

Conference apps

With conference season soon starting I thought I would run through some of the apps I think would be useful for delegates attending a urology conference in the coming year.

The conference app

It is often useful to download the official conference app on your way to the event. Conference apps are a great way to reduce the weight of your bag and can allow you to read abstracts and new research as well as plan which sessions to attend. Some of the best have daily updates of content, integration with your smartphone calendar, allow interactions such as note taking, include audience interaction such as voting and results during live talks, and in the future will potentially even empower patients.

Staying at the conference

Finding a hotel can be tricky, especially in conference season; most conferences have linked hotels already prepared for you and these can sell out fast. For those booking separately check out **Trivago**, **Booking.com**, **Kayak**, **Late Rooms**, **Expedia**, **TripAdvisor** and **Lastminute**. A great alternative is booking an **AirBnB**, **HomeAway**, **VRBO** (Vacation Rental by Owner), or **Flipkey** room or an entire house or apartment. This gives a more authentic feel of what it is like to live in a city (even if you are just there for a few days).

Travel

Most large conferences are held in large cities with well established transport systems. Given the large numbers of people attending conferences, delegates often have to rely on public transport. I would always recommend downloading an underground / bus / tram map, even if this is as simple as a picture of the map to be stored on your phone. Another useful tip is to store an offline version of the google map for the city you are visiting, thereby eliminating the need for WiFi or roaming when out in the conference city. To save an offline version of the google map you would like to keep on your phone simply locate the city using google maps, then type 'ok maps' in the search box, tap the search key and you will be prompted for the area you wish to download.

EAU 2018 in Copenhagen:

Rejesplanen, Free on iOS / Android – 'Rejesplanen' means travel planner and by entering your start and end point it shows you the best way to get there using the bus, train and metro systems in Copenhagen.

Cityplanner App, Free on iOS / Android provides door to door trip planning whether you are using the bus, train, and / or ferry.

I Bike CPH, Free on iOS / Android – Copenhagen is famous for its cycling and this app provides GPS routing for biking like a local!

DOT Mobilbilletter, Free on iOS / Android – A ticket app for all of Copenhagen's public transport (although from the user reviews there seem to be problems with the app crashing at present!).

Copenhagen City Guide, Free on iOS / Android – Insider tips from GuidePal on what things to do and see within the historic city of Copenhagen.

Google Translate, Free on iOS / Android – with a vast array of languages it can help you with a menu or a sentence and can even be used offline by downloading the file before you arrive. Probably less useful in Copenhagen where up to 90% of people can converse in English!

AUA 2018 in San Francisco:

Uber and Lyft, Free on iOS / Android – offer quick and easy taxi trips around the city.

Flywheel, Free on iOS / Android – an Uber / Lyft alternative it lets you virtually hail a taxi driven by a licensed professional and the ride is still automatically charged to your card.

Cityplanner App, Free on iOS, Android, provides door to door trip planning whether you are using the bus, train, and / or ferry.

Foursquare and Yelp, Free on iOS, Android, reviews of places to eat and drink.

SF/ Arts Express, Free on iOS / Android, listings of everything cultural in San Francisco.

BAUS 2018, Liverpool:

Waze, Free on iOS / Android, get to the conference with this car driving app, a Google Maps alternative, which includes traffic information and has helpful suggestions and features Spotify integration.

Liverpool App, Free on iOS / Android, a guide to the sights and sounds of Liverpool.

Moovit, Free on iOS / Android, a guide to public transport in Liverpool (and other major cities in the UK).

At the conference

Social media is the primary way of disseminating new ideas at conferences so keep a track of the hashtags at the relevant conference. **Twitter** allows you to follow what is happening in other rooms of a conference. I find that tweeting about the things I have learnt during a talk, or a picture of a great slide is like a note to come back to after the conference. You can create or take part in twitter chats where you can exchange ideas about difficult cases or controversial topics. Often these are announced during a conference and offer a great way to exchange ideas with colleagues.

Creating a **WhatsApp** group is also useful so that you can meet up with colleagues and friends. Keeping a track of costs by taking pictures of receipts is recommended, you can group them by uploading them to apps such as **Evernote** (an app which is also useful for taking notes).

Obviously, these lists are far from exhaustive and some like Uber and Lyft are available in most large European and American cities. Let me know your tips for next year or whilst on your way to this year's conferences with the hashtag **#confready18**.

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