

NEW



# OCTANE'S AESTHETICS TECH FORUM SHINES IN NEWPORT BEACH



BY WENDY LEWIS

I didn't need much persuasion to hop on a plane to attend the 5th annual Octane forum

live this year, having served as a judge during Covid from my laptop. Attending this year's live event, moderating a panel on AI, and networking with my fellow board members shed new light on the potential growth and unprecedented innovation, as well as some of the challenges facing the industry.

The forum is Bill Carpou's brainchild and he has watched it grow exponentially year over year.



"Our 5th year featured a very diverse faculty and industry partners sharing their expertise and vision for the industry," he told me. "Our key takeaways were that the aesthetic market is strong and growing exponentially with unprecedented

**AESTHETICS**  
TECH FORUM  
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innovation and a handful of emerging and exciting categories leading the way."

## OCTANE 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Among the many aspects of Octane that sets this conference apart and keeps us coming back is the diversity of speakers with unique expertise, the relevant topics that are covered, and, of course, the outstanding networking opportunities. I would be remiss if I didn't also mention the draw of sunny Orange County.



"As one of the founding members of the organizing committee, it is exciting to see the Aesthetic

Tech Forum evolve into one of the marquee annual events in the aesthetics sector," said attendee Faud Hasan, co-founder and chair of the board, Appiell.ai, in an interview. "What makes ATF unique is the platform it provides to all the key stakeholders to discuss, share, and debate about the

topics that are pertinent in our industry. The sessions are designed to be unique and reflect the current state of the industry. Another feature is the LaunchPad initiative, which enables brands to share their stories with the attendees which includes practitioners, researchers, innovators, investors, service providers, and product developers.”

### THE RISE OF WEIGHT LOSS THERAPIES & BODY SHAPING

It came as no surprise that the popularity of weight loss drugs and body shaping treatments were very hot topics this year.



Kamakshi R. Zeidler, MD, FACS, Founder & Managing Partner of Aesthetx and Octane Medical

Advisory Co-Chair, has served as the Emcee since its inception. “One of the highlights of this year’s conference centered around weight loss drugs and how they are flipping the switch on the aesthetic market. There is a huge influx of patients entering the aesthetics ecosystem for this purpose. We also see more patients pursuing wellness, and an explosion in therapeutic usage of treatments led by energy-based devices, skin boosters and bio stimulators to enhance skin quality.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), obesity affects about 42% of adults in the U.S., and roughly two-thirds of Americans (65%) claim that willpower alone isn’t enough for most people trying to lose weight and keeping it off, according to a survey from Pew Research Center survey.<sup>1</sup> This has created a frenzy for patients who are eager to get swelt and stay toned and fit, from teens to octogenarians.

There were some lively discussions about the future of this uber popular trend and what practitioners who have added weight loss therapies to their services to meet the demand may expect from the FDA.

### Micah Bregman, VP, Global Strategy & Pipeline, Allergan Aesthetics an AbbVie Company, is on the Octane Aesthetics Tech Forum Committee



“Octane has been a driver of innovation within Orange County for 20 years. The Aesthetics Tech Forum brings together influential Aesthetics leaders from across the country to discuss today’s landscape and tomorrow’s opportunities as we experience rapid growth and evolution within the industry. As a leading innovator within the industry, Allergan Aesthetics is proud to support a forum that convenes entrepreneurs, investors, and practitioners aligned to advance medical aesthetics.”



According to Steve Kreider, Senior Vice President, Global Marketing at Cutera®, “The demand for

non-invasive body treatments has been steadily increasing over the past decade with advancements in technology and protocols. With rapid weight loss on the rise, we are also seeing more patients turn to noninvasive body treatments like truFlex® muscle sculpting to help them complement their weight loss.”

### THE AI CONUNDRUM

As expected, the emergence of AI dominating every aspect of our lives got a lot of attention, with speakers and attendees sharing their experiences, and taking copious notes.

2024 is poised to a pivotal year for AI from the Silicon Valley perspective to how it has rapidly embedded itself into every aspect of our daily lives. By all accounts, integrating AI into a medical practice or medspa is no longer just a ‘nice to have,’ but rather an essential adjunct to run an efficient and profitable business. It feels like just yesterday I was lecturing on the benefits of adding a chatbot to practice websites, the precursor to where we are now.

Due to the lighting speed that AI is advancing, keeping up the pace requires a small army. As it expands, there is a plethora of tools to tap to automate simple tasks such as billing, graphics, collateral materials, speedy note taking, text for blogs and social media content. AI has also elevated the way physicians can manage and delegate their workflow and communicate with patients, staff and colleagues. In fact, almost anything you can think of that can replace human intervention is possible.

Facial Plastic Surgeon Kay Durairaj from Pasadena, CA, who has a robust social media presence, shared her experience incorporating AI into her practice. “AI has dramatically improved our efficiency by automating routine tasks and allowing me to focus more on patient care. It has also significantly enhanced our marketing efforts and content generation, enabling personalized and impactful communication with our audiences.”



“The use of AI for skin and facial motion analysis is set to revolutionize aesthetic medicine

by facilitating unparalleled precision in diagnostics and personalized treatment

## According to Alisa Lask, CEO Rion Aesthetics, and member of the Aesthetics Tech Forum Committee



“Being selected to present at Octane was an honor in itself, but having Rion Aesthetics win the award for best new innovation in 2023 was truly validating. It not only boosted our team’s morale but also solidified our belief in the impact of our scientific exosome work. Octane has been a wonderful experience for Rion Aesthetics, providing a springboard for growth and success in the medical aesthetics industry. It was a fantastic platform to connect with investors, physicians, and strategic firms, opening up new avenues for partnerships and growth.”

plans. AI is not just a tool, but an integral part of our success,’ says Dr. Durairaj.

### WHAT’S COMING NEXT?



Tom Albright, President and CEO, Luvantas, Inc., and member of the Aesthetics Tech

Forum Committee, “This forum has become the leading venue for those focused on the business of aesthetics, from industry executives, entrepreneurs, KOLs, and service providers focused on sustaining the medical aesthetic sector.” Indeed, the plan for 2025 includes a more spacious venue and new opportunities for learning, growing and connecting.

Cara Parchment is the Senior Signature Event Manager for the Aesthetics Tech Forum, Ophthalmology Tech Forum, and the Ignite Series, “We are very excited to announce that for our 6th year, Octane will take place at the Pendry Newport Beach, a spacious 5-star resort that is part of the Montage brand. This new location features a spacious area for exhibitors, a grand ballroom that can accommodate more attendees, as well as break-out sessions and private rooms for one-on-one meetings,” she said.



“Due to the excellent feedback we have had from our partners and attendees, we plan to keep

expanding the Octane community to cover new developments, innovation, and investment opportunities in the robust category of medical aesthetics as they arise,” said Carpou. “The future of aesthetics looks very bright.” ■

*Wendy Lewis is a member of the Octane Medical Aesthetics Medical Advisory Board.*