Acceptance and utilization of digital congress poster presentations: a survey of medical publication professionals

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To gain insight into the overall impact, acceptance, and utilization of interactive digital poster presentations in medical/scientific congresses and to educate ISMPP members on perceived advantages and disadvantages of this form of data communication.

Research design and methods: A 10-question survey questionnaire was designed, circulated via e-mail to ISMPP members, and responses invited between December 20, 2011 and January 9, 2012.

Results: Of 111 respondents who completed the survey (48.6% pharmaceutical company, 40.5% medical communications company, 3.6% publisher, and 7.2% other), 28.8% work with interactive posters, 50% utilize QR codes, and 43.2% have viewed interactive posters in a congress setting. Responses suggest the greatest potential advantages of interactive posters include increased audience engagement (56.9%), wider data dissemination (47.1%), enhanced poster metric tracking (49%), and increased capacity for audio/visual presentation (67.6%). An increased need for overall technology management resource was cited as the greatest disadvantage (80%). Other obstacles included cost (33.6%) and current congress regulations (27.1%). The majority of respondents agree/strongly agree that this format allows for better communication of data versus traditional printed posters and that congresses will slowly adopt this technology (56.9% and 63.9%, respectively).

Conclusion: The majority of respondents believe interactive digital posters enhance communication and dissemination of data and offer a dynamic forum for presenters to increase audience engagement. As congresses adopt these technologies, it will be important to monitor whether differences among guidelines emerge, as well as any potential compliance issues.

BACKGROUND

- Presentation of data as a traditional printed poster at medical/scientific congresses has remained an essentially unchanged format for decades. Although they are the accepted medium for dissemination of medical/scientific information in a congress setting, printed poster presentations are viewed by some as inadequate by failing to engage the audience and promote effective discussion of the content[1,2]
- As technology grows and evolves in other disciplines, it is intuitive to expect an evolution of technology in the dissemination of medical/scientific information in a congress setting
- Evolving technology has already supported the integration of 2-dimensional quick response (QR) codes that may be utilized to share a pdf of the poster electronically. Furthermore, "going green" by utilizing QR codes prevents the need for printing large numbers of poster handouts on paper
- Exploring the current and future utilization of advances in technology including digital interactive posters presentations may provide critical insight into the potential opportunities to improve dissemination of scientific information

OBJECTIVE

- To gain insight into the overall impact, acceptance, and utilization of interactive digital poster presentations in medical/scientific congresses
- To educate International Society of Medical Publication Professionals (ISMPP) members on perceived advantages and disadvantages of this form of data communication
- To evaluate the expectation of future utilization of interactive digital poster presentations in a congress setting

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

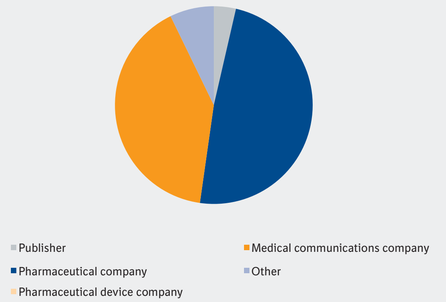
- A 10-question survey questionnaire was designed and circulated via e-mail by www.surveymonkey.com to all ISMPP members
- Responses were invited between December 20, 2011 and January 9, 2012
- Survey questionnaires completed by ISMPP members were then evaluated using univariate analyses

RESULTS

Respondent Employment Characteristics

- A total of 111 ISMPP members completed the survey
- The distribution of the respondents was as follows: 48.6% pharmaceutical company, 40.5% medical communications company, 3.6% publisher, and 7.2% other (**Figure 1**)

Figure 1: *Field of employment*



Experience with Interactive Poster Presentations and Quick Response (QR) Codes

- Of the respondents, 28.8% (32) currently work with or utilize interactive posters while 50% (55) utilize QR codes (**Figure 2**)
- A total of 6.3% (7) of respondents reported viewing interactive poster presentations often, 36.9%(41) reported viewing interactive poster presentations sometimes, while 56.8% (63) report never having viewed interactive posters in a national or international congress setting (**Figure 3**)
- *Congresses where respondents have viewed interactive poster presentations include:*

1. Movement Disorders Society (MDS)
2. American Academy of Neurology (AAN)
3. American Society of Hematology (ASH)
4. American Society for Clinical Oncology (ASCO)
5. International Society for Medical Publication Professionals (ISMPP)
6. American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG)
7. American Urological Association (AUA)
8. American Society of Nephrology(ASN)
9. America Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM)
10. American College of Radiology (ACR)
11. American Epilepsy Society (AES)
12. Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Surgeons Annual Scientific Congress
13. International Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy (ICAAC)
14. American College of Nurse Practitioners (ACNP)
15. American Society of Regional Anesthesia (ASRA)
16. Infectious Disease Society of America (IDSA)
17. European College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ECNP)

RESULTS

Figure 2A: *Does your company currently work with or utilize interactive posters?*

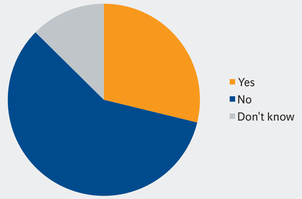


Figure 2B: *Does your company work with or utilize QR codes?*

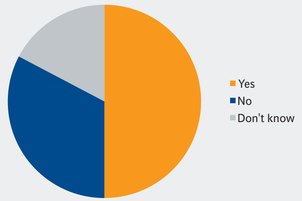
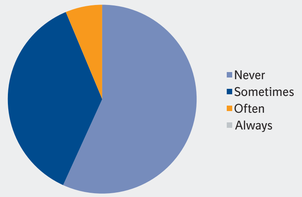


Figure 3: *How often do you view interactive poster presentations during a national or international medical/scientific congress?*



UTILIZING INTERACTIVE POSTERS – NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

- Responses suggest the greatest potential advantages of interactive posters include increased audience engagement (56.9%[58]), wider data dissemination (47.1%[48]), enhanced poster metric tracking (49%[50]), and increased capacity for audio/visual presentation (67.6%[69]) **Figure 4**.
- An increased need for overall technology management resource was cited as the greatest disadvantage (80% [76]) **Figure 5**. Other obstacles included cost (33.6% [35]), current congress regulations (27.1% [29]), author/presenter reluctance to engage with a novel presentation format (12.1%[13]), and sponsor company policy (9.3%[10]) **Figure 6**.

RESULTS

- The majority of respondents agree/strongly agree that interactive data presentation routes allow for better communication of data versus traditional printed posters and that congresses will slowly adopt this technology (56.9% [62] and 63.9% [69], respectively) **Figure 7**.

AN INTERACTIVE POSTER PRESENTATION FORMAT WOULD ALLOW FOR BETTER COMMUNICATION OF DATA VERSUS A TRADITIONAL PRINTED POSTER.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree	13.8%	15
Agree	43.1%	47
Neutral	37.6%	41
Disagree	5.5%	6
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
	answered question	**109**
	skipped question	**2**

Figure 4: *Advantages for utilizing interactive over printed posters*

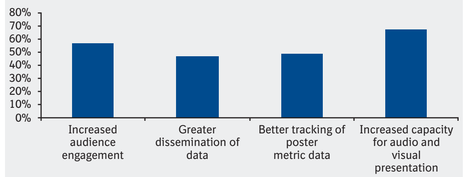


Figure 5: *What are the greatest disadvantages of non-traditional interactive poster presentations? (select all that apply)*

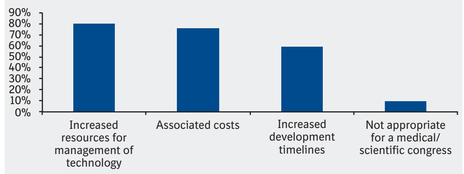
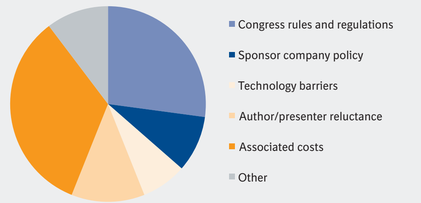
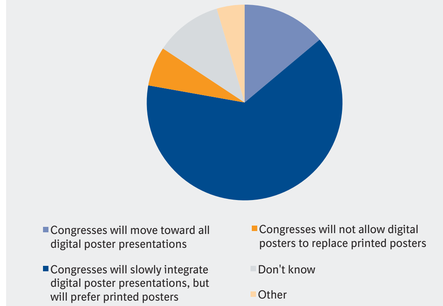


Figure 6: *What the largest hurdle to overcome in the acceptance of interactive posters as the norm in medical/scientific congresses?*



RESULTS

Figure 7: *The future of interactive posters at medical/scientific congresses*



CONCLUSIONS

- Interactive poster technology is gaining a foothold in the dissemination of peer-reviewed scientific data from pharmaceutical industry-sponsored studies: many congresses have begun to utilize this technology; nearly one third of all ISMPP member respondents already work with digital interactive posters, while half are currently using QR code technology
- The majority of respondents believe interactive digital posters enhance communication and dissemination of data and offer a dynamic forum for presenters to increase audience engagement
- The majority of respondents believe that congresses will slowly integrate digital interactive poster technology in the future
- As congresses adopt these technologies, it will be important to monitor whether differences among guidelines emerge, as well as any potential compliance issues

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1. Rowe N, Dragan I. What impact do posters have on academic knowledge transfer? A pilot survey on author attitudes and experiences. *BMC Medical Education* 2009; 9:71.
2. De Simone R, Rodrian J, Osswald B, et al. Initial experience with a new communication tool: the `Digital Interactive Poster Presentation'. *European Journal of Cardio-thoracic Surgery* 19 2001; 953±955.

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