

SIOP EC Action Item
Submitted by the Visibility Committee
January 2008

The attached proposal describes a planned public webinar, designed to appeal to one of our target audiences: undergraduates considering further study in I/O psychology.

Requested EC Actions:

1. Review the Public Webinar Proposal
2. Approve the concept
3. Approve the expenditure of an estimated \$3000 to host the public session webinar, if necessary. See committee recommendation, below.
4. Provide comments back to the visibility committee to enhance the idea or the deployment strategy.

Committee Recommendation:

As described in the attached proposal, we have found several options for presenting the webinar. One option is for SIOP to fully support the session with available funds (approx. \$3K). The second option is to use a SIOP member organization's technology and offer the organization sponsorship credit in return. The committee's recommendation is to further investigate the options for supporting the session through a sponsor organization, thereby eliminating SIOP's cost and allowing access to top-quality presentation tools. If sponsorship is not obtained, we would use the allotted SIOP funds to deploy the webinar with SIOP's current conference call vendor.

Additional details regarding the webinar and the deployment options are provided in the proposal on the following pages.

Proposal to Conduct a Public Webinar to Raise Awareness of I/O Psychology & SIOP

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And Submitted by Doug Reynolds (Chair, Visibility Committee)
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Background

A gap exists in I/O's visibility, not just among professionals, but perhaps more importantly at the early stages of education, among students. The understanding or recognition of I/O Psychology as an available and employable educational option is limited. The SIOP Visibility Committee is proposing to hold a public web conference with the objective of increasing the public's visibility to, interest in, and understanding of the field of Industrial-Organizational Psychology. We propose a series of these events, with the first event focusing on students and career-changing professionals interested in learning more about graduate programs and careers in I/O Psychology.

Target Audience

We believe there are two large segments of the population that would benefit from a webinar: 1) Undergraduates, recent college graduates, and career-changers who are contemplating a career in I/O and/or I/O study, or even simply general psychology, at the graduate or undergraduate levels; 2) Business professionals, workplace reporters, HR generalists, and others in the business world who would like to know more about I/O Psychology and the value it can bring to business.

Given that this would be the first public web conference sponsored by SIOP, we believe we should target our first session to the student population. We believe this a larger group with a high vested interest in knowing about fields of study they should pursue. As well, this is a relatively low risk option and the lessons learned from this session can be applied to subsequent sessions targeting the business world. The timing of the webinar would be scheduled to coincide with the academic cycle (timing for applications to universities/colleges or job searches post-graduation). Based on the reaction to the first webinar, we will then gauge the viability of a second session.

Format of the Session

We propose that the format of the session should be comprised of a PowerPoint presentation with teleconference audio. We would have one or two SIOP members from the Visibility Committee who would host the session, with the addition of two to four additional speakers such as:

- University Master's Program Chair
- University Ph.D. Program Chair
- A Current Graduate Student in I/O
- I/O Practitioner(s) – e.g., one from public sector, consulting, corporate settings

The session length would be 60 minutes, and would be scheduled over a lunch timeframe to allow for anyone in the working world to participate at their leisure. A link to a recording of the webinar could then be made available from the SIOP website for later playback on an individual basis.

Key Topics Covered

The session should provide a brief introduction to the field, detail graduate school options, and provide a realistic preview of graduate school life, and career options after graduate school. We propose the following topics be covered:

- Brief introduction to I/O Psychology and careers in I/O
- Highlights from “Guide to Graduate Study in I/O”
- Getting into Graduate School – Requirements, Coursework, and Graduation
- Career Paths in I/O – What to expect when you graduate (with comments from the guest speakers) , and Salary Information (review SIOP salary survey)
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- Introduction to SIOP, the SIOP Website, and the SIOP Conference
- Question and Answers

Marketing Approach

We propose using a combination of the following methods to market the web conference:

- Direct email solicitation to Directors/Administrators of undergraduate psychology programs, continuing education, and career/vocational guidance departments of leading universities. Have designated professors and I/O grad students that teach undergraduate students (particularly those in third and fourth year) volunteer to publicize the call at their university.
- Designated student volunteers currently in I/O Programs to blanket universities within a specified radius of their area.
- Soliciting local I/O organizations (e.g., METRO, PTC, HIOP) to announce the webinar at their meetings and on their websites.
- Front page announcement on the student section of the SIOP website; front page of the main SIOP website as the webinar date draws near.

Delivery Options

To deliver the webinar, we recommend using a web technology platform that, at minimum, allows the presenters to control the in-meeting presentation, and enables the participants to ask questions in a text or through a moderated Q&A phone session. This provides a way for the presenters to adequately control the presentation and Q&A session, as well as reinforce SIOP’s brand intent of being a technology-savvy, business relevant, professional organization.

We have identified two options that will provide these services:

1) SIOP managed – This option would entail SIOP procuring the web technology through an appropriate vendor, and managing the entire process from registration to participant evaluations. We have checked pricing on a number of different vendors (including Conference Depot, WebEx and Centra) and Conference Depot seems to be not only the most cost effective, but also the most trusted, as SIOP has used them successfully in the past. They provide a flat rate quote of \$2000 for up to 200 participants for the presentation portion. This would include the pre-recorded webcast, in which participants could submit questions in writing over the internet during the discussion which then can be answered live by the moderators at the close of the session. There would be a cost associated with the Q&A portion, because it would be done live. Any live audio/visual would cost \$0.20/minute per person using Conference Depot. However if we only devote the live portion to a 15 minute Q&A, we believe the cost is reasonable (about \$600 based on 15 min at 200 participants).

The advantage of this option is that it is solely managed by SIOP, which will serve to further SIOP’s brand intent. The disadvantage of this option is the cost of purchasing the technology platform to deliver the webinar (estimated total about \$3000).

2) Sponsor hosted – A second option, which would save SIOP money in paying for a delivery platform, is to have a SIOP member’s organization sponsor the webinar. Companies like DDI or IBM have the web

conferencing technology and could be willing to host the webinar for a sponsorship (we have contacts in each of these companies who are in the process of checking feasibility).

The advantages of this option is that it would send a strong message to participants that SIOP is associated with some key consultancies and Fortune 50 companies, and it would be of little cost to SIOP to conduct. The challenge in pursuing this option is to identify a reputable company whose association will enhance SIOP's brand image, and who is willing to provide the technology and audio-connection time required to conduct our webinar with a fairly substantial audience size (200 people).

We recommend the Sponsor-hosted option, as that is least costly, provides brand association with relevant companies, and seems most reliable from a technology standpoint.

Regardless of the option we chose, we will require SIOP website programming assistance for a post-conference feedback survey. We will also require a web-page on the SIOP website announcing the webinar and pointing potential participants to the registration website (managed by the hosting company).

Projected Costs

Most costs are associated with the delivery option that we deploy. Regardless of which option we chose for hosting, we assume that there are only minimal additional costs associated with programming the SIOP website or in our marketing of the event (printing, mailing, etc.).

Future web conference events focusing on other constituent populations may carry costs associated with marketing, as reaching some of those segments may require advertising in commercial media.