

Today's reality

How to make social distancing work in med comms

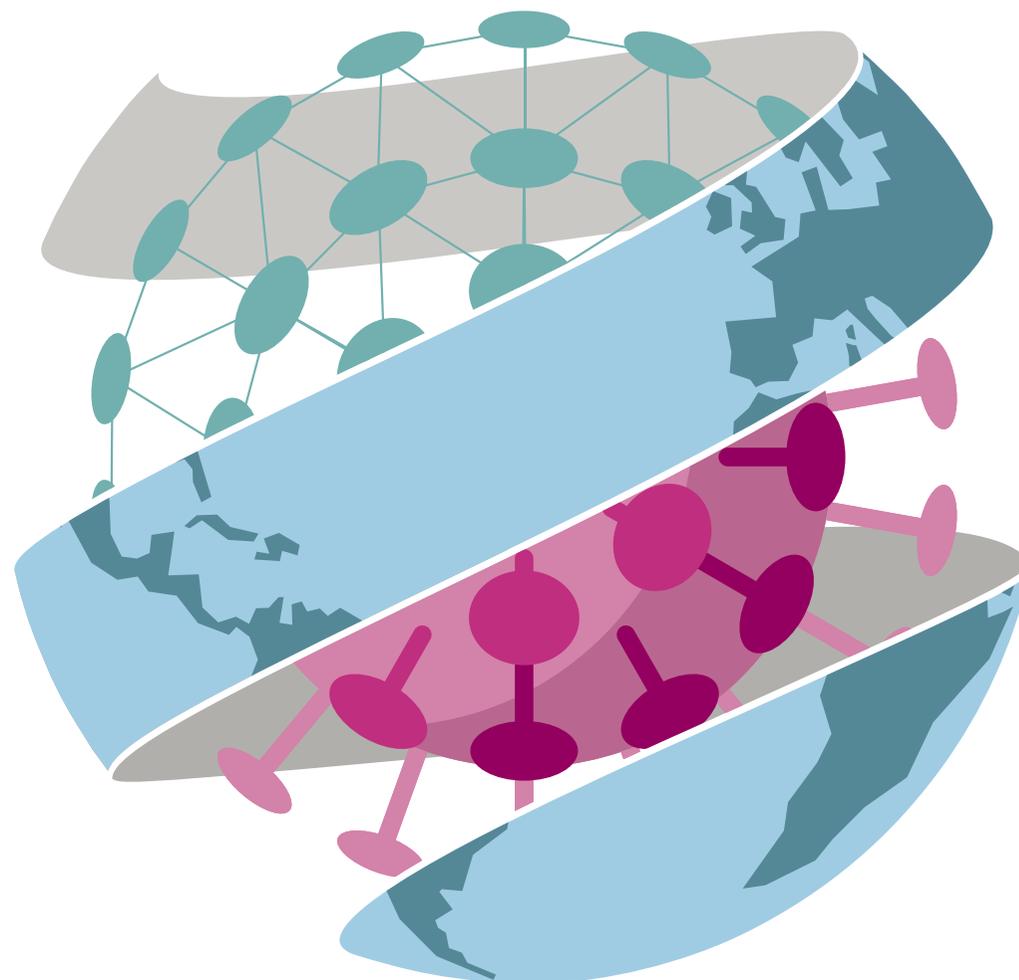
At Lucid, we don't just want to cope with COVID-19.

The current situation certainly presents an unprecedented challenge to delivering medical education. The daily update of cancellations and postponements has become a formality – a strange quotidian occurrence that just a fortnight ago would have been an extreme rarity.

However, this is no time for us to grind to a halt. Client, HCP and patient needs remain, and while we may temporarily be prevented from delivering valuable content through live channels, digital platforms provide an alternative avenue to maintain momentum.

When a door shuts, open a window.

The fact is, we've already seen rapid growth in the use of virtual spaces over the past decade. The scenario this pandemic presents will force that trend to take a sharp upward turn. Like a rubber band that is stretched beyond its elastic limit, it is likely we will see the entire industry change forever on the back of this experience.



Online platforms are simply the tools for creation

“Focus on the psychology, not the technology.”

JONAH BERGER

It can be easy to assume a mentality that online technologies compromise our ability to deliver engaging experiences and force us to sacrifice interactivity for convenience. However, the same behavioural principles apply whether you conduct activities in person or virtually.

At Lucid, we pride ourselves on our ability to take a step back and see that any virtual engagement is just a small portion of the overall audience journey. There are many other points along this continuum that require thought and consideration to realise our vision of an optimised interaction.



“Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

At Lucid, it is our imagination and understanding of behaviour change – and the science that underpins it – that allows us to get the most out of virtual meetings.

To borrow lessons from storytelling, if we consider the start of a virtual activity to be the first page of a book, then you should know that you are already in the middle of a plot that has been happening for some time, and one that will continue long after you close the browser window.

Your attendees are your characters with their own subplots.

Ask yourself:

- ❓ How have you informed and delivered a meaningful experience in the run-up to the event?
- ❓ How have you gathered useful insights from them prior to the event to feed into the agenda and give them ownership?
- ❓ What does their happily-ever-after journey look like once the action has finished, and the epilogue has been written?

Online platforms. Think of the entire journey

It would seem myopic to focus on whether the platform has a chat functionality for moderating Q&A. **Think of the entire journey:** it might all be conducted virtually, but it can reflect a humanity that makes the remote experience as engaging and enjoyable as live events.

At Lucid Group, **our mission is clear — to transform lives through medical communications that change behaviour and improve patient health outcomes.** Therefore, it's our duty to provide viable solutions to our clients on how they can best navigate this new reality. With the right perspective, there's the potential to identify it as an opportunity to test the platforms that will inevitably shape the future of medical education – a future that will be predominantly remote.



For pivoting quickly

There are a multitude of established platforms with varying levels of functionality and sophistication our clients can leverage with minimal fuss. The following is a short compendium of examples with which we have had positive experiences.

Cisco Webex

PROS:

- Proven technology
- Easy to use
- Reliable high-quality audio and video
- Multiple features such as polling, chat and whiteboards

CONS:

- Breakout rooms are only available through Webex Training, not Webex Meeting
- Webinars are best managed through Webex Events
- Different packages are required depending on need



Zoom

PROS:

- Proven technology
- Feature rich
- Easy to use
- Many pharma clients are already familiar with the system
- Can be integrated for multiple applications
- Extensive supply of training materials available online
- Allows for pre-defined breakout groups
- Multi-device support

CONS:

- Some features (such as polling) require the Zoom client to be installed
- Free version limits to 40-minute meetings
- Free version does not include polling
- Pro version required to record to cloud
- Some features must be enabled from your account settings page prior to use
- Add-ons, such as 'large meeting' must be bolted on to your licence to achieve certain scalability



Adobe Connect

PROS:

- Proven technology
- Feature rich
- Extensively customisable
- Can be branded
- Provides a host of features to help facilitate and encourage engagement
- Does not require a separate download

CONS:

- Interface potentially not as intuitive as other platforms
- Vast amount of configuration means some complexity and time in setting it up and ensuring it functions as expected



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PROS:

- Provides a high level of customisation and configurability
- Feature rich
- Allows multiple activities to be performed on screen at the same time
- Allows the host or producer to control the configuration of the attendees' interface
- Ability to apply branding to the background of the space

CONS:

- Interface potentially not as intuitive as other platforms
- Takes longer to customise and get going
- Steeper learning curve than the likes of Webex and Zoom



For longer lead times

For those who see this as a time to reflect, regroup and invest, at Lucid we have developed our own customisable models which allow clients greater flexibility, usability and audience experience.

The Bluedog Virtual Engagement Platform

This platform exists to sustain engagement with experts across multiple touchpoints, with minimal in-person interaction. This has been particularly useful for programmes where multiple formats and topics for discussion were required across a lengthy period of time. For instance, continued dialogue with steering committee members has been well-served across the various functions available in the platform.

FEATURES FOR VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT

- Meeting facilitation via client-preferred video conferencing technology
- Document library
- Discussion forum
- Surveys
- Interactive polls
- Events calendar
- Customisable
- Client-hosted, avoiding third-party hosting environments
- Co-created content



AVISO – Virtual Advisory Board

AVISO has now been used successfully across multiple clients. It can be deployed at relatively short notice and is a cost-effective (carbon footprint-reducing) alternative to traditional face-to-face advisory boards.

AVISO 



FEATURES FOR VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT

- Discussion forum
- Private discussion threads
- Integrated metrics
- Resource centre
- Admin suite including moderation
- Conversation tagging with email notifications
- Unlimited discussion threads
- Mobile and tablet compatible

REKORD

Beyond facilitating virtual collaborative activities, REKORD is another useful tool we have developed for quickly and remotely capturing talking-head video content. The recording is completed solely by the KOL at a time and location of their choosing.



FEATURES

- Clean and easy-to-use interface
- Recorded content is automatically sent to us. No need for third-party file-sharing sites
- No additional software required, just a supported web browser and a functioning webcam and microphone
- Built-in guides to help obtain the best shot framing

All in all, whether utilising third-party or our own customisable platforms, we have consistently delivered excellence for our clients. Since 2018 we have delivered over **1,200** different med-comms initiatives, including more than:

- 40** bespoke online platforms
- 65** symposia
- 280** educational meetings where virtual elements are always intertwined as part of the learning journey
- 100** advisory boards with at least 10% of these being run entirely remotely, enabling us to transform many planned ad boards in the coming months over to a virtual platform with ease

Patients have never needed us more than they do now. So, if you need help optimising your med comms to help improve outcomes in today's reality, we're here. Always.

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