

# Making virtual events a success for the Australasian Leukaemia & Lymphoma Group

## Client profile

The Australasian Leukaemia and Lymphoma Group (ALLG) was founded in 1973 to improve the treatment and the lives of patients with leukemia, lymphoma and other hematological malignancies by advancing 'leading edge' clinical trials in Australasia.

They aim to be regarded by the local and international community as the peak research body for these diseases within their geographical areas of operation and influence.

## Which technologies?

- Digital Events

## Which services?

- Virtual Event platform

## Which partners?

- Digital Events projec management
- Multimedia event production
- Virtual event creation
- Speaker training and support



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**Delaine Smith**, Chief Executive Officer, ALLG

## Summary

In response to COVID-19, the ALLG had to shift their regular biannual Scientific Meeting from a face-to-face setup to a virtual environment in May 2020.

These working meetings bring together hematologists, oncologists, pathologists and scientists from across Australia and New Zealand.

With our understanding of the pharmaceutical industry and healthcare experience, NTT was considered the ideal partner to enhance the work of the ALLG through their inaugural virtual event experience.

The virtual Scientific Meeting in May 2020 saw an increase in attendance by almost 150% compared to their previous face-to-face meetings. The event was seen as a significant driver of member activity and has helped the ALLG strengthen existing partnerships with professional societies and patient organizations.

## Business need

### Going virtual amid a global pandemic

The ALLG holds a biannual Scientific Meeting to bring together the blood cancer community, which includes hematologists, oncologists, pathologists and scientists from 92 medical institutions across Australia and New Zealand. The Scientific Meeting was scheduled to take place in May 2020 in Melbourne, Australia.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has made in person meetings impossible. However, the executive leadership of ALLG was committed to advancing and conducting clinical trials to deliver value to the hematology community, and cancelling the event outright was not an option.

Rescheduling speakers and exhibitors to a future date or location was not feasible, as the ALLG run their Scientific Meetings twice a year to provide key updates on clinical trials.

## Solution

### Optimizing the digital customer experience for HCPs

After assessing several digital events and webcast providers, the ALLG selected us to deliver an online meeting to replace the in-person event.

The intent of this virtual scientific meeting was to make participation as convenient as possible, for as many members as possible, and in formats that are most easily accessible in a professional manner.

In less than a month, we were able to build several interactive components that included:

- A virtual exhibit hall that gave the ALLG sponsors a way to deliver their message to all conference attendees in an interactive manner. Exhibitors could customize and brand their virtual booths, as well as offer live chat sessions, downloadable content, streaming media and interactive experiences like trivia and polls.
- The conference theater allowed attendees to create a customized agenda by selecting from 14 conference sessions. Speakers also had the ability to interact with attendees using interactive features, including Q&A and polling, as well as share streaming media and downloadable content. Sessions could be viewed live or later, on-demand.
- The event lounge offered attendees an additional way to network and interact with each other. One-on-one chats as well as group discussions helped the ALLG community to connect and build stronger relationships.

In addition, our Digital Events team ensured a seamless experience with additional virtual event-specific services such as configuration of the virtual environment, webcast and speaker support, and full project management. This support was especially important as it was the very first time that the ALLG organized a virtual event for their members.

'We chose NTT because of the stability and security of the platform. Time was against the project and the NTT team was able to work incredibly quickly to go live within an extremely tight timeframe,' said Delaine Smith, Chief Executive Officer at the ALLG.

The ALLG events team added: 'Training from the NTT team was amazing and was highly praised by our clinicians.'

## Outcomes

### Driving attendee satisfaction and sponsorship for ALLG

By shifting to a virtual environment, the attendance for the meeting skyrocketed by nearly 150% from what their in-person meetings typically averaged. Overall, the May Scientific Meeting was attended by 419 members and 126 sponsor representatives from across all Australian states and territories, and New Zealand.

### Attendee satisfaction

In addition, feedback for the event was extremely positive. In a post-event survey by the ALLG, 92% of 253 session attendee survey respondents rated the sessions as either 'Extremely High Quality' or 'High Quality'.

### Delivering ROI for sponsors

The May Scientific Meeting also received positive feedback from the ALLG's sponsors.

'Many commented that the ALLG have set the standard in terms of virtual meetings, which is high praise in comparison to the large-scale global events that have been run,' said the ALLG events team.

### **Opportunity for innovation**

The upcoming event will offer new technical features such as in-booth private video messaging and conferencing, which will deliver even more extensive opportunities for engagement. In addition, the ALLG is also broadening the scope of the research program to include new sessions and topics, such as tele-trials, rural/regional issues and international research collaborations.

These virtual formats enable leading clinicians and scientists in the region to converge to generate research ideas, develop new concepts, provide updates on current trials, share member research publications and presentations, and deliver translational research.