

# Psychological Science, Treatment, and Research in the Digital Age

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In the digital age, when we have something to say we tweet, text, email, post, and blog our hearts out. Researchers have taken note and are recognizing that phone and web-based technology has the potential to be a useful research, treatment, and education tool.

One may ask why researchers would want to incorporate technology into treatment and research. The answer is that technology can save clinicians time and money, it can extend their services to those who may be reluctant or unable to come to in-person treatment sessions, and it can help standardize the delivery of therapy. It can also make data collection easier, more efficient, and more accessible to the general public.

The symposium speakers shared their individual experiences using phones, websites, and computer programs to treat mental health and addiction problems in their patients. As a whole, the group described promising results from using technology, reporting that it helped improve the addictive behaviors and the mental health of their patients. They also noted that technology effectively motivated people to quit drugs and helped increase the number of people who sought out drug addiction resources.

The symposium was also a chance to promote a new mobile platform for developing behavioral and social science experiments. This platform — called PACO — is being developed by Google. Although the program is still in beta testing, it provides an interesting new way for researchers to conduct experiments in the digital age.

So it seems researchers are jumping on the digital bandwagon with promising results. The insights and experiences of these speakers provided a glimpse of the full potential of integrating psychological science, treatment, and technology.

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*Kathleen Carroll, Yale School of Medicine*

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