



SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS 2014

Exhibits: November 16-18  
Sessions: November 15-19  
Resuscitation Science Symposium: November 15-16  
Cardiovascular Nursing Symposium: November 18-19  
Chicago, Illinois  
scientificsessions.org



# Automated Registration Marketing

## AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS 2014 CASE STUDY

### The company

The American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions is the organization's largest annual gathering of scientists and health care professionals devoted to the science of cardiovascular disease and stroke and the care of patients suffering from these diseases.

The meeting is a gathering of influential physicians, scientists and researchers who are committed to the latest developments in cardiovascular disease and stroke. Nearly 60 percent of the attendees are from the U.S. The rest of the more than 14,000 attendees come from over 80 different countries.

The meeting features 5,000 presentations, more than 4,000 abstract presentations, more than 200 posters, and more than 200 exhibitors.

### The challenge

Eleven weeks prior to AHA's Scientific Sessions 2014 in Chicago, attendee registration for the meeting was running behind both prior year and current year expectations.

Growing attendance over the prior year's Dallas-based meeting was critical. AHA had added many new attendee-engaging offerings and experiences for the 2014 meeting, and it wanted as many past attendees to attend the 2014 meeting to benefit from those new additions.

To complement AHA's strategic and aggressive outreach meeting marketing, the association engaged Ascend to specifically reach out to **26,000 past attendees** who had not attended the meeting during the past one to four years.

AHA wanted to increase attendee registrations

The campaign worked because the messaging style was out-of-the-box, short, personal, with a strong call to action.

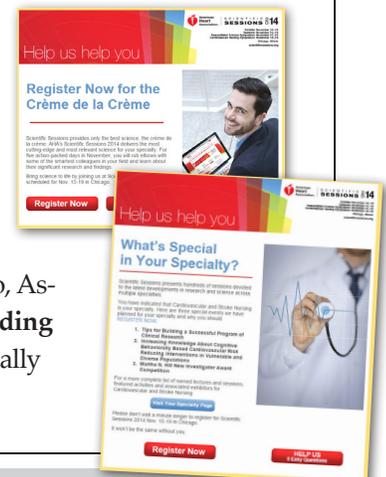
Rhonda Wickham, Vice President of Content

from this target group, so that combined with AHA's current marketing, the end result would produce 2014 attendee levels greater than 2013's performance.

In trying to encourage those professionals to "come back," AHA also wanted to better understand what reason or reasons were keeping these individuals away from gaining exposure to new science, research and high-quality education.

### The solution

To target the past attendees who had not attended the annual meeting in one to four years (26,000 professionals), Ascend created a multistage, **six-part email campaign** that was deployed during the six weeks prior to the meeting. Also, Ascend created **mini-websites/landing pages** to feature content specifically targeting the 16 specialties.



### The weekly survey

Throughout the campaign, each weekly blast included a link to a **5-question survey** to provide AHA market intelligence to enable the association to better shape its marketing of all future Scientific Sessions.

Additionally, a **post-campaign survey** was sent to everyone from the original 26,000 target list that ultimately opted not to attend Scientific Sessions. This survey asked recipients to share their reason for not attending and what factors impacted their decision. And, most important, whether they were planning to return to the meeting in 2015.

The messaging within these blasts was short, single-thought messages designed to be completely different in appearance and tone than other messages that recipients have received from both AHA and Ascend on behalf of AHA.

- The first Blast spoke to the cutting-edge and most relevant science to be featured at the meeting.
- The campaign continued with **customized** email messages for each

of the segmented 16 specialty groups...leading recipients to the mini-websites/landing pages.

- The next weekly email spoke to how the recipient attending the meeting could contribute to the overall success of Scientific Sessions.



To find out more about Ascend Integrated Media and how we can help you increase attendance for your event or drive more memberships, please contact:

**ERIC JACOBSON**  
VICE PRESIDENT, MEDIA DEVELOPMENT  
913-344-1436  
ejacobson@ascendintegratedmedia.com

**TRICIA WALSH**  
VICE PRESIDENT, MEDIA DEVELOPMENT  
314-317-8761  
twalsh@ascendintegratedmedia.com

Ascend Integrated Media  
6710 West 121st St., Suite 100  
Overland Park, KS 66209  
www.ascendintegratedmedia.com

- Blast No. 4 featured a personal invitation from the chairman of the meeting's programming committee.
- Blasts No. 5 and No. 6 carried, respectively, "We Missed You" and "Not The Same Old Sessions" messaging themes.

Additionally, a separate email blast was sent to past attendees whose ZIP codes indicated they were within 100 miles of the meeting site — **driving distance** to attend the meeting in one day at a special day pass registration rate.

And, finally, early in the engagement with AHA, Ascend sent a blast that encouraged exhibitors at the meeting to invite their select group of clients/customers to the meeting at a reduced registration fee.

In total, **Ascend wrote, designed, deployed and managed more than 74 email messages during the six-week period** (including segmented messages to 16 different specialty groups).

### The results

Ascend delivered significant direct and indirect attendee registrations as a result of the eBlast campaign: **956 attendee registrations** (7 percent of the campaign's target audience). This produced a 1,855 percent return on investment for AHA. In addition, the campaign provided AHA with critical marketing intelligence to shape future meeting marketing.

The campaign clearly demonstrated the value of delivering to prospective attendees content customized to their medical specialty interest.



Ascend's registration campaign for Scientific Sessions 2014 offered segmented messaging to over 16 different specialties within the focus of Sessions. Not only did the campaign nicely complement the in-house marketing, it also worked well congruently to further registrations and added direct revenue at more than \$400,000.

Lisa Contreras, Manager of Marketing & Communications, Scientific Sessions

