

# CASE STUDY: GWCO Annual Congress



amcinstitute.org

Virtual Meetings | Education/LMS | Delivering Partnership/Sponsorship Value



## Great Western Council of Optometry

- Provides financial support to 13 member state associations (more than \$2 million since 1997)
- Enhance professional development for members within organized optometry
- [www.gwco.org](http://www.gwco.org)



## AMC Profile/Overview

- Innovative and progressive, on the forefront of association technology
- 24 clients, 25 staff, AMCI accredited
- [www.sbims.com](http://www.sbims.com)

## Challenge

- Annual Congress event could not be held in-person at Portland Convention Center as planned due to COVID-19
- With only 10 weeks time, reimagine the in-person event to virtual format to provide CE credits to attendees and deliver value to Industry Partners
- Distribute net proceeds from Congress that 13 member states count on for support of ongoing professional development and legislative activities

## Actions Taken

### Step 1

Assess budget impacts and resources needed to move Congress to a virtual format

### Step 2

Identify a virtual platform to comply with stringent CE requirements to deliver online education

### Step 3

Determining a program format that would accommodate Industry Partner deliverables

### Step 4

Maintain the culture of Congress, including a theme, costume and booth decorating contest, and networking for attendees and partners

## Goals

- Provide critical continuing education to practicing optometry professionals so they can maintain licensure
- Reinforce relationships with Industry Partners to ensure the success of future partnerships
- Maintain the culture and feel of the in-person Congress experience in an online format

## Results

- 3 days of online education offering 15 hours of cutting-edge CE for nearly 600 attendees
- Interactive exhibit hall with 23 booths which met budget goal

## Insights/Learnings

- By elevating and differentiating Congress from competitors, we exceeded attendance and engagement goals
- Investing in a professional Emcee maintained the professionalism and respected branding of GWCO Congress

*“Thanks to SBI, we’ve launched our 1st virtual conference with royal flair.”*

**Hilary Hawthorne, OD**  
GWCO President