

Guiding Principles for Digital Conferences

The principles that govern the PAAB's review of other APS also apply to digital conferences. When submitting for digital conferences, it is important to be clear and detailed about all aspects of the booth, the platform and any and all other interactions. The following provides general guiding principles that reflect current review practice. A detailed advisory will follow shortly.

Linkage
<p>All linkages should be disclosed for review, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• links between conference items (e.g. lobby banners, product booths, corporate booths, learning sessions)• links to external items• links within a digital booth (e.g. downloadable swag, resources) <p>Linkages that are not acceptable in print material are also not acceptable in digital conferences. Examples include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Linking branded product material with editorial material, exempt material, press releases, learning sessions, etc.• Linking to non-Canadian product websites and linking beyond the home page of non-Canadian corporate websites
Claims
<p>All content, both text and visuals, can be considered to be claims and will be reviewed as such. This includes the names of downloadable swag/resources.</p>
Fair balance
<p>Product claims should be accompanied by the indication and the appropriate level of fair balance (for the whole of the product content at the digital conference).</p> <p>The indication and fair balance should be presented with a prominence similar to that of claims and should be easily legible without requiring any additional action from the user (e.g. click to enlarge).</p> <p>The PAAB allows for direct scaling of APSs without resubmission with the understanding that all aspects of the APS remain legible. If an APS will be scaled to a size such that some aspects (e.g. the fair balance) are not legible, it does not meet the standards of the Code and is a violation of Code section 2.4.</p>

Chat

By providing this functionality, the manufacturer is exposed to regulatory risk if the chat room becomes advertising.

- The PAAB can provide an advisory opinion on how to minimize risk of the chat room from becoming advertising, including guidance on:
 - Chat room access (rep + single attendee interaction vs. rep + open group chat with anyone who comes into the room)
 - how to moderate the chat room
 - Chat room functionality
 - Duration of chat room content (transient vs. persistent)
 - Downloading/sharing chat room content

Search

Content descriptors for APSs provided by the pharmaceutical company for use in the internal search function of the conference (e.g. meta tags, keywords) are subject to PAAB review and should be included in the submission for the APS.

Learning sessions

Learning sessions that meet the requirements for continuing medical education (CME)/scientific symposia/exhibits per the Health Canada policy document, The Distinction Between Advertising and Other Activities, do not require PAAB review. The PAAB can conduct an opinion assessment to provide a determination if the item meets requirements.

These should not be linked to promotional materials or activities that refer to the product, including corporate booths or websites.

While digital conferences are a relatively new way for manufacturers to communicate with healthcare professionals, the application of the PAAB Code to digital conferences is reflective of its application to all other advertising material. Essentially, the same principles apply regardless of the form. When preparing submissions for digital conferences, the inclusion of information on the entirety of the manufacturer's involvement/representation at the conference will help facilitate a smooth review.