SYNQ Studios

Engaging a global audience online

Miami-based computer graphics firm SYNQ Studios uses Adobe® Connect™ to support rich, interactive three-day educational webinar from Cairo to audiences on five continents

SYNQ Studios has earned a name for itself within the film and television industry by demonstrating that it can deliver at show time. In addition to being an award-winning production firm, the company has a dedicated workshop and webinar group called SYNQ|ED that identified the opportunity to conduct an international webinar, based in Cairo, as a way to further extend its reach beyond the entertainment realm. Needing the most reliable platform with the necessary reach and scalability, SYNQ turned to Adobe Connect for Webinars.

With offices in Miami, Kuwait, and Egypt, SYNQ Studios constantly seeks out new ways to use multimedia to tap into people's senses and stimulate their perceptual experiences. Its global clientele has sought its expert visual effects, animation, and computer graphics services for diverse projects—from Hollywood blockbusters *Lord of the Rings*, *Ice Age*, and *Underworld Evolution*, to the multimedia displayed inside “The Tallest Tower in the World,” Dubai’s Burj Khalifa.

In the wake of the political revolution in Egypt, SYNQ Studios had the rare occasion to make a small mark in history by using technology to help promote a sense of stability to niche audiences in Northern Africa and around the world. Together with the organizers of Cairo Media And Entertainment Trends Fair And Forum (CAIROMET), SYNQ Studios administered the broadcast of the interactive three-day seminar series—working from offices in Miami and with presenters in Cairo—that was seen in real time by hundreds of computer graphics professionals on five continents.

SYNQ Studios turned to Adobe Connect for Webinars because it needed a platform that would help ensure clear, engaging communication to a diverse audience, who could participate easily and reliably in online sessions.

“When we had the chance to be a part of CAIROMET, we knew right away that the web conferencing systems we had been using could not scale to support an online event of this size,” says Ahmed Shehata, co-founder and animation director of SYNQ Studios and SYNQ|ED. “That’s when we started to look for options and found that Adobe Connect was by far the best choice.”

**Rich, engaging webinars**

CAIROMET is an annual showcase of technologies that engage consumers in every imaginable medium. While SYNQ Studios’ first-class artists and technicians had previously collaborated on many large projects, they approached CAIROMET with hopes of conducting a prototype webinar series that could be developed into an ongoing educational service.

All the CAIROMET presenters were located in Cairo, teaching a live audience of 300 attendees in an auditorium. Yet, the vision of CAIROMET organizers was much broader. They wanted to open the webinar to the entire world to create a unified experience for attendees thousands of miles away, making everyone feel as if they were equally sharing in the same moment.
“There are people in many countries who are craving this type of visual effects information,” says Shehata. “We just had to find a way to get that information to them. With its foundation on the Adobe Flash® Platform, we saw that Adobe Connect enabled us to share highly visual, complex information with global audiences in a way that was just as effective as having everyone there in person.”

Because the subject matter presented at the forum was computer graphics and animation technology, it was imperative to have a webinar solution that could produce high-resolution visual media without dropped frames or loss of quality or continuity. In addition, most of the presenters were professionals in the field who had brought their own content and multimedia lesson materials to demonstrate various computer graphics techniques, making speed and dependability crucial.

With Adobe Connect, SYNQ Studios was able to assemble and orchestrate a team of technicians and presenters under one virtual roof—most of them had never met in person and were not associated with one another prior to the event. The virtual team leveraged capabilities, ranging from the ability to quickly customize rooms and presentation layouts to the ease of assigning roles for hosts and presenters, to provide webinar participants with rich, seamless experiences.

In addition, Adobe Connect facilitated CAIROMET presenters through the use of split screens, live chats, and webcams to better engage audiences in more dynamic, interactive sessions. In total, SYNQ Studios counted nearly 600 unique IP addresses that logged into the series of eight lectures, and many stayed on throughout the duration, a testament to the conference’s success.

SYNQ Studios used Adobe Connect to record each CAIROMET session and create libraries of materials for access on demand; these have been very useful for attendees located in time zones where logging in live to CAIROMET sessions was inconvenient.

With Adobe Connect, SYNQ Studios was able to offer enterprise-class services that enabled people around the globe to virtually attend this event and learn more about visual effects technology as well as collaborate directly with visual effects artists, who are in high demand. The stability and reliability of Adobe Connect enabled the launch of a global webinar incorporating all of the latest video and motion graphic capabilities. The presenters and attendees realized the full value of the sessions because the delivery and execution were flawless.

From Miami to Cairo and beyond

For the busy staff at SYNQ Studios and CAIROMET, an important advantage of using Adobe Connect for Webinars was the ability to move easily from hosts in Miami to presenters in Cairo and then quickly support interactive chats and other activities on demand. The Miami-based hosts used the role-based features of Adobe Connect to smoothly manage the webinar. While the speakers in Cairo focused on their presentations, the hosts loaded content, set and switched layouts, and managed audience Q&A. This made it easier for the presenters to focus on the content instead of the technology.
Adobe Connect facilitates a personal experience between the presenter and the audience. The presenters could directly address the attendees who asked questions and enabled participants from various countries and time zones to feel like they were in the same place at the same time.

"The flexibility to move seamlessly across all activities—for example, switching layouts from presenters to Q&A sessions—allowed us to plan ahead and structure the webinar," said Shehata. "During the 30-minute breaks between the presentations, we even created a digital lobby for participants to gather, which showcased previews of what was coming up next and helped maintain a flow of the event while presenters prepared behind the scenes." Registration and reporting features in Adobe Connect provided insight into participant demographics. Instead of investing in additional research and marketing tools, the SYNQ team was able to use this information to determine new target markets. The team was also able to review polling results to measure the overall effectiveness of the event and use participant feedback to make future improvements.

SYNQ Studios is now exploring how to utilize Adobe Connect for future projects. The live polling, desktop sharing, and mobile capabilities in Adobe Connect have the SYNQ team excited about developing new webinar initiatives where they will incorporate these features to enhance participant experiences. They also envision using breakout rooms to customize live broadcasts for people who want to go further in depth in various sub-specialties of computer graphics and multimedia.

"Given what we achieved with CAIROMET, we are looking to partner with governmental institutions in Cairo and create a whole nine-month program based on Adobe Connect, where webinars are going to be given from Miami and Los Angeles to audiences of 24 to 50 people in Egypt," says Maria Lanao, Communications and development, SYNQ Studios. "Adobe Connect is enabling us to work efficiently across global teams and reach audiences worldwide with dynamic and engaging online experiences."

"Adobe Connect is enabling us to work efficiently across global teams and reach audiences worldwide with dynamic and engaging online experiences."

Maria Lanao
Communications and development,
SYNQ Studios

Adobe Connect for Webinars

For more information
www.adobe.com/products/adobeconnect