

Press Release



Information and Knowledge Management in the International Pharmaceutical Industry

50th Annual General Meeting of the P-D-R 2008

The Pharma Documentation Ring (P-D-R) held its 50th Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Montreux, Switzerland from the 23rd – 26th September 2008. This year's meeting celebrated the 50th anniversary of the group's founding. The P-D-R is an association whose members represent the scientific information departments of the leading international R&D-based pharmaceutical corporations. There were two new corporate members (Ferring Pharmaceuticals and UCB) added during the previous 12 months. The 23 member companies continue to account for approximately 60% of the total global turnover of ethical drugs (approximately \$500 billion); by far the majority of the top 20 global pharmaceutical companies are P-D-R members.

Forty delegates attended this year's meeting, which was hosted by Novartis. The 50th anniversary event included a half day meeting to which former P-D-R members and 12 information vendors were invited. Henning P. Nielsen (Novo Nordisk), current President of the P-D-R, and Alexander Mullen, past President, opened the meeting with an amusing look backwards on the past decades of the P-D-R. The following keynote speakers were decidedly future facing.

Jeff Elton, COO and Head of Strategy at Novartis Institute for Biomedical Research, Inc., spoke about informatics and innovation in drug discovery. Matthias Horx, founder of the Zukunftsinstitut and one of the most influential futurists in the German-speaking world, gave a thought provoking talk on scientific futurology and mega-trends in society. Philipp Karmires presented Google's view on innovations after ten years of business. Brief presentations by each of the vendors followed, including Chemical Abstracts Service, Ebsco Information Services, Elsevier B.V., FIZ Karlsruhe, Georg Thieme Verlag, Informa, Nature Publishing Group, Springer, Swets, Thomson Reuters, Wiley-Blackwell, and Wolters Kluwer. They shared their vision of the information future supported by a poster session.

A principal highlight of this meeting was the strategic topic session which focused on the future information world and how this should be reflected in the different topic groups where P-D-R members work together. The results of a P-D-R internal survey on the vision of the future integrated information

world, first conducted in 2003 and repeated now, five years later, were summarized, and then the groups invited all participants in a poster session to exchange views and to set expectations for the future work.

Each of the topic groups organized a portion of the agenda which highlighted areas of interest within that group. A theme which emerged at this year's meeting within several groups was text mining. The Chemical and Patent Information group highlighted approaches for chemical entity recognition and the new technologies available to offer enhanced ways of searching, analyzing and processing text. The Biomedical Information team presented text mining in biomedical content from the perspective of an information professional highlighting the different tools and approaches needed for text mining vs. traditional searching. The Business Intelligence topic group focussed on creating value in the business areas of the pharmaceutical industry through text mining. The various uses for text mining approaches were described and how text mining can fill the time gap to avoid the issue of "information aging", but is not yet at a place where it can replace manual curation by experts. The final presentation with a text mining theme was from the Technology team about the added value of semantic technologies and what is missing.

Information and Knowledge Management presentations included several case studies around Web 2.0 approaches. The Library Affairs and Copyright team gave an update on the outcomes of the special meeting held earlier this year which brought publishers, intermediaries, and copyright agencies together to discuss the issues facing pharmaceutical companies in the provision of information.

An ongoing feature of the P-D-R AGM is the review of information-related developments within the member companies over the previous twelve months. Common themes that emerged were the use of SharePoint as an enterprise platform, the increasing use of Web 2.0 features as wikis and blogs, continued outsourcing of non-core information activities, the continuous need for internal marketing, and ongoing organizational changes.

The 51st P-D-R AGM will be held in Leesburg, Virginia from the 22nd - 25th September 2009 and will be hosted by Bristol-Myers Squibb and Merck & Co.

The P-D-R web site can be found at <http://www.p-d-r.com>.