What's New With ASCO.org?

By Ronald Blum, MD

ASCO.org underwent a significant site redesign in early 2006. Ronald Blum, MD, 2006-2007 Chair of the Information Technology Committee, answered questions to help identify key functionality and new organization on the Web site.

What is unique about ASCO.org?

The ASCO Web site is unique in that it provides access to the world's premier source of oncology-related education and research content. The ASCO brand is based on content that encompasses the breadth and depth of oncology, is peer-created for ASCO, and peer-reviewed by ASCO member leadership for excellence.

What are the major changes to ASCO.org?

Based on requests made by ASCO members, the new Web site content is more thematic, associating specific disease and topic content. The result is 12 disease-specific portal sites, all of which are accessible from the home page. The redesign provides the user with access to all ASCO.org content, but is tailored to give direct, disease-specific access.

What are the new disease-specific portals?

Each of the disease-oriented home pages is modular with topic pages. The 12 disease-specific portals link information about specific cancer topics, including presentations from the ASCO.org Virtual Meeting, articles from the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, abstracts from past Annual Meetings, Educational Book manuscripts, and related articles available through PubMed. One of the clear messages from our users is that they want to find information related to the disease they treat, to support evidence-based clinical decisions. The disease-specific portals provide ready access to the evidence.

How is ASCO.org navigation better?

In redesigning the Web site, we undertook the yearlong process of Web metrics analyses and usability testing using advanced Web design concepts. The goal is to have the fewest number of "clicks" to get to the desired content. The result is modular Web pages that are thematically organized in three columns:

- The left-hand column of the homepage has links to specific content: Meetings, Abstract and Research, Practice Resources, Education Training, News, and Legislative and Regulatory. Other topic categories in this left column include: About ASCO, ASCO Bookstore, Careers in Oncology, Downloads and Technology, Grants, Membership, and State Affiliates. There are also direct links to other ASCO Web sites, including *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, *Journal of Oncology Practice*, *ASCO News & Forum*, People Living With Cancer, The ASCO Foundation, and The ASCO Press Center.
- The middle column highlights upcoming ASCO meetings, and displays a banner with links to the three most commonly accessed features: Virtual Meeting, Membership Directory, and Practice Guidelines. The

lower half of the column features the latest news, policy news, and today's cancer news.

- The right-hand column has direct links to the portal pages for cancer types and news highlights.

Has the search capability been enhanced?

The new Web site features enhanced search capabilities via several methods:

- A simple search, which uses Vivísimo—a search engine that produces a hierarchical grouping of related content. The search capability has been further enhanced by the use of a Web site content management system, Vignette, which has enabled content to be labeled in an oncology-specific vocabulary.
- An advanced, content-specific search, as in the Virtual Meeting pages, can be done by entering specific information such as author, presentation title, or keyword.

What resources are available to benefit an oncology practice?

There is an entire section of ASCO.org dedicated to the practicing oncologist. It is found in the left column navigation menu under "Practice Resources." In this section, you will find information about the Practice Management Curriculum, eHealth Records, and reimbursement and coding questions. This section is a must-see for all practicing oncologists. The Practice Guidelines provided by ASCO are another valuable resource available online. New guidelines also come with a toolbox (slide sets, worksheets) to facilitate use of the information in practice.

Are there sections of the Web site you recommend to help remain current on the research and science of oncology?

Absolutely. Be sure to visit the Virtual Meeting (www.asco.org/vm), a resource dedicated to giving unlimited access to cancer research. This is a must-visit for any oncologist working to keep up-to-date on the latest information to best treat patients. In addition, you can review abstracts presented at ASCO meetings back through 1996 and Educational Book manuscripts through 2002.

What is next for ASCO.org?

ASCO.org continues to seek innovative ways to provide information to users. For example, a new Podcast Program was launched at the 2006 Annual Meeting. This service provides subscribers with access to the audio recordings of all Annual Meeting presentations for use on their computers or portable MP3 devices, as well as access to the ASCO Audio Journal of Oncology interviews featuring discussions of the latest progress in the field. Podcasting as a listen-on-demand method of disseminating information will be a focus for us moving forward.

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