

CASE STUDY



World Polymer Congress – MACRO 2018
1-5 July 2018, Cairns Convention Centre

Overview of the Event

The International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) World Polymer Congress, the largest event dedicated to polymer science globally, was held at the Cairns Convention Centre between 1-5 July 2018. The 5-day conference attracted 844 participants from 44 countries. The technical program included presentations from 7 plenary speakers, 165 invited speakers, 486 contributing speakers and 198 poster presentations. Each of the 11 breakout sessions were split into 10 streams.

Identifying and Addressing Key Challenges

There were several key challenges that were identified during the organisation of the congress. The main challenges we faced are listed below, along with what was implemented to address the challenge.

1. Registering at the venue

With a large number of attendees and a high percentage of internationals, we needed to re-think the standard “check-in” process onsite. Our goal was to create a seamless onsite registration experience and ensure there were minimal queues.

We opted for a self-check-in experience and contracted ExpoScan to provide check-in kiosks. Attendees were emailed check-in instructions the week prior to the congress, these instructions included an individual QR code that required scanning at the kiosk, the QR code was also included in the mobile app. When an attendee arrived at the venue, they simply scanned their QR code at the kiosk which then generated a printed name badge. There were a small percentage of attendees who did not have their QR code printed or on their phone, when this occurred a staff member was there to assist checking them in manually by searching their surname on an iPad at the kiosk.

The feedback from attendees was excellent:

“Easiest check-in procedure I have ever encountered”

“Check in was quick and efficient and rather novel which was fun”

“Was as smooth as airline check-ins are meant to be!”



2. Program Display

With 599 oral presentations within the program, it was clear that there were going to be an unavoidable number of last minute program changes. We wanted to move away from any form of printed program, so we looked to find alternatives that would enable us to update the program in real-time. We decided to make the program available in a few different ways:

- **Live program in the attendee mobile app**

Events Air software was used to produce the mobile app. The software was also used to manage the congress presentations, program, and registrations etc. so any updates made in the system automatically fed through to the mobile app which reduced double handling.

- **Current/Upcoming breakout session displayed on LCD screen (pictured below)**

We hired 5 LCD screens from our AV provider to display the current/upcoming sessions at different locations around the venue. The program could be updated electronically with any last-minute changes so the versions displayed around the venue were always current.

- **Full program available on website**

To complement the mobile app and electronic signage around the venue, we also kept a current version of the electronic program available on the website.

MONDAY 2 JULY 2018 All speakers must present themselves with their presentation on a USB at the Speakers Room at least 2 hours prior to their scheduled presentation. The Speakers Room is located on the Mezzanine Level

SMART AND FUNCTIONAL POLYMERS		POLYMERS IN BIOTECHNOLOGY, MEDICINE AND HEALTH		POLYMERS IN BIOTECHNOLOGY, MEDICINE AND HEALTH		RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN POLYMER DESIGN		ENERGY OPTICS AND OPTOELECTRONICS		RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN POLYMER DESIGN		KINETICS OF POLYMERIZATION		POLYMER NANOTECHNOLOGY AND POLYMER PHYSICS		AUSTRALIAN-GERMAN SYMPOSIUM	
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Highlights

The overriding highlight of the congress was the seamless onsite delivery. This was largely due to the clear communication with attendees in the leadup and the points mentioned above. With a program of this size, and the percentage of international attendees at MACRO, we were wary that there may be quite a lot of program changes, and issues with locating sessions and uploading presentations in the preparation room. Due to the thorough communication, our pre-congress concerns were not an issue.

Leishman Associates were engaged to manage this congress back in 2015, and we are so pleased to have delivered a successful international event for our long-term client of 11 years, the Polymer Division of the Royal Australian Chemical Institute.

“Continuing with the thank-yous, I would like to mention the team at Leishman Associates, in this case led by Emma Harrison – once again they have put the P (for professional) in PCO, and long may their association with the Australasian polymer community continue – it’s now almost unimaginable that we could hold a conference without them!”

*Prof. Dr. Greg Russell
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IUPAC Polymer Division President 2016–2019*

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