

NEW PRODUCT/SERVICE LAUNCH CAMPAIGN

2017 Winner: American College of Cardiology

Entry Title: ACC International Regional Conferences

Project Overview/Elevator Pitch:

The ACC has 52,000 members around the world, including 15,000 members outside of the United States. The international activities of the ACC are driven through ACC International Chapters, which are formal partnerships that the ACC has cultivated with cardiovascular societies around the world. After years of engaging in different educational programs outside of the United States, the ACC decided to pilot its own regional cardiology conferences in partnership with ACC International Chapters in different regions of the world. While other association activities usually bring an update or review from a domestic annual congress, the ACC International Regional Conferences offered the full suite of ACC activities, including its educational programs, digital learning platforms, JACC journals, ACC registry programs, and non-clinical education such as leadership training, to different regions of the world. The ACC's International Chapters then worked with the ACC to design a locally relevant, interactive, and innovative 2.5 day educational program. The ACC piloted two of these programs in 2016 – the ACC Latin America Regional Conference in Mexico City, Mexico on October 6-8 and the ACC Middle East Regional Conference in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia on October 28-30. The immensely successful programs attracted 450 attendees in Mexico and 715 attendees in Jeddah. Through its evaluations, the ACC demonstrated concrete gains in clinical knowledge, as well as a 100% satisfaction rating from attendees. Based upon this initial success, the ACC has chosen to expand the offering in 2017 with three conferences in Latin America, the Middle East, and Asia Pacific.

Project Goals/Objectives:

The goal of this project was to bring the best of ACC's high-quality education in a way that is relevant to unique regions around the world. Recognizing decreasing attendance at international congresses and easy accessibility to remote learning, the ACC aimed to reach frontline practitioners and younger physicians who have not been able to engage with the ACC to date. The ACC International Regional Conferences therefore ensure that the ACC can continue to achieve and expand our global mission by reaching clinicians where they live and practice. The conferences are also dedicated to delivering education that is developed and customized by local experts and offered through convenient learning platforms. In this way, the engagement is immediately applicable in assisting clinicians increase cardiovascular care and promote heart health in their regions.

Other objectives of the program included:

Demonstrable Behavioral Change: Using the results of specific case questions presented in pre-and post-conference evaluations, the ACC was able to demonstrate a change in how doctors are treating patients based upon the most recent guidelines in cardiology.

Developing Future Leaders: The ACC developed specific programming for younger physicians, including physicians in training. The programming included the first ever cardiology examination for fellows in training that allowed trainees to confidentially benchmark themselves in all areas of cardiology to understand areas for improvement. The ACC also conducted a leadership training program taught by ACC past presidents to prepare younger doctors to be leaders of their clinician communities in the future.

Promoting Innovation in Learning: All sessions at the conferences had audience response systems that engaged the audience as teachers and learners throughout each program. In addition, the ACC brought clinical simulation platforms to each program that allowed small groups of attendees to practice an interactive application of clinical guidelines on simulated patients.

Strategy:

Key strategies included:

Relevancy – By establishing planning teams for the course with 20% representation from the United States and 80% representation from leaders in each region, the ACC was able to ensure that every session and learning platform was relevant to the unique practice of cardiology in each region. As importantly, the content was developed so that the regional leaders could teach the most important clinical research and standards of care occurring locally that was also of import to clinicians around the globe, thus creating a bidirectional learning environment that strengthened the core mission of the ACC.

Data Driven – In addition to relying on local experts, the ACC conducted a robust assessment process for the program. This included doing an environmental scan of each region that built a needs assessment that was used to develop the key teaching points for the program. The ACC then worked with the program planning team to develop pre-assessment and post assessment questions that would allow the ACC to evaluate if its goals were achieved in terms of changing daily practice.

Allowing Opportunities for Staff Growth – The ACC International Regional Conferences were successfully executed in 2016 without any additional staff being hired for the programs. The way that the ACC was able to achieve this objective was by identifying strong performers across all divisions of the ACC and allowing them to contribute to the program as a professional growth opportunity. Teams were developed for each program that tapped into leading staff members from International Affairs, Education, Marketing, IT, Meetings and Events, Business Development, and other divisions of the ACC. Putting together these cross-functional teams of high performing staff members was perhaps the most important strategy that the ACC employed in reaching the level of success that we achieved in the regional conferences.

Success Metrics:

The ACC's key metrics for success for the conferences and performance on each metric are as follows:

1. Attendance of at least 250 attendees at each conference: The ACC had 450 attendees in Mexico City and 715 attendees in Jeddah, which greatly exceeded our registration goals for both conferences.
2. Regional Impact: It was important to ACC to have attendees from outside of the host country for the program. In Latin America the ACC had 12 countries represented and in the Middle East the ACC had 10 countries represented. Of particular note, there were 200 attendees from Pakistan at the program in Jeddah.
3. Break even financial performance: The ACC was able to conduct both programs profitably based upon higher than anticipated attendance, strong global and local fundraising efforts, and excellent week-to-week management of the program budget.
4. Positive Attendee Experience: 100% of attendees at both conferences reported that they met their goals and 98% reported that they would recommend the ACC regional conferences to a colleague.
5. Demonstrated Change in Practice: The ACC demonstrated an average of 35% reported gain in knowledge during the program. Objective assessment based upon clinical case questions demonstrated an average of 16% improved performance and application of the most recent medical guidelines.

Learn More:

Association website

<http://www.acc.org/>