

Do I Need a Live Internet Connection for My Presentation?

Using the Internet in a presentation can create technical complications that may disrupt your session. Here are some of the reasons why live Internet can be problematic in a presentation:

- Internet in convention centers and hotels is not 100% reliable. Unlike an office environment, these are dynamic networks with many temporary users connecting at any given time. Therefore, they can be affected by other users' problems, overall network traffic, and network problems within the building. This is especially true for wireless Internet, which is never 100% reliable.
- If you are using a computer provided by your employer, it often has preconfigured security settings that can cause difficulties when you are trying to connect to a new network. This may be exacerbated when using wireless networks, which are inherently less secure. While you can generally work around such security settings, doing so may delay your session.
- Whenever you are on the Internet, there can be problems accessing specific Web sites. You do not want this to happen during your presentation.

The good news is that most Internet content used in presentations, including audio and video clips, can be incorporated into a *PowerPoint* file. Designed for presentations, *PowerPoint* is much easier to use than live Internet.

You can also record a "screencast" of an Internet session in advance, using a capture program such as *Camtasia*. This lets you record your entire Internet session and is indistinguishable from a live session. This "present from file" approach is more reliable than live Internet.

So when do you need a live Internet feed for your presentation? There are really only a few cases that require this:

- If feedback from your audience is directing your Internet session
- If you are showing an online application into which you need to input live data

Because the MLA is committed to keeping registration fees low and making the meeting accessible to as many people as possible, we ask for your help in managing costs. Internet usage in convention centers and hotels is very expensive; please review the factors above when considering the use of live Internet in your session.