Personal notes
You may have noticed I was a little rushed at the end. When I practiced, I had about 35/40 minutes of content. Shows it’s good to leave time to stretch instead of rushing too much. There were a lot of questions which took up more time than I expected.

The doorbell was someone who was offering to plow my driveway, I was very thankful since we have about a foot of snow. That was something I couldn’t predict or prevent happening, a good example that you can’t plan for everything. We had a tornado sighting during one of the ALCTS webinars and our tech support person had to leave the webinar to take cover. There have been other weather events and fire alarms through the years. We moved to scheduling someone to be back-up tech support after that first tornado experience.

Violet appreciated the kind words and knows she’s a very good and quiet dog!

Books mentioned
Teach Beyond Your Reach by Robin Neidorf (Information Today: 2006)
Crash Course in Presentation Skills by Maurice Coleman (ABC Clio: expected 2014)

Main webinar software programs
Note that you might be restricted to what your hosting organization or home institution offers. There are few free webinar options out there, but Google Hangouts is growing in popularity.

Citrix GoToWebinar: http://www.gotomeeting.com/online/webinar
Cisco WebEx: http://www.webex.com/
Google Hangouts: http://www.google.com/+/learnmore/hangouts/

Technical aspects
Wikipedia software comparison chart:
Top Ten Review: http://webinar-services-review.toptenreviews.com/

Note that these are not comprehensive or exact. For example, they say that chat is an option in GoToWebinar, which it is, but not an interactive chat that everyone can see.

Attendee questions
Q: Do online demos usually work in presentations?
A: They do work. Just be careful about moving back and forth between slides and software demonstrations, as the software might not like it and it could be jumpy for the attendee. Also be conscious of how you’re pointing your mouse and scrolling. Everything takes longer to show up on the attendees screen, and they’ll lag a bit behind. Go more slowly than you normally would.

Q: Do you recommend providing handouts at conference presentations as well as during webinars?
A: Yes, you can do a handout for a conference presentation. I would recommend posting something
online that they can access later. You might want to create a SlideShare account to share your slides instead of having them printed for the session. Many conferences will have someplace to centrally post any handouts and slides after the conference.

Q: How much time do you typically allow for polls?
A: I watch how they come in, and try to get about 90% participation. This probably lasts about 1 minute, but seems like an eternity.

Q: How much time should you allocate for people joining you on the webinar, intro, actual content delivery, and Q&A?
A: I mentioned this in the presentation, but wanted to break it down again for a 60 minute webinar or presentation: Joining you: 0, they know when you’re starting, don’t wait for them unless it’s a small workshop; Intro/Conclusion: 5 minutes, including housekeeping; Content: 45 minutes; Questions: 10 minutes

Q: Is the Poll function part of the webinar software?
A: Most webinar software does include a poll function. It will work differently for each one, so see if you can practice ahead of time. There are also often character restrictions, so you might have to shorten your text. I brought up Polling Everywhere: http://www.polleverywhere.com/. This would probably work better for a live demonstration, and gives people multiple ways to respond in real time. If any of you have used this, I’d love to hear about it.

Q: How often should you check and respond to questions from attendees? Should we always answer the questions while we doing the presentation?
A: Experience shows that people want interaction, which would mean answering questions more often. I would recommend building time into your presentation to ask for questions and to respond to them about every 15 minutes. You can allow them to build up a little, and then respond to them at your transition from one thought to another. If you wait until the end of the presentation, people have lost their train of thought on why they wanted to know more about a topic. I think this takes practice, and stopping for questions can throw off your flow. I know it happened to me a few times in today’s presentation.

Q: When is it best to allow questions from audience by mike vs allowing questions via messaging (like this or via Twitter)? Does the size of the audience make a difference here?
A: Getting audience voice interaction and comments works in a small group setting. It is not as effective when you start getting over 25 people. It takes time to stop and check people’s technology. When I used to teach workshops with webinar software, we would take time in the beginning of the class to check everyone’s microphones and explain how to use them. This isn’t as effective in a large presentation.

Q: Why are questions being kept anonymous? Would love to see other folks’ questions.
A: So would we! This is a function of the GoToWebinar software. Each software packages has its pros and cons, and this unfortunately is one of our cons.

Q: Will you talk about finding someone to sponsor a webinar?
A: There are often calls for presenters if an organization is looking for webinar topics. ALCTS is always looking for presentations, contact the Continuing Education Committee or use the form online at https://alctsprogram.wufoo.com/forms/p7x3x5/. Look for a CE group with your membership organization and contact them to see if they need presenters. It will help if you have presented before
and have people who can vouch for your skills.

Q: Too many presenters is a big no-no as far as I’m concerned... you wind up getting very little actual content.
A: I meant to get to this during the presentation. In a 60 minute webinar, I wouldn’t suggest having more than 2 people, in a 90 minute webinar; I would limit it to 3. Think about how much time each person really has to present when you need time for introduction, conclusion, and questions. For 2 people in 60 minutes, each should shoot for 20 minutes of presenting. For 3 people in 90 minutes, each should shoot for 25 minutes of presenting. I think there’s also a space for panel webinars with more interaction between presenters, such as what American Libraries Live has been doing.

Q: How could you find out if there have been other webinars on the topic you are considering doing? Sources to search to find out this information or just need to hunt or ask around?
A: I think you would really just have to hunt around and Google this. Think about the organizations you would expect to sponsor a webinar on a topic, and see if they have a page with what has been presented. If something hasn’t been presented for a while, it might be time for an update.

Q: What kind of follow-up assessment or evaluation would you recommend? Any specific questions you would ask that are specific to webinars?
A: You’ll see the evaluation that we send with the ALCTS webinars. It’s not very long. We do want to know if there were technology problems, and if we hit the mark on content and the presenters we chose. Sometimes the description misses the mark, as it does for any conference presentation, and we want to know things like that so we can improve in the future.

Q: What about a recorded webinar? I’ve been asked to do a recorded webinar. Seems hard to break things up / poll / etc.
A: I think you can pre-record a webinar, and build in activities that they would do at intervals. There’s no telling if they would actually do them, though. Instead, you could make a series of 5-15 minute recordings on shorter how-to topics and get really specific. It would depend on the purpose and audience.

Q: Does your home library own the webinar software? I don't quite understand the tech side of this.
A: The software used in today’s presentation was GoToWebinar, and the ALCTS office has a subscription. Some libraries do have an enterprise license to webinar software for distance education, remote meetings, and other uses. An ongoing subscription will cost you money, and you will also need staff to maintain and support the use of the software. My library does not have a subscription to any webinar software.

General attendee comments:
- I find that 90 mins is the absolute max of time. People lost concentration after that.
- Questions = interactivity
- It sounds like the slide etiquette is similar to what’s been said about PowerPoint
- Fred Reuland told us that he thought the hands-free desk microphones were the best, especially because of breath sounds etc.
- A big issue is if the software requires a plug in or download. Some of us can’t download to our work computers.
- One of the best follow-ups to a webinar I received was a transcript of the Q&A and the Chat
session. Allowed me to remember what was 'said' during the presentation.

- Problem with answering only on Twitter for poll questions if you don't have an account; make sure your polling can be answered by all.
- I like doing webinars - takes out some of the nervousness common in presenting in person :)
- I always like webinars where there is a practical take-away. Something I can adapt for my library system.
- Also want access to archived recordings after the webinar
- I like to listen to a specific parts of recorded webinar after attending the webinar
- I find that adding a lot of images slows down the downloading of a slide down. Just like your little doggie did now. It loaded slowly. So I send a pdf of the slides to the attendees with images and use just plain text on the webinar.
- Never had successful webcam experience from me or attendees
- People don't like too many technical difficulties, such as audio problems. But these are impossible to predict.
- All of those comments could have been said about any presentation, webinar or not.
- It's difficult to keep the energy up as a presenter because you don't have that live energy exchange with your audience.
- Presenter not talking loud enough to hear over the phone if needed to call in
- Maurice [Coleman] gave a great webinar through SLA on teaching adult learners. I highly recommend it.
- ISBN for [Maurice Coleman’s] Book - on Amazon! 978-1610696166
- Thank you, I tell myself “Remember, you're not being attacked by a tiger”