



“Leveraging Adobe Connect for Successful Blended Learning: A Case Study”

Transcript

Host/Event: IABL (International Association for Blended Learning) ~ First Online World Conference on Blended Learning

Date: 4.23.30

Session recording: https://iabl.wildapricot.org/resources/2020_Conf_Videos/Session%20115.mp4

Karen Hyder: Thanks so much, Joe Ganci, and thanks everybody for joining this session and thanks so much, Kassy LaBorie, for making it sound like I actually know how to play ukulele. But, what we used to say back in the day is you just need to be a day ahead of the students. So, as long as you're a day ahead, you can teach something, but you need sometimes a little bit more than that too.

So, I know you've been using Zoom already for a few hours but I wanted to start in a way that I prefer to start which is to teach people how to use the tools of the interface. So, in the Zoom app, you might notice that your tools look a certain way but if you're using Zoom in the Windows environment, things look a little bit different. So it's important to notice that no matter what tool you're using, whether it's Adobe Connect or WebEx or GoTo or Zoom, the features and the tools behave a little bit differently, and it's just enough difference that it can make the participants feel awkward or uncomfortable or lost. So, if you expect people to participate using the tools, it's helpful to show them what they are and then ask them to use those tools.

And in with that, I'd like to also ask you to agree to participate. So I'm asking you to resist distractions, to yes, do ask questions and contribute to the discussion by typing in chat. And, whether you're on a mobile device on the app or on a Windows or iOS version, please agree to participate by using either thumbs up or yes to let me know that you're out there and you're with me and you're ready to participate. I'm not sure if you're seeing that yet. So go ahead and locate the yes or no functions or thumbs up.

Male voice: One of the things I find I have to do because I am in fullscreen mode is sometimes I have to move out of it to be able to see those things.

KH: Yes, if that window is free floating you may need to navigate around. OK, so I see a couple things coming in here. A couple hand raises. Thanks so much for locating that. And if you have multiple windows open, it's of course useful to shut down unnecessary applications to free up your system resources in your network throughput, but also to really help reduce distractions so please go ahead and do that now as I continue on with

my story. I have so many things I want to tell you about using Adobe Connect and about this project that I've been working on that really uses a flipped classroom or blended learning model.

So my goal is to talk to you about this project that I've been working on with a not-for-profit. We'll talk about the basics of the flipped classroom model; key team member roles; production, prep and and planning steps; technical issues – which are always a key factor here; and a few things we wish we had known before we got started with this. So I hope you're eager and ready to begin this session.

I won't get into all the details about how I've been doing this but suffice it to say I've been online in virtual classrooms for 20 years. So I've got a very early start, but before that I spent a lot of time teaching people how to click and double-click for the first time when everybody was learning how to use Windows and graphical user interfaces. I also spent a lot of time working with the eLearning Guild and running their online events.

But recently, or in the last 3 years, I've been working for an organization called Hearing First. And their goal, when they came to me, was to teach a global audience of professionals and parents who help children who are deaf or hard of hearing get the services and support they need to learn to listen and speak wherever they are in the world. So the idea of using virtual classrooms seemed really kind of ideal, knowing that participants and practitioners could be anywhere in the world.

So we knew that all the learning experiences had to become scalable – meaning if we had hundreds of people wanting to join, we needed to be able to accommodate that. And, also, locally available. Meaning, we're not going to travel around the country to deliver this – delivering this training, but it needs to be available to them locally. So here I am, seated at this desk, where you're seeing my picture right now, and this is my classroom. This is where I operate from most days here in Rochester, NY, just up the road from Kassy LaBorie and I've been online with these folks for three years.

But, before we get into what the details of this project included, I'd like to have you folks type in chat, if you're willing, to let me know what types of interactions you know to be possible when you're doing live online sessions. You know, when there's people actually logging in with a facilitator and so forth. So I'm going to stop for a minute and read what you're posting in chat – so go ahead and type what you know – types of interactions are possible in live online sessions.

Great! I see some answers coming in here, like chat and Phil is saying he can only raise hand. Q&A function, polling, using the microphone when possible – right some apps let you click and drag. Sure, lots of things that can be done when you're live and online in a tool like this one, like Zoom.

What about when you're in a self-paced, asynchronous environment? What types of activities can you do there? Go ahead and type in chat. Right OK, so yeah it's anything that's self-paced, anything that's possible on a computer. Certainly, typing in chat or doing a phone call – all kinds of things can be done when we're not in a live, online format.

So that was something to keep in mind as we broached this whole project. And the team started with some content developed – actually Connie Malamed helped us put it together. And it's based on the Harold Jarche's "Seek, Sense, and Share" and there's some information there at the bottom of the slide that I'll ask one of my team members to paste into chat before we're done here so that you can go back and read that information. And there's also a blog post there from my team, Hearing First. So the whole idea of "Seek, Sense, and Share" is this flipped classroom blended model. That we do some tasks that are really about discovering new information. But then it's important to apply that and think about how that can be personalized for our own work. And for our own experiences. And then to turn around and share that with other team members so that they can learn from what we're learning. So this whole idea is assuming that there's going to be multiple different modalities. Sometimes it can be hard to choose what is the right modality.

But as we teamed up and put these pieces together we started to see the types of things that you typed as being kind of fairly obvious things to do in these three phases. So during the "seek" – what we call "pre-learning" – people watch videos that are posted in our community space – we use a software tool called Telligent – they read articles, or find curated content that the facilitator has pulled together, maybe they're white papers or lectures, they might observe a case study. And then they're supposed to connect those key learnings with real life situations. So go out there and try this out in your practice today. Or talk to team members about this. And then ultimately, we're commenting on the videos that are posted, we're reporting outcomes, telling stories, working in groups, writing reviews. So this model helps us put the right pieces in the right places.

And when it comes to the facilitator, we've pulled in professional people from the industry, people that we brought in from conference sessions that we've seen, so that they could put the content together. And I'll let you read this, but I'm just going to skim quickly. Essentially, there's the stuff that they have to do for pre-learning, the stuff that's gonna happen in the live session, and then the stuff that happens between the sessions. So take a look at that, and I'll stand by.

It's a lot of work for the facilitators to put this together, and initially we hoped that they would be able to do the bulk of it on their own, but found out that they really needed a lot of help. So, we do a lot of hand-holding along the way to help them get the right content in the right places. As far as the team goes, of course there's the participants, they're the people that we're serving, and the facilitators who are delivering the content – they're subject matter experts – but they don't feel confident enough to master the software to the degree that I've mastered it. So I work with them to help them deliver their live online sessions and support any kind of technical issues that might come up or handle things like polling or video. I find that a lot of people are intimidated by just using polling and video because they're not quite sure how it all works. But the more experience they have, the better they get.

Because our community is often deaf or hard of hearing, and that is certainly a major issue for us, we also bring in a captioner who uses a pod within Adobe Connect that I'll talk about a little bit later on. We have a document manager – somebody who helps all the things get into the right locations – and our visionary. Our team leader who is really looking at how to keep the right content in the right lanes. So the right facilitator is teaching their subject matter and no extra subject matter. So we don't have a lot of overlap from one program to the next.

But we found along the way that we still needed IT support to help us adapt the Telligent interface and help troubleshoot things as they came up. And that included a programmer. We have a registrar – somebody who keeps track of the participants who have registered, makes sure that they’ve gotten the information that they need and handle their questions. Somebody who manages graphics. Somebody who does communications and marketing. A project manager who sees everything that’s going on in the organization. And then our fearless leader, our CEO Teresa Caraway, who has really pulled this whole program together.

As far as the tools we’re using, we do use Zoom every day. We use it for team meetings, for small group sessions, and sometimes for breakout activities in longer programs. We also use Google Docs a lot of times for the communications text – like what’s going to go out with this alert or this news item. We use Dropbox as a large file transfer. Many of our facilitators are giving us video files, so we use the Dropbox feature that allows them to just have essentially kind of a bottomless pit. They just keep dropping files in there and we can collect them on the other end and move them to the right places. I see HIPAA is spelled wrong there, so that’s a mistake that I wish I hadn’t made, but we also use Wistia, which is a space where video files can be stored, and it is HIPAA compliant, so there’s a secure aspect to that. We use Teams and Outlook, we use Hubspot to help us attendance track and report, and CEUs – Continuing Education Units – are very important to our project. We also use a tool called Wrike for forecasting and for tracking project details. So we’re using many more tools than just the platforms of delivery.

But I want to talk to you about the delivery platforms too. So Telligent essentially handles all the communication, the content, the video clips, the discussion boards, everything that falls into like the “seek” and “sense” portion of our program. And it is a place where participants can communicate with discussion boards and post their own files too. So sometimes they have to get a report signed or something filled in and submit it before the training. Then when we go into Adobe Connect we initially started with, yes, live sessions and, yes, breakout groups, but also video clips – we initially used voice over IP and telephony audio, but have since fallen away from using telephony and we use only voice over IP.

We don’t use webcams that often, but we do use a lot of polling, chat, of course we record all sessions. Tracking is important to us. And we use a captioning service called Caption First, which provides for us team members to log into our live session and write for us while we’re talking. So those are the pieces that we’re really wanting to support or to store or to deliver to our learners.

I’ll mention this again at the end, but in addition to the standard pods that you see in Adobe Connect, you can get apps that are free in some cases or licensable applications that are aftermarket tools that you can bring in to Adobe Connect. So we use a captioning pod called “Caption Stream” is the name of it. And that allows us to have the captioner logged right into Adobe Connect with us. So if you want to find out more information about the Adobe apps that you can purchase or get for free, I’ll give you that link a little bit later on.

So in the Telligent interface, in the pre-learning environment, it looks kind of like this. Participants log in, they of course register first, they get a login ID and they log in and their pre-learning is intended to be done obviously before the live session. This requires a little bit of a culture shift – people aren’t expecting to have to do

assignments ahead of time. But it's like – you know, I studied literature in college – you don't go to the class before you've read the book. You have to read the book first. And then you go to class, and then you have something relevant to say. So the thinking is the same here. You're going to watch the videos, you're going to read the articles, you're going to complete the assignments – and then come to the live session and then everybody is in a better place to actually, you know, apply what they're learning. In addition to what you see there, we also have more embedded video, the transcript of the video, so if it doesn't play well for people or if English is not their first language, it's valuable for them to see that content in a script format. And this is essentially – obviously this is very crowded – but this is essentially what they're seeing as their pre-learning content. So they have about 45 minutes to an hour's worth of content before they attend the live session.

I mentioned earlier about having downloadable forms and things that they needed to upload for their CEUs. This is an example of what that looked like. And we always include a section called "Dig Deeper" for the advanced student or the student who just has tons of time, or the student who's particularly curious about this topic. And that "Dig Deeper" lets them spend time on that if they choose, but it's not required for CEUs. The discussion boards are an excellent place for participants and facilitators to collaborate on things and for the facilitator to see what the participants are thinking and talking about before the live session means that they can be prepared and be ready to course correct or offer suggestions or respond to people's questions verbally, if appropriate. So it's so nice to see y'know a hundred participants in the discussion before the live session begins. That lets the facilitator really get their head screwed on straight for the session. And then, of course, people are posting in those discussions as well, so the facilitator can type answers to the questions or participants can ask more questions.

Here's an example of one of the session videos. So here's some information and the participants are needing to go through this exercise and then complete a quiz at the end. That quiz at the end that lets us kind of prove that they watched the video. Because if they didn't watch the video, not only wouldn't they have ever seen those questions, but they wouldn't have answered them correctly. So by doing that, we've convinced the CEU bodies, the governing bodies, to allow us to give CEU credit for the pre-learning. Without being able to prove that people did it, they weren't able to allow us to give CEUs. But because we can really prove it, then we are able to.

Now, when we use Adobe Connect, the feature set is quite a bit different than what you're using in Zoom today. So, yes, people can raise their hand, yes they can set their status, but you have more things you can do there, like agree and disagree, and even "stepped away," which we like to know if people really aren't there live. There's also the ability for people to turn on their microphones. Of course, they can type in chat, but in Adobe, we can have as many chat pods as we want. As opposed to here in Zoom we just have one chat pod and one Q&A. So I can set up multiple chat pods depending on what the exercise is. Of course there's polling, and I can have as many polls as I need, and there's breakout groups, which was a big selling feature for my client because they knew they wanted to do interactive elements in the sessions to get team members to get to know each other and to apply what they were learning.

Now when participants log into the Adobe Connect session room, they're seeing an interface kind of like what you're seeing here in Zoom, but all of the pods and moveable objects are things that I move. You don't move them. So I have a lot more control over what people are seeing when. Also when I show a PowerPoint slide, that

slide is uploaded into a pod, which means that it lives in the cloud already. So when you're receiving this content, it's already sort of statically out there and you're downloading it or caching it locally. As opposed to what we're doing here – I'm broadcasting or streaming this up to the cloud and then you're receiving it down. So if I had any network issues on my end, you would also suffer that on your end. So it's comforting to me to have those files uploaded ahead of time. In addition to that, session rooms are persistent, which means things that I upload today will still be there tomorrow and a year from now. So we knew we would be repeating these courses over and over again. Sort of college semester style. And we didn't want to be recreating things every time. So we've built these rooms, we've uploaded content into the pods, and the rooms stand alone. So when we're ready to run that course, we can run it in that room. When it's time to run the course again next year, it'll be the same room, and other courses run in different rooms. So there's no cross-pollination of content. It's all isolated in one space. But we do run four sessions typically in a learning experience program, so we're running in the same room every time and sharing the same URL every time.

If you're on a mobile app it looks a lot different. You have tools around the edges, along the left side and the right side. Participants see the slides sort of in the middle of the screen but that changes depending on what's activated.

And chat behaves kind of differently too, depending on the mobile device you're on, but it can be unnerving for participants – they can get a little bit lost in the mobile app. But we find more and more our participants are using mobile apps, especially since people have started working at home now. So they maybe had a desktop machine at their office, but they're not going to their office, so people are running on all kinds of devices it's just shocking how many different devices are out there

But the chat capability is quite robust. You've noticed here in Zoom that you can send essentially a private chat to the panelists or the presenters. But in Adobe you can send a private chat to anyone. So it's helpful to be able to communicate either technical problems or you see a friend from school you can type to them there. But the chat becomes kind of the primary source of communication among participants.

And in Teresa Caraway's session a couple of months ago, she put together an exercise here that was built on some of the pre-learning content, but she wanted the participants to really practice "languaging" what they were going to be doing depending on whether their audience member was a baby, a toddler, or a preschooler. So, they used this technique that they called "narrating activities" which is you're just talking about what's happening as you're doing it. Like this little boy is probably putting his shoe on. Is he putting his shoe on? Yeah, he's going to put his toes in there. So, they're wanting – Teresa in this case is wanting people to really tell her what words they're going to use in that example.

So she put together this exercise, which I've blanked out the names here but you can see that we're using three chat pods, left to right. So as participants are typing, they're pre grouping themselves in baby, toddler, or preschooler, depending on where they think their script, or their narration text should go. You're not seeing the captioning text in that pod now, but if the captioner were live and online right now, she'd be typing in that white

space at the bottom. So this using three chat pods across is kind of cool, although the screen gets really crowded. The good news is, these pods are static – participants aren't moving them around. Only I'm moving them around.

So when you're thinking about that, if you think about including questions into your presentation, what kind of questions might you ask in chat? What could you ask to get participants engaged? And you heard Kassy saying earlier, something should change every three to five minutes. Maybe it's your slide changes, maybe something animates, but maybe you're asking a question like I'm asking here. So I'm going to stand by and see what you're typing in chat. Yes, any kind of review things "What did you just learn from that segment?" I don't know about the pants thing Phil, but yeah, I mean you could be humorous if you need to.

But the idea is that rather than just chalk and talk where you're just going through the whole thing as a lecture, asking questions is a sure way to get people to respond. But remember at the beginning of this session, I asked you something first. Because one of the first things I've noticed here, is we have to change the expectations about what people think a live online session is like. And my experience is that their live online sessions have been fairly passive. So yes, they can be folding the laundry, or watching a movie or in another meeting like Kassy talked about. So by setting up front that I want you to participate, and I'm showing you how to use the tools, then when I ask you to participate, my likelihood is much higher.

I'm gonna ask another question here because I didn't really mention polling, but what poll questions could you use? And how are polls different? So I'm going to pause here and let you type. OK I see your items coming in there. Yeah really whenever it's about a choice – when you have the opportunity to say "Is it A, B, C?" "Are either one of these the correct answer?" You're giving away part of the answer for them, but it's a quick way to find out that people are learning and they're ready to move on. It's certainly a great way to prove that the participant was participating. You might not always be able to prove that they got the right answer, because sometimes they don't.

When you use the "set status" I find that people think that "set status" is something silly that we would never use – but I find that I use it every time I wish I could see people nodding their heads. And here in Zoom, if you're just in a meeting or if you only have a handful of people logged in, having everybody on webcam is really fine. But once you have a couple hundred people logged in, that's not an option. So, I want to find out things like "can you hear me?" "are you ready to proceed?" So I use the set status to get people to give me feedback on things like that. Or, I might also ask them to let me know when they've stepped away from the session. If you're using the mobile device, the hand raise is hiding the set status agree and disagree. So you need to point that out to people – that that's hidden under that button on the right side of the screen.

But our friend Sherri Fickenscher did a session recently where she was wanting to show video clips and it's challenging when you show a video clip because everybody's throughput is a little bit different, participants will finish watching the video at a slightly different point. And we tend to as a rule, keep videos two minutes or shorter. And 30 MB or smaller. Because bigger files are really tough on the people who are on a low bandwidth, high traffic, or wireless network connection. So we keep these video clips nice and small. If they're larger, they go in the pre-learning.

But here in Adobe Connect, if we're going to show this video, we're gonna assume that everybody watches it, but we want feedback on when they're done. So I typically say to them, please show agree when the video has finished for you. And then when I see lots of green checkmarks then I can hide that pod. But in this case we've additionally added two pods on the right side that ask participants to respond to the questions "What pragmatic skills did you observe?" and "What could I say to mom about what I see?" So as folks are watching the video and sort of finishing up that exercise, they're starting on the next exercise. So again, I've used a layout here in Adobe Connect to configure the PowerPoint, the video pod, the chat pods on the right, and of course our captioning pod along the bottom. And when participants show that "agree" or "disagree," I'm seeing that attendees list off to the side – and I'll talk to you more about that later on.

Notice also there's a pod in the lower right here called "tech chat." When I have had a couple hundred people logged in to our Hearing First sessions, invariably somebody is telling me their audio cut out. Or they can't see the video. Or the video won't play. Or something is swirling. So, rather than try to pick that out of a fast-moving chat pod, I have a separate chat pod for tech chat. So participants can type to me when they need troubleshooting help. Sometimes they ask me about why their CEU credits didn't get applied and like in the live session I can't care about that. But when they're asking me about what can they do to get their microphone working or what can they do to improve their network connection, that's the place I go to communicate that information.

So I mentioned the idea of Layouts. And in Adobe Connect, kind of like on your smartphone or your tablet, you can have different pages with different configurations of things. So I might have a configuration with just the PowerPoint slides and a chat pod and maybe the attendee list. Or a configuration that has 3 chat pods. Or a configuration that has the video plus two. So I pre-create those, configure all the pods in all the right places, and then with a click of a button here on the right side, I can easily move from one to the next. So that saves me scrambling moving things at the last minute. But it does mean I have some up-front work that I need to do to get into the room and set those things up. That's OK though. This room is persistent, I can keep reusing it, and next time we run this course, I'll reuse the same room again. So my upfront costs are high, but later on I end up saving time. When I want to create a layout, I'm just using this little tool at the bottom of the right side of the layout panel or the layout toolbar – looks like a little "plus" – when I click that plus it says "do you want to duplicate an existing layout?", which means, essentially take a screenshot or a snapshot of what's already there. And then just changed based on that already established configuration. So I'm still going to want the PowerPoint, I'm still going to want the chat pod, I'm still going to need my captioning pod and my tech chat pod, and I can keep all those in place and then just change out the parts I don't need. So if you haven't used layouts in Adobe Connect, check those out.

I also like to do things like inventory all the things that are going to be used in that lesson. So, for Sherri Fickensher's session, what was this, session 2, she had six video clips. So I preloaded the six video clips and I'm not allowed to show you the kids' pictures here because we have permissions issues. But the video clips are all preloaded. And then Sherri and I can quick check them to make sure this is the right video, this is the right kid, this is in the right order. I can even double click the title bars to change the titles to show whether it's like a session 2 or "oops we didn't have time to show that in session 2, now it's for session 3." But I can document what order

they go in and where they belong and that helps me get the right things in the right places on the day of. So using layouts as inventory places means I'm not really ever going to show that to the participants, but I know where everything is, and I can rewind all the videos to the beginning. I'll do that with polls too. So I can quickly go in and save the polls if the data is important to me. And clear the polls if I want to go back and use them later. That's a lot quicker than opening up each poll pod, clearing it, hiding it, and opening the next one. So if you're used to using Adobe Connect, you know that that manipulation of polls and pods can be, y'know, cumbersome.

What you maybe don't know about Adobe Connect is over here on the far-right side where you see the layout buttons, there's also this thing called the Presenter Only Area, and as the name implies, it's hidden from the participants. So as we presenters are working together in this live session interface, we can be communicating with each other off there on the right side. And not only are the team members communicating, but we're also escalating questions. So if we see something that came up in chat that the facilitator didn't notice, we can copy and paste it from the left-side chat to the right-side chat, and hopefully draw attention there. Sometimes we even change the color so it pops out a little bit more.

We've embraced the idea of bringing in fellow team members – people who are experts and who are teaching on our online programs but maybe aren't committed to this particular session as a presenter, but they do come in just to help out. So if the facilitator is overwhelmed by 150 participants with a zillion questions, the team members can help out by answering questions, and then in presenter chat letting the facilitator know that that question has been taken care of. Notice also in the lower right, I have the presenter notes with my phone number in there handy, in case of cataclysm and they need to get a hold of me outside of the Adobe room, like I disappeared from the room. I also have the captioning link so participants who can't see the captioning inside the construct of the Adobe Connect session room, can watch the captioning in real time in a cloud-based app that's not in Adobe Connect. And that comes up sometimes for people on iPhones or iOS devices, where the caption stream function doesn't work quite right.

You might also notice there in the presenter notes that I've got a handout there where I can quickly copy and paste things out of the presenter notes and into chat when necessary. I call those things that are handily copy and paste-able "Pasteables." So I might say to my team member "I need all the pasteables for Sherri's session 2" and that means I need the links to the book that she's going to reference, I need the links to the videos where they live someplace outside the room in case people have trouble getting them, I need the links to the handouts, whatever might need to get pasted into chat during the session, is right at my fingertips there in the presenter notes. And, of course, participants don't see that. And it's not like those pods are so special, it's just this dividing line between the right side space and the left side space is where the difference shows up.

So when you think about having these different layouts available where you could organize content into different configurations to support an activity, what layouts might you create? I'm going to stand by and see what you have to say. Excellent, thanks so much, I see Kurt's post there "a collection of chats to use as brainstorming for a variety of topics." A layout that has chat, Q&A, whiteboard, file download, y'know just whatever are the tools that you're going to need for that exercise. So keep that in mind when you're planning, that maybe this exercise is kind of complicated, but if you can pre-create it that helps a lot. As long as you're thinking about that, what pods might

you store in that off-stage area or backstage area called the Presenter Only Area? What might you keep over there handy to either bring on to the main stage or to keep private between you and the other co-presenters? It really could be anything, but yeah, thanks Kurt, polls is an excellent one to use there. Chats with other presenters, sure anything that you want to have ready to bring onto the screen with just a flick of the mouse.

If you do decide to use breakout groups, know that the breakout function is actually kind of easy to work with in this environment. The attendees pod has a separate tab. It's the second one that you see at the top there that looks like the 5 on a die or dice. So once you go into that view, you have to be a host to do it, you're really just moving the names of the participants into the breakouts as though you're moving files into file folders. This particular screenshot included participants who were dialed in on the phone. That can get complicated. If participants don't merge their dial-in number with their login instance, Adobe sees them as two different things. Two different login instances. So if you move Kristen to breakout room 1 but her phone number stays in the main meeting, she can't hear when she gets to breakout room 1. So merging the phone with the user is important. Also, if you don't really have integrated telephony, this isn't going to work. Because you need to be moving people into breakout groups in Adobe. And then moving people into subgroups on the phone. So, if you're going to use integrated telephony, use the one that Adobe sells to you, don't try to use aftermarket things because they don't always sync up quite right. But we've moved to the stage where we're just not using telephony at all. Everybody uses voice over IP and it's really fine. I mean we have noticed that we have some people who have sluggish connections and video and webcams and those types of things really just burden their connection. So we've tried to reduce all the burdens, and make file sizes nice and small so that they can just use voice over IP and they don't need telephony to be able to hear it.

So I'll let you read the procedures for setting up the breakouts and then I just want to show you some other cool things about it. Of course, I can move myself from one room to the next, the way I would move anybody – I'm just dragging and dropping or using a flyout menu that shows up. I can send broadcast messages like I can here in Zoom that warns them "hey, you've got 2 more minutes" or "remember to assign a spokesperson who will speak for your group when we come out of the breakout activity" or "remember to assign a typist to type in the note pod while you're in that breakout group." So a lot of times I'll set up a breakout group so that it has a note pod they can type in that also has instructions. And it has the webcam pod so they can use it if they want. I also keep the tech chat pod visible so if they run into trouble, they can type to me. But I create a separate chat pod for the folks just in that room. So if somebody's mic doesn't work, they can still chat to each other. And then if they need my help, they can type in tech chat and I know where to run to. If you want more information about the breakout rooms, Adobe has a bunch of great videos on their website.

I recommend that if you are going to use breakout groups, get all of the assignments and troubleshooting done before you send them to the breakout rooms. So I usually show them a breakout layout, show them the webcam, show them the extra chat pod, show them my timer, my note pod and everything else, so that when they get into the breakout, they know what to expect, and then I have them show hand raise when they're ready to move to breakouts. And if they didn't raise their hand, I'm going to assume that they really aren't in their chairs right now and they're really not ready to go to a breakout group. So if they do manage to come back into the room and say "hey what's going on, how come everything got quiet?" I can quickly move them into the breakout. But I don't

want to just send somebody to a breakout room if they don't know what's going on. So I give them all the instructions up front, make sure they have the files that they need, let make sure that they know that they should have a note-taker and a spokesperson, make sure that they know that they have to actually turn on their own microphones, my voice will stop and that they're going to have a limited amount of time for the exercise. When we come out of the breakout groups, it's kind of cool.

that once a breakout room is used and created, we can bring the pods that participants used in those rooms back to the main room and keep all those pods in a layout like this one. So if I had three groups working on three different exercises, I'm assigning them a task and giving them a space to type, but then when we come back to the main room and then we're ready to debrief, it's important that they can read their notes. So, before they even show up for the class, I've already created this. Where I've established what the breakout groups' notes were going to be, I've color coded them so it's visually a separate thing and when they're done with the assignment, their notes would be listed here as well as my notes. So I'm just going to stop for a minute there and let you take a look at that and think about how you might use something like that. That's pretty cool. Because it's almost always the struggle that people have is we took notes but now we don't have the notes or nobody remembered to write the notes.

So as long as we're talking about Adobe Connect, I recommend that when you're going to include people in a live session, you send them this self-test. This is just a URL that you put in your own domain and then adobeconnect.com and then etc etc. That way they can run a self-test and determine whether or not their connection, their system, is ready to really cope with Adobe. And the system status link that I'm posting here is something I just used this week! We had some issues with outages and that tool allowed me to see that yes this is a real thing, it's not just here at my house. And then those free and licensable apps – things like vantage point which helps you manage multiple videos at once. A map that lets people mark where they are in the world and you can see all those in one place. All those things are available either for free or to license on that page. And I'm going to ask one of my team members to paste that into chat when we're done here. I have a little tip that comes from Karen Gleason at the eLearning Guild, and that is, if you want participants to always run their live sessions in the Adobe Connect app, instead of in the browser, add `/?proto=true` to the end of the URL and that will force them to open a browser and they'll have a little bit better experience within the app. It runs a little bit more stably, there's more room on the – across the top of the screen, and it's helpful to not let them lose that window in multiple tabs open in their browser. So I encourage you to add that to the end of your addresses when inviting people to Adobe Connect sessions.

One other thing that came up that we like to use a lot is the event time announcer at timeanddate.com – if you were to click the link that you see there – you can't actually click it – but if you were to be able to click that link, it would take you to a place that shows you what time this session is, no matter where you are in the world. So it's helpful when people are coming from different time zones because calculating that can really be mind-boggling, especially when we change to Daylight Savings Time and people on the other side of the world are like “we didn't know you changed” so keep that information out there so that people do know how to look up the correct time. And that long string is very long. But of course I would use bit.ly to shorten something like that and bit.ly is just bitly.com You can paste in a long string and it spits out a shorter string with bit.ly as part of the name. But it helps

when you're communicating in email or other tools where you don't want that URL breaking at the word wrap line at 88 characters – or thereabouts.

So we wish we had known before we started – or maybe we had an inkling, but we learned very vividly, that participants really need to unlearn habits and commit to this flipped classroom model. Because if they don't do the assignments up front, they don't know what we're talking about in the live sessions. But we found out that they were really motivated by the CEU requirements, so they have to attend all the live sessions – and they do, if they want those credits. We know that participants are really inexperienced with the technology. Many are on WiFi – a lot weren't interested in the orientation sessions. So they sort of come to us sometimes hot messes. But we offer a technical tutorial before each live session and we've got that Tech Chat pod to assist during. We also found that breakout groups were really unnecessary. We're using really robust video scenarios combined with chat polls, and interactions and that means that we can take the pressure off of trying to have somebody operate within a virtual class – sorry, within a breakout session on a screen this big. That just wasn't working for a good percentage of our participants.

So we've delivered 50 of these learning experience programs now. We've had almost 10,000 registrations. We've had people from 66 countries. And 4600 CEUs given out already. So we're really proud of what we've accomplished so far.

And we've had some great learner feedback. They're thrilled with what we're doing. They're surprised at how much we can do in a short period of time. They love the pre-learning which is terrific.

I'll go back to that in just a minute. But as we wrap up our time here, I'd like to know what takeaways you are taking from this session or what you're going to turn around and share with your team members right away. Go ahead and type in chat.

As we wrap up our time though, I do want to invite you to contact me. I am here and as Kassy warned you, it did snow today – not quite like that, but this is where I am right now. If you'd like to contact me, I'd be happy to answer your questions about Adobe or running online sessions. Or about Hearing First. So here's my contact information, and I'm so thankful to have had this opportunity to share this with you. Thank you, Joe, for inviting me.

OK I pasted some of those URLs that you were looking for in chat. So the extension on the URL is `/?proto=true` to force open the Adobe Connect app. And the self-test string and some other stuff is in the chat there on the side. Thanks so much to everybody, great to see you!

