



Press Release

Information and Knowledge Management in the International Pharmaceutical Industry

44th Annual General Meeting of the P-D-R

The Pharma Documentation Ring (P-D-R) held its 44th Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Newmarket, UK from the 8th – 11th October 2002. The P-D-R is an association whose members represent the scientific information departments of the leading R&D-based pharmaceutical corporations. The 23 companies represented account for approximately 60% of the total global turnover of ethical drugs., by far the majority of top 20 global pharmaceutical companies are corporate P-D-R members. Over 45 delegates from 11 different countries in Europe and North America attended this year's meeting, which was ably hosted by GlaxoSmithKline. An informal reception for delegates prior to the official opening of the meeting was organised by Thompson Derwent .

In his opening address, Sandy Mullen (Bayer AG), President of the P-D-R, discussed the continuing information explosion. He noted that Chemical Abstracts Services (CAS) register a new substance every 5 seconds, approximately 6.7 million substances will be added to the CAS Registry in 2002. The availability of biosequence information had increased dramatically in recent years e.g. it took Derwent 20 years to reach 1 million sequences but only 9 months to add the second million to Geneseq. In a later talk, Matt Toussant (CAS) reported that the bioscience content in CAS databases was steadily increasing - more than 40% of the 23 million references in the CA database now related to bioscience topics, and the proportion of bio-molecules in the CAS registry growing from approximately 10% of all substances in 1995 to 45% in 2002. The CAS Registry File itself has now grown to more than 42 million substances. The P-D-R was asked to provide qualified input with regard to adding value to CAS's work in the sequence area

Sandy Mullen also commented on the successful development of the P-D-R website (www.p-d-r.com), which had become a major platform for the our activities. Useful, new publicly accessible, features include the Pharmaceutical Company ranking tables (2001 and 2002) from Wood Mackenzie, PharmaProjects, Current Patents as well as overview articles

from Pharma Marketletter. In addition, a new daily webspider service from Reg123 is available , reporting on the very latest press releases from the P-D-R member websites. Additional functionality and content had also been added to the 'members only' area of the website.

Four strategic topics of particular interest to the P-D-R representatives were discussed in two parallel streams

- Measuring what we are doing
- Data and Text Mining
- Marketing Information Services
- Database Futures

These more practical, pragmatic sessions proved particularly popular, there being a healthy and open discussion amongst delegates on the issues faced, the different approaches that had been tried in member Companies, and an indication as to what had worked well and what had not.

During the 'Measuring what we are doing' session, Peter Shepherd, an external speaker from Elsevier Science and the manager of the Counter Project, presented a progress report on this project, which involves the collection and reporting of statistics on the use of scientific, technical and medical electronic journals. He advised that information managers in the private and public sectors were actively involved in the specification of the statistical parameters that would assist them to gain an improved understanding of how electronic journals were being used in their organisations. This information will assist the information managers to provide the electronic journal services that will deliver most value to their organisations. This was followed by two presentations by P-D-R company delegates on the results of internal quantitative studies on the use of information within their own organisations.

This useful sharing of non-confidential information, one of the most important aspects of P-D-R Meetings, enabled delegates to take away some new and creative ideas on how to analyse as well as promote their information and KM activities within their organisations.

Data and text mining of patents and the scientific literature continues to be an area of strong interest to P-D-R Companies and recent reports suggest that this software sector will grow to a \$3 billion business by 2003. The market place is still relatively immature with more than 200 vendors providing a wide range of offerings. The P-D-R will conduct a more detailed study into data and text mining, together with classification and taxonomy tools during the coming year, probably being the topic of a special P-D-R Meeting in the Spring of 2003

In the company reports sessions, the content of which is an excellent basis for informal benchmarking, it was very apparent that several companies continue to undergo major internal restructuring as a result of further merger and acquisition activity in this very active industry sector. The larger companies

are putting considerable efforts into establishing global licences with scientific and technical publishers and database providers and an ever increasing number of electronic journals are being licensed and made available to R&D and other staff at all sites, particularly via the exploitation of linkage technology i.e. database records to e-articles. A number of the Companies had also evaluated the financial benefits that had resulted directly or indirectly from the activities of the information services function.

A common thread that emerged from several of the presentations related to the significant merger and acquisition activity that appears to be taking place amongst information providers. It was noted that some of the larger publishers had acquired a number of smaller publishers and that in terms of major database providers Thomson Scientific had acquired Current Drugs and Wila Verlag, and MicroPatent had acquired Aurigin. Some internal restructuring had also been observed and several information vendors had also formed strategic relationships with partner organisations to enable them to extend the scope of their offerings.

In summary, it was a highly successful and interactive meeting and a survey conducted amongst attendees indicated there had been, once again, a very high level of relevant and quality presentations by PDR members and invited speakers. The meeting continues to be regarded by most participants as the major annual event of its type for the international pharmaceutical industry.

The 45th P-D-R AGM will be held on 24th - 26th September 2003, near Thame, Oxfordshire, England and will be hosted by Wyeth.

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