

## Maestro Conference

Discussion created by Sheila LeGeros on 7/3/2009 5:15 PM

[Sheila LeGeros](#)

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In my continual search for technology to animate ToP methods virtually, I participated in a MaestroConference call today. You can sign-up for 3 free conferences during the month of July following the link below.

<http://maestromonth.com/>

Here is what I found remarkable:

- 1) We had 235 participants on the teleconference and it was easily one of the most engaging teleconferences I have ever participated in.
- 2) The sound was clear -- we could always hear the speaker well, with no dogs barking in the background or static from cell phones.
- 3) We had 3 times when we went into breakout rooms of between 3 and 7 people each, over the course of a 90 minute meeting. We were brought back to the large group with a pleasant chime.
- 4) The call started and ended on time.
- 5) The moderator periodically asked us questions to which we could reply yes or no using the number pad on our telephones. He reported the data back to us instantly and it helped build engagement.
- 6) There were several occasions where the audience could ask questions. We pushed a button on our phone if we wanted to ask a question. The moderator handled it with ease and called people by name to ask their questions.

I think this would be a wonderful tool for something like World Café, or Focused Conversation with large groups.

I encourage you to register for one of the free classes this month so that you can experience this new technology. (The speakers are amazing too -- Deepak Chopra is one of them coming up.)

Sheila

[Catherine Tornbom](#)

Posted by [Catherine Tornbom](#) on 7/26/2009 12:19 PM

Sheila,

I accepted your encouragement to participate in one of the Maestro programs. I joined the July 10 program with Luisah Teish (a wonderful storyteller). I had a similar experience as you did and was impressed with the ease of connecting, the quality of the sound, and the abilities of the program to move people in and out of breakouts.

I don't think the moderator of my session was as skilled in giving instructions and preparation for the shifts as he could have been. For instance, in the second breakout session, it would have been helpful to know that we were in a different group, and approximately how many people in our group, and that we had to start at the beginning with intro's to help transition us to completing our discussion assignment . A virtual group has the same needs for forming - even if only for the briefest moments - as a face-to-face group.

I give this high marks for use with a focused conversation and other conversation based methods.

Catherine

[Sheila LeGeros](#)

Posted by [Sheila LeGeros](#) on 7/27/2009 6:00 PM

Hi Catherine,

I participated in a second MaestroConference free session and found a big difference in the quality of the call, which was related to both the presenter and the facilitator. The presenter crammed too much heady information into too short of time, and seemed to have the goal of using every conceivable feature of the tool in a one-hour session. He asked a very deep question on the first breakout and gave only enough time for about 30 seconds per participant, that left me uncomfortable to speak, or know where to start. The facilitator was a fill-in, and she did not seem fully present (could hear her cell phone ringing in the background).

Participant experience did not seem to be a goal of the call. This session provided a

great learning opportunity about being mindful of participant experience -- it needs to be a paramount goal in virtual meetings.

Sheila

**Discussion created by Sheila LeGeros on 9/17/2009 9:03 AM**

[Sheila LeGeros](#)

**Posted by [Sheila LeGeros](#) on 9/17/2009 9:03 AM**

Hello Virtual ToP Team,

Ester Mae and I are starting a small group of people who want to study the use of MaestroConference as it relates to ToP. There are some really neat features in the tool:

- 1) Facilitator has the ability to create breakout groups
- 2) Great sound quality -- there is technology built-in to dampen sound other than for the person who is speaking
- 3) Polling capability with the keypad of a regular telephone
- 4) Facilitator has the ability to mute/un-mute participants

I find it easiest to learn about how to use this tool by practicing with an actual group of people. We are looking for people who are willing to experiment. I think we'll probably need 3 or 4 sessions in order to give each one of us the chance to "hold the reins" and practice checking people in, create breakout groups, run polls, etc. We will run this experiment with MaestroConference only -- no other tools, just so that we can become proficient using MaestroConference.

If you are interested in joining this group, please reply to this message; and sign-up for the 30 day trial (link below) so that you may access the online tutorials.

<http://maestroconference.com/specials?w=tryit&p=LeGeros>

**<=== FREE 30 DAY TRIAL**

Once we have established who is in this small group, I shall send out a MeetingWizard for the first meeting.

Hope you'll join us,

Sheila & Ester Mae