A Case Study: ACS B.I.O.T Web Symposia

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Outline

• Introduction to web symposia
• Web symposia goals
• Implementation of web symposia
• Future of web symposia
Web Symposia

• Web symposia are a series of presentations given over the internet with audio typically over the telephone
• Audience needs high speed internet, computer and projector, speaker phone, and a conference room
• Speakers need high speed internet, computer, phone, and a quiet room
Questions BIOT asked

• How can BIOT increase the number of members?
• How can BIOT keep members longer?
• How can we attract BS and MS level members?
• How can we better interact with BIOL and ANAL (our largest co-member population)?
• How can we increase the number of international members?
Member needs

• **Continued programming** beyond annual meeting
  – The best BIOT talks are given at other for profit meetings (IBC, CHI, and others)

• **No Travel:** Many people, especially students and young professionals, cannot travel to the annual meeting. Only eight of our 100 member department could travel this past year. How do we provide value to the rest of these members?

• **Edit content:** many of our talks are good, some are great. These great talks should be chosen and made available to members
Web Symposia Goals

- Provide our members programming information outside the annual meeting
- Increase our membership base among undergraduates, graduates, and BS level “biotechnologists”
- Increase our membership base among non-US biotechnologists
- Fund academic sites scholarships
- Provide biotechnology companies programming that they’d be willing to pay for
Overview of web programming

- Invite best speakers from March 2005 meeting to present again online.
- The symposia consist of 2-3 speakers and last 60-90 minutes, including Q&A.
- Use common Web presentation technology (WebEx and others) to present slides and telephone to present audio.
- Sell connections to industry, offer discounts or scholarships to academia.
- Record presentation if speaker allows.
## Web Symposia to date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symposia Date</th>
<th>Sites</th>
<th>Attendees</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Net profit (cost)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>$3,395</td>
<td>($711)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>$4,605</td>
<td>($3,820)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>($123)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 10</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$3,514</td>
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</table>
Survey Responses

- Attend another web conference: 100% yes
- Quality of web conference: 97% respond “good”, “very good” or “excellent”
- Nearly all responses were positive
Web symposia costs are low and getting lower

- $25 per site for a 90 minute presentation
- One industrial site paying a $150 fee will fund five scholarships
- Each paying site typically has 10-20 members in audience: cost per attendee is about $7.50 - $15
Recording symposia

- Symposia can be recorded with speakers’ permission
- Recordings can be sold
- Sales from three recordings to date: $2,340
- Some industrial and academic speakers will not allow recording
Suggested Technology Provider—WebEx through ACS subscription

• With ACS Continuing Education Department’s subscription to WebEx, Division cost is currently $110-200 per month for unlimited seminars, plus 20c/min for telephone connection

• Can host up to 200 people
Funding Web symposia long term: Industry/Academic Model

$150 (member), $190 (non-member) per site fees
$25 per site costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number paying sites</th>
<th>Profit per seminar</th>
<th>Number of scholarships possible</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>$1,250</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>$3,750</td>
<td>150</td>
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</table>
Funding web symposia long term: Academic/Government model

- Charge $30 for all sites for each 90 minute symposium
Alternative Web Symposia

resources

- www.WebEx.com: the number one on-line business collaboration tool. ACS Continuing Education has yearly license and will allow division use for $200 per month + $20 per telephone connection.
- www.GoToMeeting.com: $3600 yearly fee for unlimited seminars with 50 connections (telephony costs 5-8 cents/min). Highly rated software with an excellent business model for ACS divisions.
Web Symposia Resources, cont.

- **www.MeetingBridge.com**: low cost seminars for experienced providers. About $25 for 90 min. BIOT uses this vendor.

- **www.krm.com**: high cost, turnkey seminars. About $100 per 90 min. Minimum 60 sites! BIOT started with this vendor. Visit their toolbox for helpful hints.
Crucial Issues in Programming Success

• Choice of program chairs or editors
  – People with good judgment: In what is our audience interested? What’s hot? What’s not?
  – People with connections to good speakers

• Choice of symposia speakers and topics
  – Topics of interest to paying members of division
  – Talks with value to paying members
Long term support

• Programming needs
  – Ongoing Programming Chair (Symposia model) or Editor in Chief (Journal model)
  – Session chairs
• Administrative needs
  – Registration web site with credit card acceptance
  – Professional announcements
  – Speaker logistics
  – Audience logistics
• Competition from “For Profit” organizations will occur
Web Symposia Vision

• BIOT will provide six symposia in 2006
• In three to five years, BIOT will provide weekly programming content throughout the year via the web
• In three to five years, 75% of the ACS divisions will offer Web seminars
• In one to three years, ACS will begin web seminars paralleling their best journal publications
Conclusions

- Division symposia have value beyond the annual meeting
- Web symposia are a self-funding method of providing information to academic and industrial members
- Web symposia allow the best information to be presented to more members
- ACS Divisions can earn revenue on Web Seminars