BUDGETING, ORGANISING AND RUNNING A VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

Dr Brianna Robertson-Kirkland

Spheres of Singing, 28-30

Spheres of Singing
An interdisciplinary conference on singing and song, 28-30 May

SPHERES OF SINGING 2020

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Spheres of Singing is a unique platform for interdisciplinary research and practice focussed on singing. The conference allowed for communication of research and practice between disciplines, and between academics and practitioners (choral conductors, community singing leaders, singing teachers, music teachers, music therapists, professional singers) through a wide range of talks, workshops and performances. Hosted on Zoom, the conference featured contributions from around the world, including: 45 presentations, 7 workshops, 6 open discussions and 4 lecture recitals.

Sessions included: singing and health and wellbeing, practice research, philosophies of song, musicology and historical recordings, non-human song, phonetics and voice production, teaching, conducting and vocal pedagogy, singing technique, opera, art song, inclusivity in singing, and virtual choirs.

Highlights:
Professor Emeritus Grenville Hancox – Hard wired for singing. A case for prescription (Keynote)
Professor David Howard – Voice pitch and choral tuning (Keynote)
Dr Emily Peasgood – Practice research in the Arts: Creating Collaborative Artworks in the Community (Doctoral training session)
Professor Janis Kelly, Chair of Vocal Performance at the Royal College of Music – Vocal Masterclass
The Sixteen – Conducting and ensemble singing workshops

https://spheres-of-singing.gla.ac.uk/

Key concerns

■ Security

■ Accessibility

* Time (child care, time zones etc.)
* Captioning
* Preparing an accessible presentation.

■ Managing the event including all the technical challenges.

Security

- In March 2020, many were somewhat unfamiliar with Zoom and how to ensure Zoom calls were "safe".

- Some naïve mistakes were made, which led to some unfortunate and rather unpleasant incidents.

Boris Johnson sparks security concerns after revealing Zoom ID for Cabinet meeting

View 22 comments

Emma Brazell Tuesday 31 Mar 2020 11:09 pm

2.3k SHARES

Zoom Meeting ID: 539-544-323

'Zoombombing' Attacks Disrupt Classes

Online Zoom classes were disrupted by individuals spewing racist, misogynistic or vulgar content. Experts say professors using Zoom should familiarize themselves with the program's settings.
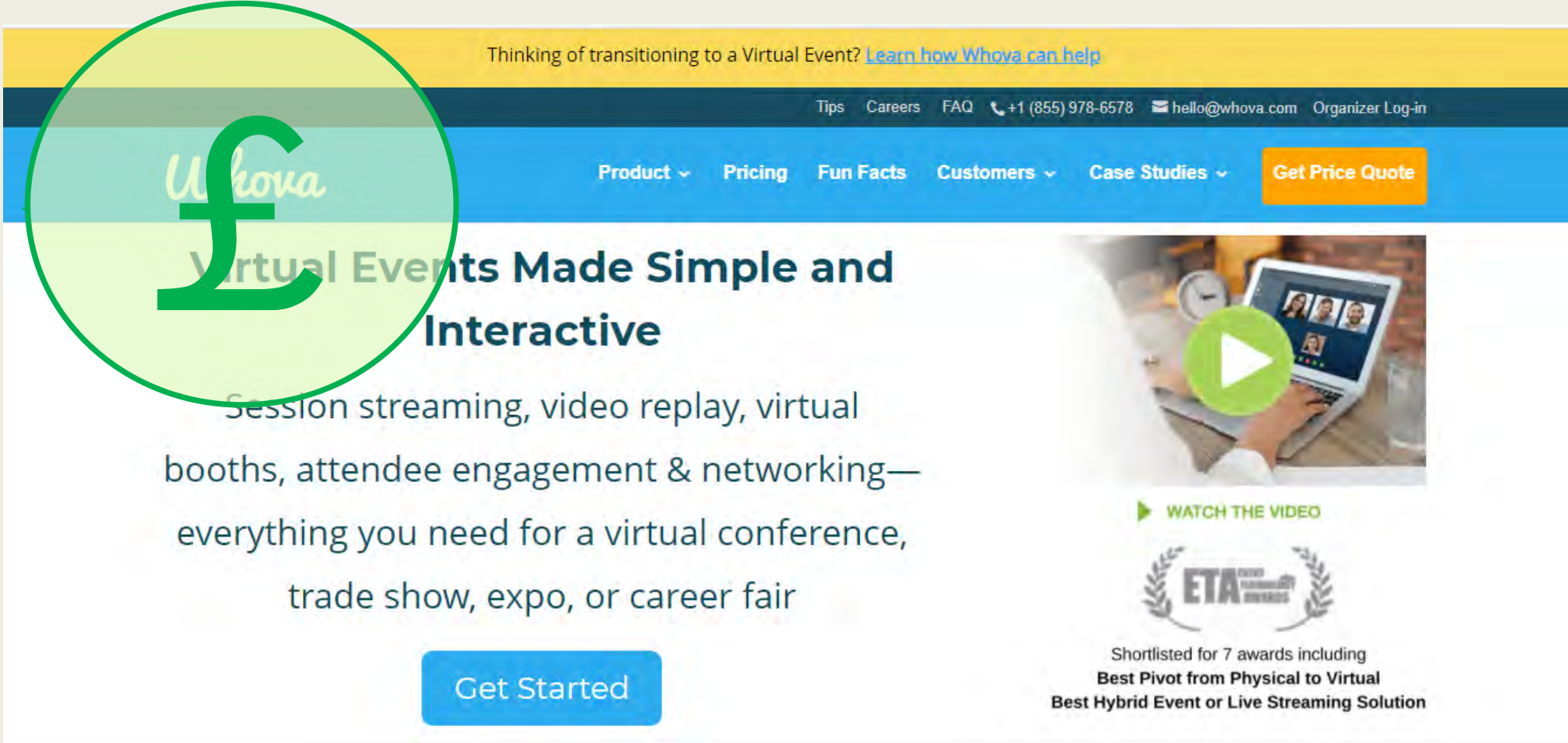
By Elizabeth Redden   // March 26, 2020

After months of meetings, events, and teaching we are perhaps more familiar with Zoom security protocols.

- Not sharing the links on social media or on public emails and instead...
  - *Asking people to register for an event.*
  - *Enable a waiting room and checking who should be in attendance.*
  - *Making sure Zoom calls are password protected.*

Security: Using an event management app

Other issues

- Not everyone wanted to download the app (or had the technical savvy to download and use the app).
- The front end was difficult to navigate and while most people managed it, there was a lot of frustration and unexpected technical issues.
- It was not as accessible as it was initially described to us, which was upsetting because we promoted accessibility as a key area the conference wanted to address.
- Because users were unfamiliar with the app, they were quick to jump to conclusions about why tech issues occurred.
  - For example, not everyone realised they still had to download the Zoom app, to be able to access the links.

No Zoom-bombing!

- We didn't experience any Zoom-bombing, but it is difficult to know if that was because of the app, or because we would never have been bombed.

- Since then I have run monthly international seminars and I am organising another international online conference and I am not using an event management app.

- With the standard safety protocols in place, so far there have been no issues.

- But, I have also added an extra layer of security, which I will discuss when we get to managing the event including technical challenges.

Zoom webinar vs Zoom meetings
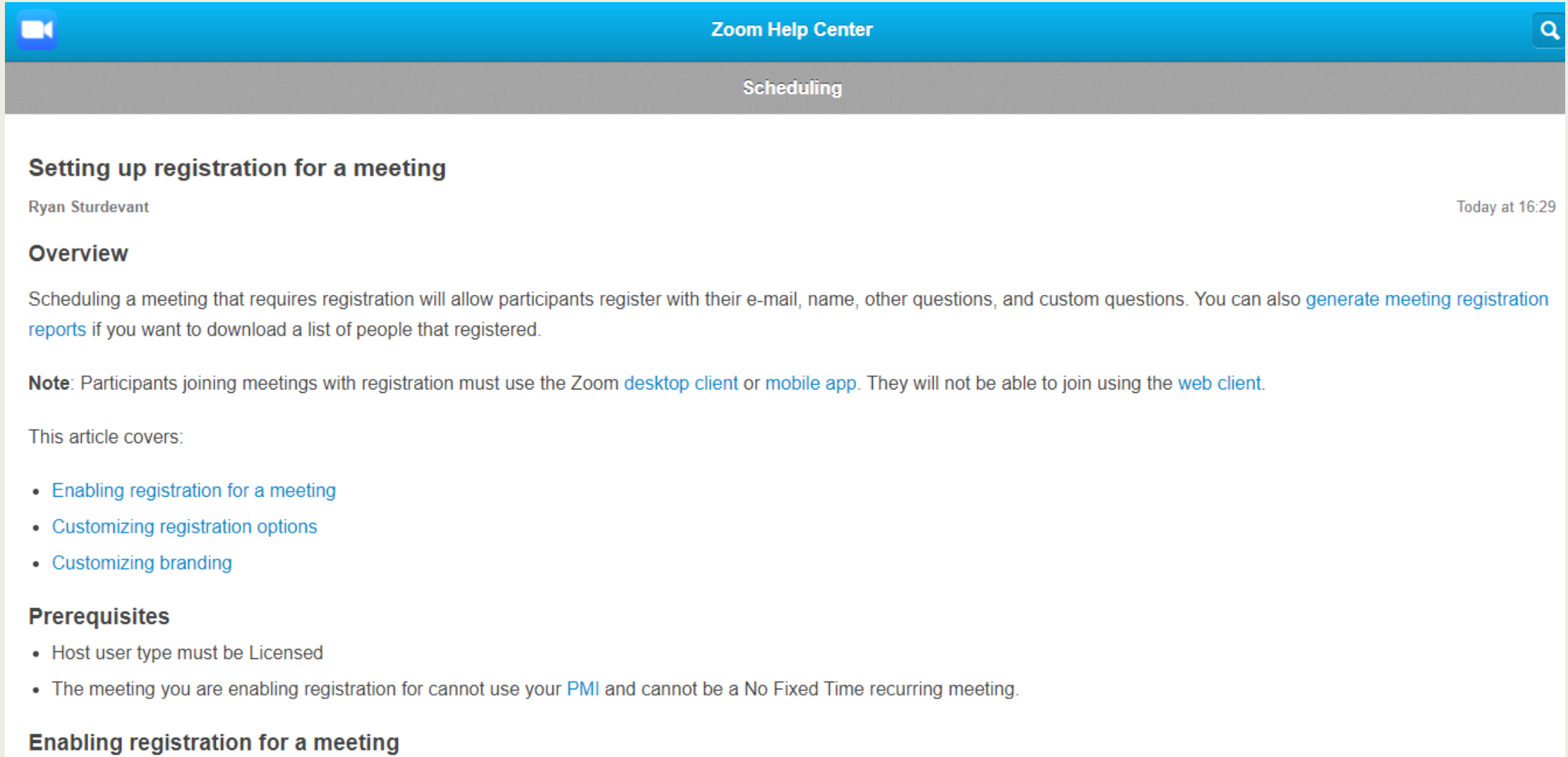
How do I send out the Zoom links?

- Important to ensure safety, but also make it easy for attendees to enter the meeting.
- If the event has only one panel going on, make sure attendees register before hand.
  - *Send out all the guidance materials and let them know when a Zoom link will be available to them.*
  - *Maybe set up a calendar invite.*
  - *Send the Zoom link one or two days ahead of the event and remind attendees not to share the link with people who have not registered.*

Zoom has a built in registration system

Setting up registration for a meeting

Ryan Sturdevant   Today at 16:29

Overview

Scheduling a meeting that requires registration will allow participants register with their e-mail, name, other questions, and custom questions. You can also generate meeting registration reports if you want to download a list of people that registered.

Note: Participants joining meetings with registration must use the Zoom desktop client or mobile app. They will not be able to join using the web client.

This article covers:

- Enabling registration for a meeting
- Customizing registration options
- Customizing branding

Prerequisites

- Host user type must be Licensed
- The meeting you are enabling registration for cannot use your PMI and cannot be a No Fixed Time recurring meeting.

Enabling registration for a meeting

Eventbrite

How do I send out Zoom links cont.?

- If there are multiple concurrent panels:
  - *Attendees should still register before hand, but prepare two versions of the conference programme – one with the zoom links and one without.*
  - *Send the one **without** Zoom links in advance (and it can be posted publicly). Then one or two days before send the conference programme with all the links included.*

Eventbrite isn't an option for an event with concurrent panels.

4. Select "Connect Zoom" (under "Live video content").

5. Select "Add new account", and then log in with Zoom.

6. Select a Zoom user. Then click "Next".

7. Connect to an existing Zoom meeting or webinar or create a new one.

8. Manage your Zoom connection.

9. Start your meeting/webinar.

10. Understand your attendees' experience.

11. Optional: Remove the Zoom app.

Helpful links

1. Check this before you start.

☑ You already have a Zoom account.

☑ The Zoom integration is only available in English.

☑ If you don't have a Zoom meeting or webinar created, Eventbrite's integration will create one for you.

☑ Once added to an event, the Zoom integration can't be removed. You can still change it to another meeting or webinar.

The Zoom integration doesn't support:

✗ Multiple Zoom meetings or webinars on the same event

✗ Repeating events that use the event schedule feature

✗ Zoom webinars and meetings with required questions or "Only authenticated users can join" enabled

✗ Multiple tickets under one email address — Zoom won't add duplicate registrations

✗ Call-ins, manual joining — attendees must join from the link on the online event page

2. Create an online event.

To create an online event:

1. Go to **Manage events** in your account.
2. Select **Create event**.
3. Fill in the details for your event; set the location to **Online**.
4. Click **Save & continue**.

Over-communicate and keep registered attendees in the know about how things are going to run.

Accessibility: Recordings

- Ahead of the event, ask speakers for permission to record their presentation noting it is for accessibility reasons.
  - *This benefits those who have personal responsibilities and cannot attend a session at the set time.*
  - *Also benefits people who want to / need to watch the recordings back.*
- However, some speakers may feel uncomfortable being recorded, so let them know when the recording will be available and when it will be removed.

Accessibility: Time zones

Accessibility: live captioning verses closed captioning on a video

- Zoom has in-built closed captioning option, which it can render onto a recording, but at the moment, automatic closed captioning is not available. Zoom provides a few suggestions about live captioning including assigning a participant to caption, or integrating a third party service: link.

- Microsoft Teams now has automatic live captioning, without needing a third party. Each individual needs to turn this on. However, Teams is a little more unstable when it comes to call quality.

- Microsoft Streams and YouTube also have automatic captioning as an option when a video is uploaded.

Accessibility: Captioning

Accessibility: recommendations for registration

- At registration, list the accessibility services on offer.
- Also ask if any other accessibility services need to be considered.

Accessibility: Guidance for speakers

Accessibility: Guidance for speakers

- Guidance on how to use Zoom (as a speaker)
- Preparing slides:
  - *Font size*
  - *Alt text*
  - *Speaking speed*
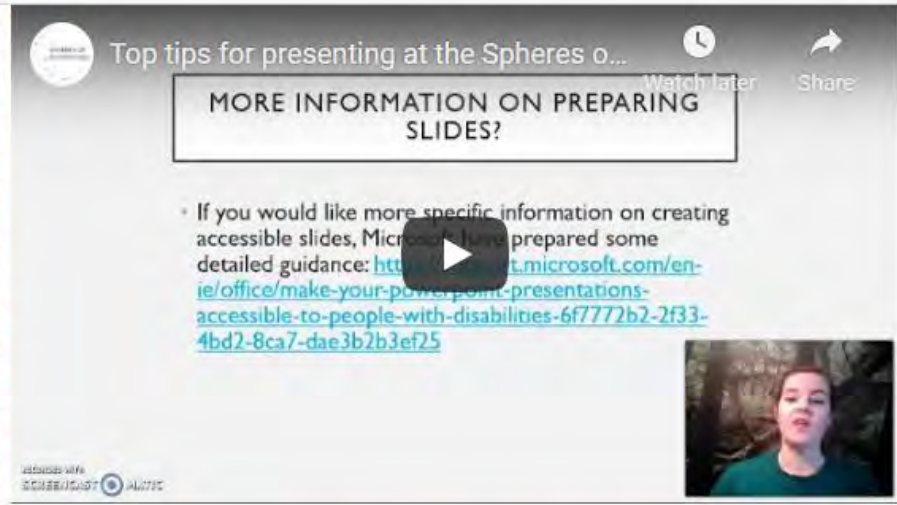 - *Lighting*
- Maximising WiFi quality

Speakers pre-recording a video presentation

- If a speaker wants to go with this option, it can still be 'live-streamed' by one of the organisers at a set time.

- This means the presentation can take place in a traditional 'panel' and the speaker can participate in a live discussion.

- It does rely on the person streaming having stable WiFi or a hardwired connection.

Hosts, chairs and co-chairs

- Host: in charge of the technical aspects of the meeting.
  - *Setting up the link.*
  - *Dealing with technical issues such as assigning co-hosting rights to speakers and the chairs and helping attendees.*
  - *Expelling anyone who might cause disruptive behaviour.*
- Chair: in charge of the session.
  - *Introducing the speakers.*
  - *Listening to the papers.*
  - *Managing the questions and discussion.*
- Co-chair: assisting the chair.
  - *Managing questions in the chat.*
  - *Able to jump in if the host or chair experiences technical difficulties.*
  - *Might be surplus to requirements depending on the size of the event.*

Offering hosts, chairs and co-chairs training and guidance

Link to guidance

- **For Speakers**
  - [Top tips for presenting at the Spheres of Singing online conference – Powerpoint Slides (PDF)](#)

- **For Attendees**
  - [Guide for Attendees – PDF](#)

- **For Chairs/Co-chairs/Hosts**
  - [Guide for committee hosts, chairs and co-chairs](#)

Set up a separate tech support email and have someone manage it throughout the conference

- Sometimes, technical issues are not related to the conference at all, but that doesn't prevent an attendee or a speaker feeling frustrated and upset.

- Having a dedicate email and someone who can email back quickly with advice can really transform someone's conference experience.

- Also consider setting up 'drop in' tech sessions throughout the conference.
  - *Speakers might want to test their equipment and if they can share a screen or sound.*
  - *Or they might just need advice about how a session will run.*

Guidance on running an event

Final thoughts

■ Applying for funding? Please consider:
- – *Investing in accessibility services over 'management' services.*
- – *Investing in people's time (such as a student who could help with tech issues, or an assistant who can set up the Zoom links etc.).*
- – *UoG has a dedicated IT service who will know what is already on offer and what needs to be costed into an application (i.e. Zoom webinar).*

THANK YOU!

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