ELEARNINGNEWS ARTICLE

Year 6 - number 227 Wednesday 7 december 2022

The perfect setup for live streaming lessons

How best to approach, and with the right equipment, your next live streaming lesson

Delivering a **live streaming lecture** is by no means a simple matter: connection problems, skipping audio, poor video quality, and many other difficulties can seriously compromise the management of your distance learning project.

In this article we'll give you some tips on how best to approach, and with the right equipment, your next live streaming lesson.

Start with good quality video and audio

Delivering a professional lecture cannot ignore **video quality**, ever.
Let's not assume that content is the important thing. It may be true that "content is the king," but truth be told, video quality...is the queen!

Why do I particularly care about good video quality? Because that is what makes the difference between the experience of enjoying an online lecture and an in-person one.

The use of home technologies has yes helped clear the way for the use of PCs (and tablets and smartphones) as a tool for distance learning, but in order for our learners to really feel like we are there with them, we will need a good video streaming setup.

But what will we then need in order to make sure that we have good quality video and audio?

First of all, we will need to get a good **video camera**: in my opinion, it is better to leave aside the very expensive webcams, which will often only be a limitation for our user experience in managing the streaming.

At this point, doing a quick web search, you will have to go and select a camera capable of being used as a webcam directly connected via USB or USB-C cable.

The market is now saturated with such solutions, and the excuse of high purchase costs is now a child of the past.

Therefore, it is most important to take care of your video by using a camera that can handle good framing, preferably with a normal or wide-angle lens.

The added value of choosing a good camera? When the class is over, you can explore the world by taking wonderful photographs and shooting videos of your close friends' parties.

Fun aside, the work of a good online trainer must necessarily go through quality.

We have already talked on these pages about **how to handle good quality audio**. For this reason, I will explain what tools are needed to significantly increase the audio quality of your streaming.

Once again, a quick search online, will give you a way to find microphones to suit all budgets. You can thus search small or large e-commerce sites for a microphone suitable for streaming. My advice is to aim for a dynamic broadcast product with usb output, to avoid also investing on a sound card or mixer with balanced input.

In addition to the **microphone**, you should also equip yourself with an antishock boom or stand that will allow you to avoid noise due to the movement of the desk from which you are "streammating."

A separate chapter could be devoted to what is the virtual background. Do yourself a favor: avoid in a professional production situation using the background erasing function of the most well-known streaming platforms. Someday, perhaps, the algorithm will allow a good result but, at the moment, especially in low light conditions the results are quite funny.

To remedy this problem you can use a combo of useful tools to change the background from which you are streaming your live lesson.

Thus, if you cannot afford to create a **professional background** or you want to include a graphic with a logo of your distance learning project, you can purchase a green panel, also known as a chroma key panel, which will allow you through dedicated live streaming software to get a better result than you would have been able to get from just using the background recognition of your favorite video streaming software.

Setting out to find a good chroma key panel online is a particularly easy thing to do: there are all sizes and dimensions of them, and you will also be able to pair it with a good set of lights to allow for better light diffusion on the green backdrop.

How does this technology work? Basically, the video software can recognize the color green and isolate it, allowing you to replace the green color with an image you choose.

Only caution: avoid wearing green or acid green clothing to avoid having one or more of your body parts disappear from the frame!

Last but not least, the use of **lighting**. To make a professional lesson, I do not recommend using natural light, such as that coming from your window.

As you can imagine, natural light is an extremely variable factor and could bring you quite a bit of trouble when live streaming. High lights, as well as shadows, may not be well balanced by your camera and could significantly worsen the result transmitted to your learners.

For this reason, it is important to know how to use at least one of the fundamental techniques for light management, which, for this time, we will borrow from film photography techniques.

By searching your favorite ecommerce store, or from your local photography equipment retailer, you can conveniently purchase some LED panels (with associated stand) that will allow you to light different areas of your set for live streaming.

So let's start with lighting your figure: will you be shot in a half-length, full-length, or timeless "American plane" shot, that is, up to belt height?

Depending on the portion of the figure you will need to illuminate, you should equip yourself with one or two more or less powerful lights, that is, capable of evenly illuminating the subject (you or one of your trainers).

To illuminate the facial area, I usually prefer to use a circular LED light, also called a ring light, which can be useful to better manage the lighting of the face. Inside the hollow area of the ring light you can conveniently place the camera to make sure that no shadows are created in the frame and to better manage the light within it.

Another LED panel, this time in a rectangular format, can be used to evenly illuminate the rest of the figure or part of it.

These lights can often be adjusted in color temperature as well. A series of specific lectures would be needed to explain this setting well, but in summary, you can manage the option of using a "warm" light, that is, tending toward red, or a "cool" light tending toward blue.
Another LED panel should be placed to illuminate the background. If you are looking for uniform lighting you will necessarily have to "open" the light completely toward the background. If, on the other hand, you want to seek a particular play of light and shadow, try to direct the light and close the side flaps by orienting the light panel toward a position in the background until you are happy with the result.

Light is an especially important element in creating the perfect set-up for your online classes.

If you don't have a particularly large budget, I recommend using at least a ring light that will allow you to make a major leap from the light coming from the chandelier in your office, which, coming from above, would cast unattractive shadows on your face.

Conclusions

In conclusion, no matter what platform you use to do live streaming of your content, you may need a product that can enhance your online presence.

Try to study the market and take a cue from others who have been doing this for some time, either by asking for information on industry forums or by asking specific questions of one of the streamers you follow during a live broadcast.

The prospect of running your in-person classes with a particular quality will open you up to a market that is particularly fervent these days.

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