

# Let the Data Breathe: Introducing the Burstcast Protocol for Live, Evidence-Based Dialogue

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## Abstract:

While the scientific webinar has democratized knowledge at scale, it is insufficient to navigate the modern infodemic and heal an eroding public trust. A culture of one-way presentation has inadvertently created a fracture between compelling narrative and visible evidence, leaving audiences with either a story or the data, but rarely both. The Burstcast is a new framework for live, evidence-based dialogue designed to heal this fracture. The protocol weaves together the narrative engagement of a podcast with the dynamic, on-screen exploration of data, transforming static presentations with a collaborative "guided expedition" into the scientific process. By making the act of finding as accessible as the findings themselves, the Burstcast protocol offers a practical method for researchers, institutions, and funders to move beyond static conclusions to a dynamic inquiry, fostering the transparency and understanding needed to rebuild the credibility of science.

## Article:

The scientific webinar has been an invaluable tool, democratizing knowledge and connecting millions of us, especially during times of global crisis. Its power lies in its ability to broadcast information at scale.

Yet, as a community of researchers, leaders, and innovators, we now face a challenge that broadcasting alone cannot solve: the erosion of public trust in an age of misinformation. We have all felt the limits of our current formats; that moment in a presentation where a one-way stream of data, no matter how brilliant, struggles to create a genuine two-way conversation.

This is not a failure of our science, nor of our scientists behind it. It is an opportunity. It is a sign that we are ready to evolve beyond one-way delivery and pioneer new formats designed to foster dialogue, invite engagement, and put the dynamic, living process of discovery on full display.

An old idea keeps tripping us up: that simply giving people facts will change minds. The assumption that more data automatically yields understanding has created a culture of presentation, not dialogue. This isn't just ineffective; it's corrosive. In an age of institutional distrust, presenting science as an infallible sermon from a pulpit is a self-inflicted wound. We are inadvertently teaching the world that science is a set of facts to be accepted, not a process to be understood and questioned.

On the other end of the spectrum, the rise of the scientific podcast has masterfully solved the problem of narrative. It has given voice and personality to researchers, telling the human story behind the data. Yet, it creates its own gap: the data itself remains invisible, leaving the listener engaged but unable to see the evidence. We are left with either data without a story, or a story without the data.

Burstcast was designed to heal this fracture: it combines podcast-level narrative with on-screen evidence so people leave with both the story *and* the science.

This deep-seated frustration with the divide between narrative and evidence led us to develop a new framework. Its goal is to heal this fracture, replacing the one-way stream of data with a structured, interactive dialogue built around the live exploration of data. It's a simple concept with a radical ambition: to make the process of scientific inquiry as accessible as its conclusions.

The expedition is orchestrated through four distinct phases. It begins with a Concept Hook: a relatable story, co-created by the host and guest, designed to answer the audience's unspoken question, "Why should I care?"

The centerpiece is **interactive science**. This is not a static presentation but a responsive dialogue from claim to evidence. While a live dialogue might seem more daunting than a rehearsed presentation, we've found it's actually liberating for the expert. It replaces the pressure of a flawless performance with the energy of a collaborative discovery, all guided by a skilled host who is there to support the speaker. The conversation builds through a series of key discoveries, and for each one, the host and guest unpack the analytical approach. They deconstruct complex approaches and, guided by the host's questions, present the key data needed to make the case. It culminates in a unifying concept that connects the claims, offering a live demonstration of the scientific method itself. We are not just sharing findings; we are sharing the act of finding.

Finally, the session expands into an Open Dialogue, creating a space for questions, but also for the community to offer diverse perspectives and truly engage with the science.

Imagine a world where this model is the norm. A world where funders can validate the key findings that justify new investment, where policymakers can engage with the evidence for a new public-health measure, and where students can see for themselves how a scientific claim is charted, moving from a single data point to a bold new coastline on the map of human knowledge. The tools are already at our disposal.

Science has always been an expedition into the unknown. Burstcast invites humanity to join the journey, to not just see the destination, but to experience the discovery for themselves.

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