>

10 Tips For Giving Effective Virtual Presentations:

<https://www.gsb.stanford.edu/insights/10-tips-giving-effective-virtual-presentations>

9 Tips For Giving Engaging Virtual Presentations:

<https://pantheon.io/blog/tips-for-virtual-presentations>

Tips for Creating a Virtual Presentation:

<https://www.stinsondesign.com/blog/virtual-presentation-tips>