INTRODUCTION

Dermatology congresses such as American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) and European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology (EADV) have become early adopters of digital resources such as electronic poster presentations.

Oncology congresses such as American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) offer social media and digital resources such as a comprehensive meeting website, resource library, iPlanner, and a messaging and networking center.

However, the value of digital resources to attendees is not well understood, and it is not known which types of resources should be implemented during future congresses.

Additionally, the perceived value of electronic posters compared to traditional print posters has not been evaluated in any published source.

OBJECTIVE

To understand the perception of and preferences for digital and social media tools at scientific meetings among dermatologists and oncologists.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Exploratory research was conducted via a web-based Epocrates® (San Mateo, CA) HCPEView™ (Epocrates, Inc, San Mateo, CA) survey.

Participants included practicing dermatologists (n=9) and oncologists (n=16) who had attended ≥1 national or international congress in the past 2 years.

The survey consisted of 10 questions with directions to select a “very or extremely valuable” resource related to scientific presentations at a medical or scientific conference using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 = not at all valuable and 5 = extremely valuable.

When asked what type of content would you be most interested in accessing via a QR code on a scientific poster, approximately half of participants (48%) were most interested in using poster QR codes to access a website with additional study information, followed by a physical copy of the poster (40%).

Opinions regarding electronic posters were mixed but generally positive (Figure 3).

Most respondents had used a conference-specific app, and experience was generally positive.

Logistical resources such as smartphone apps, electronic news feeds, and online session calendars were considered very useful.

Opinions on electronic posters were mostly positive, though some respondents still preferred face-to-face communication with authors.

Perceptions of digital resources have improved over the last 5 years for many respondents because of increased accessibility, faster communication, and greater convenience.

Resources from congresses that would allow for access to scientific content and improved logistical options.

CONCLUSIONS

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While this survey was small and not generalizable, results suggest that digital resources are changing the landscape through increased access to scientific content and improved logistical options.