



EMDR International Association Expands With Hybrid Annual Conference

Case Study: Using Hybrid Events to Enhance Member Educational Offerings, Optimize Resources, and Diversify Revenue

*Founded in 1995 and now more than 4000 members strong, the **EMDR International Association (EMDRIA)** is a professional association where EMDR therapy practitioners and EMDR therapy researchers seek the highest standards for the clinical use of EMDR.*

Executive Summary

EMDRIA hosted its first conference in 1996, bringing high quality education and resources to its then 400+ members. Over the next decade, the association added programs and services consisting of designations of Certified Therapist in EMDR and Approved Consultant in EMDR. EMDRIA has continued to focus on advancing the education, practice, and science of EMDR therapy and upholding standards of practice, training, certification and research.

Challenges

Since hosting its first conference in 1996, EMDRIA enjoyed steady, regular attendance at the annual event. However, as membership continued to grow over the next two decades, the association was facing a few challenges with the event.

First, the association's strategic plan calls for increasing diversity of members, not just private practice, but also individuals who work for nonprofits, counseling services or agencies. Cost constraints of a physical conference play a big factor for this target audience. They may not have funding available for attending in-person events.

Second, an evaluation of existing member services revealed that members desired an online learning option due to scheduling conflicts common in the field of mental health.

Finally, the association sought a way to broaden member reach when providing educational services to its members.

Solution

When considering how to best resolve the challenges, an eLearning solution was most affordable. EMDRIA's leadership decided to offer a hybrid conference for the annual conference to resolve the key challenges. To minimize risk, they turned to a [Revenue Share Partnership](#) using the [iCohere Unified Learning System](#).



Planning, Design and Implementation

Conference planners wanted the online portion of the conference to provide networking opportunities similar to the in-person event, and the same high quality content members were accustomed to receiving.

Networking: The conference planners found the online chat rooms to be a significant networking tool for the event. Discussion and networking happened organically in the chat rooms and were a tremendous resource for online participants. The planners have continued using the chat room at smaller events and have seen engagement grow to as many as 1000 comments in a one-day event. Planners also scheduled live chats with speakers, so that online

participants were given opportunities to interact with the speakers.

Content: The content of the EMDRIA conference is in very high demand. Because the concept of a virtual conference was new to members, conference planners were proactive in showing the online portion would result in the same value as attending in person.

Key marketing tactics included:

- A dedicated event webpage with detailed conference information and the benefits of attending the event.
- Targeted email campaigns focused on the high quality content. The marketing campaign promoted each speaker and their respective content, and online opportunities for learning and networking.

Results and Return on Investment

The iCohere Revenue Share Program helped EMDRIA launch a high quality eLearning program without the financial risk. In addition to regular event attendees, the online conference attracted a new audience of members who otherwise would not have attended the in-person event.

EMDRIA was able to broaden its global reach of attendees, grow its membership base and optimize conference resources for long-term use. The online conference also provided opportunities for additional sponsorship revenue and the option to repurpose the content and use it as a new member benefit or additional revenue.

Launch your own revenue-generating hybrid conference. For more information and a free demo, contact Lance Simon, CGMP, CVEP at lance@icohere.com or at (202) 870-6146.