

Dental symposium at home? AMED goes virtual

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The energy and expense of running a physical meeting has become a significant problem for many organisational leaders in 2011. With the worst economy since the Great Depression, the Japan tsunami affecting 40% of our membership, and the annual meeting scheduled to be held in one of the most exclusive areas in the world, the Academy of Microscope Enhanced Dentistry (AMED) found itself entering a perfect storm.

"The man of virtue makes the difficulty to be overcome his first business, and success only a subsequent consideration" (Confucius) came to mind as AMED President, Dr Bill Lannan, and I took a step away from tradition this past March after our very successful Santa Barbara 2010 meeting. We regrouped and brainstormed a new idea: a virtual dental conference with no physical meeting space at all!

We developed a live three-day online programme with multiple webinar channels and an interactive website with chatting capability for attendees. The meeting was organised into corporate forums, research and academic presentations, and featured clinical presentations.

Most sessions were presented live with nearly 50 presenters in the three days. Teams of moderators, co-moderators and guests were packed into my dental office computer network, as mission control to ensure the smooth running of the conference. We were in touch live around the dental world from 10 to 12 November. Presenters spoke from Brussels to Florence to Taiwan to Frankfurt to Sao Paolo to Tokyo to London to Melbourne to Haifa to Vancouver to Athens to Riga to Cape Town to Newport Beach, all simultaneously with multiple channels. Real-time group Q & A followed each presentation in every time zone. The attendees from 26 countries said that they were having much fun staying up all night interacting and listen-

ing to some of the most talented dentists in the world lecturing from their homes on their computers as if they were in one giant global room together. There were even impromptu live presentations. It was dental Woodstock, a ground-breaking event!

The meeting is now online for registrants to view the presentations if they were unable to see them live. Up to 28 self-instructional ADA CERP CE credits are available by filling out surveys on the conference site. The AMED site is now an active communication hub where invitations are sent out for impromptu lectures by some of the presenters. The unique aspect of the AMED conference is that it continues to attract participation well after the meeting. The buzz keeps going on.

Attendees are able to see their colleagues' online presentations through the AMED website and are then able to chat with them online. The virtual exhibit hall, individual presentation pages, and overview page are great places to meet. The attendees can also write comments on the presenters' page and obtain feedback directly from the presenters. We plan to continue these virtual meetings and will add more presentations to our exclusive video-viewing library.

Please join the experience by logging onto www.microscopdentistry.com. Members who register for the meeting will receive indefinite access as a member benefit and non-members can register for the event with 30-day access.

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