Elevation™ Virtual Investigator Meetings

Case Study: A Strategic Initiative

SITUATION

In 2015, a Top 10 biopharmaceutical company (the "sponsor") initiated a strategic program to lower costs of clinical trials and support a more sustainable model for drug development. A task force within the sponsor identified a number of diverse tactics with significant cost-savings potential, and conducted a strategic review for each tactic to identify best-in-class service providers. The task force determined that virtual meetings have the potential to produce significant cost savings, and after a competitive review selected MedPoint Digital as the single provider for the virtual meeting program. At the start of this process, the sponsor was conducting all investigator meetings as on-site/travel-to meetings.

In the quest for a more sustainable model for drug development, virtual meetings can make a solid contribution.

SOLUTION

The task force was committed to generating significant cost savings, while at the same time maintaining high standards for operational excellence and efficient processes, especially with investigator sites. There was concern that virtual investigator meetings might compromise the quality of site training and preparation. MedPoint Digital worked with the task force and study teams to plan, produce and execute virtual investigator meetings that were seamless and reliable, with highly engaging formats to effectively train study sites.

RESULTS

Significant results were generated in the first 12 months of the virtual investigator meeting (virtual IM) program. MedPoint applied its service model for optimized virtual meetings, working closely with study teams and presenters. From a baseline of no virtual IM activity, 33 virtual events were executed in the first year.

There was significant skepticism and push-back from many members of study teams, primarily due to negative experiences with past virtual meetings. This was overcome by strong top-down support by senior management, and by a sustained campaign to promote and demonstrate the quality and value of the new virtual IM approach.

A promotional campaign and early success are key factors to gain buy-in from skeptics of the virtual IM approach.

A primary goal was to achieve success from the very beginning, to foster a more positive view of virtual IMs. This goal was largely achieved, with positive metrics for cost savings, carbon savings, participant satisfaction, and more. Going into the second year, the virtual IM program is being expanded to a larger number of studies at the sponsor.

METRICS

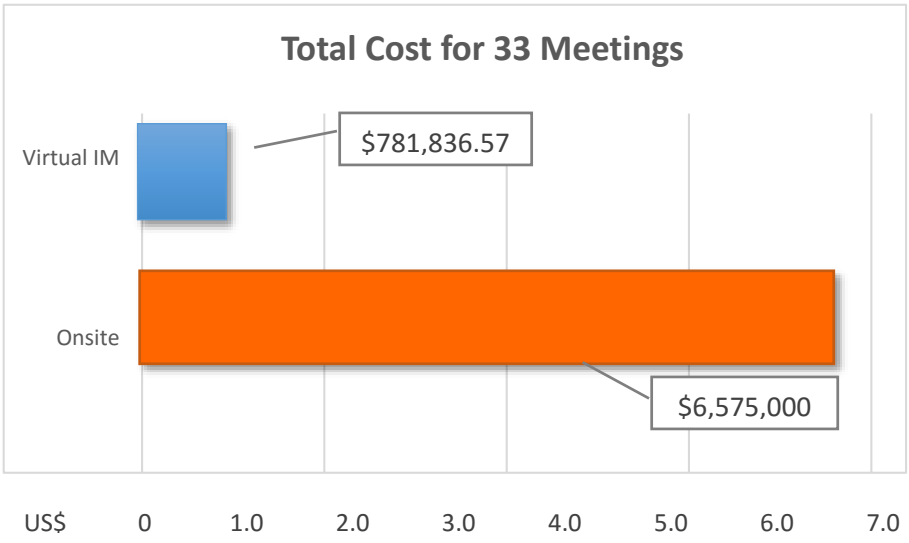
1. Cost Savings

A major driver of the virtual IM program is to generate cost savings, with the goal at the sponsor to reinvest savings in an expanded drug development program. Cost savings were calculated using a baseline of the average actual cost per attendee of recent on-site meetings compared to actual costs of virtual IMs.

In its first year, the virtual IM initiative was viewed as very successful on a cost savings basis, generating US$5.8 million in documented cost reductions. This averaged over US$175,000 for every virtual IM conducted, an 88% cost reduction compared to on-site investigator meetings. As the virtual IM program expands to support more ex-US and global studies, the virtual IM program is projected to generate even greater cost savings.

US$5.8 million

documented cost savings



88%

cost reduction

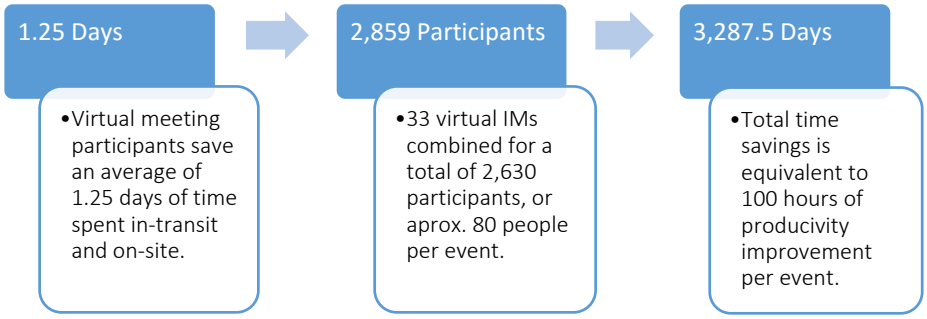
2. Time Savings

Improving productivity is an important consideration in the field of clinical research, where both sponsor and study site personnel are medical professionals with high time demands. The virtual IM approach, by lowering time demands, makes it more feasible for the busiest VIPs, such as Principal Investigators, to attend the meeting. On the sponsor side, time savings can significantly reduce the burden on key study team members during the peak period of activity when the study is going live.

Time Savings - continued

In this case, the cumulative time savings for all virtual IM participants is roughly equal to two full-time annual workers. In the context of reducing site burden and making clinical trials more sustainable, these productivity gains are an important benefit of the virtual IM approach.

Virtual IMs help reduce the time demands placed on investigator sites and study teams.

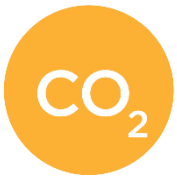


3. Carbon Savings

Reduction in CO_2 emissions is a natural consequence of the virtual IM approach and an important one for many drug developers who have made a commitment to reduce their carbon footprint. MedPoint Digital tracks and reports greenhouse gas reductions using a formula approved by the U.S. Department of Energy.

Major carbon savings are an important benefit of the virtual IM approach.

In this case, we did not include CO_2 reductions from ground travel and hotel lodging, but instead focused on the major contributor to carbon savings, air travel. In its first year, the virtual IM program generated an estimated 2,425 tons of CO_2 savings, which is equivalent to sparing over 53,000 urban trees. This outcome received widespread recognition within the sponsor and made a significant contribution towards the sponsor's goal of being a more responsible global citizen.



2,425 tons CO_2 saved

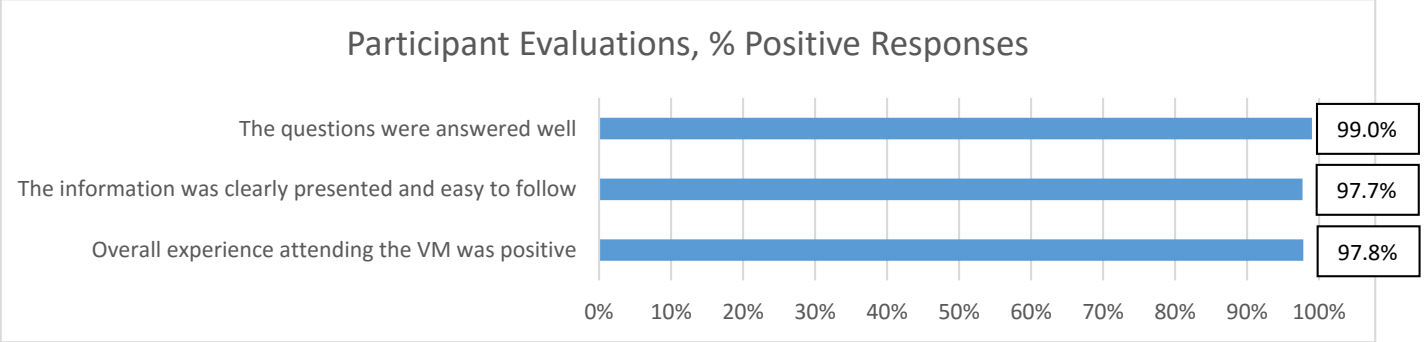
Equivalent to planting 53,657 urban trees

4. Participant Experience

A fundamental goal of the Virtual IM program has been to generate cost, time and CO_2 savings without sacrificing the primary mission of investigator meetings, which is to effectively train sites so they are prepared to appropriately conduct the trial. In this case, leadership at the sponsor encouraged study teams to embrace the goal of producing highly engaging virtual IMs. To minimize the burden on study teams, MedPoint Digital supported pre-production of various interactive and multimedia elements.

Virtual IMS must achieve the primary mission of effectively training investigator sites.

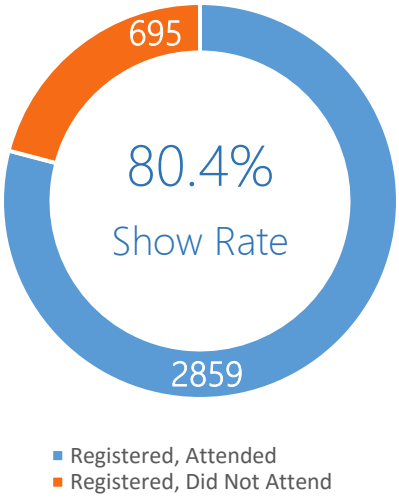
A primary measure of program quality was feedback from participants on their virtual meeting experience. This feedback was gathered using a short Participant Evaluation survey that was conducted at the end of each virtual IM. Thanks to the investment in more engaging virtual events, participant experience was overwhelmingly positive. For the three questions on event quality shown below, the rate of positive responses was in a range of 97.9% to 99.0% across the 33 virtual IMs conducted in the first year. A significant majority of participants also indicated they would prefer more use of virtual IMs going forward.

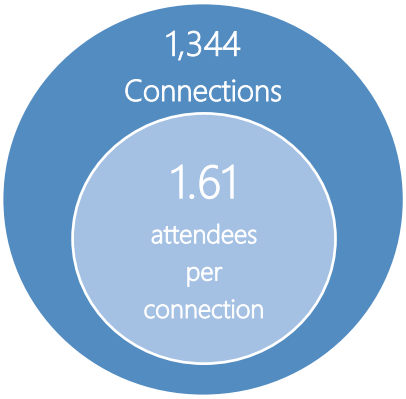


5. Attendance

A fundamental goal of the virtual IM program is to ensure that adequate numbers of study site personnel register and attend the events. In the first year of the virtual IM program, attendance rates varied significantly among the 33 events. Overall, attendance rates were slightly over 80% for registered attendees. More than half of participants connecting to the events had at least one additional person from their site participating from the same connection.

MedPoint Digital worked with study teams on several best practices, but these were not fully implemented for some events. Factors that affect attendance levels include adequate advance notice, communications that indicate the importance of the virtual IM, support by regional CRAs and affiliates, and use of chase teams.





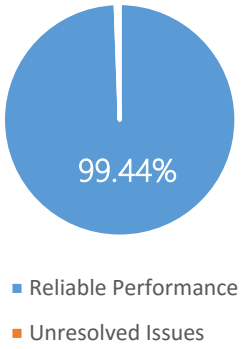
Various best practices can be implemented to drive high attendance rates.

6. Technology Performance

Virtual meeting technology has been available for over 20 years, but many users still experience irksome technical issues. The sponsor in this case recognized that investigators and other medical professionals have low tolerance for technical glitches, so that a primary goal of the virtual IM program has been to offer a highly reliable platform and simple process for participation.

MedPoint Digital deploys a combination of custom technology, robust processes and personalized service to ensure high rates of performance and a seamless user experience. This includes various best practices to minimize potential sources of failure, as well as active monitoring to identify and resolve glitches rapidly, often before they are noticeable. As a result, technical performance for the virtual IM program was nearly flawless, with about ½ of one percent (00.56%) of participants experiencing an unresolved technical issue. None of the 33 virtual IMs held during the first year experienced technical issues that significantly disrupted the successful completion of an event.

Virtual IM Technology



Summary

The Virtual IM initiative generated major cost savings in its first year and also produced positive results across all other program metrics. Based on this, the sponsor is expanding the program to other divisions and global regions, with a goal of using virtual IMs in almost all clinical trials. The sponsor is evolving its site training program in other ways, such as use of training modules to complement virtual IMs.

