



HCP Social Media Planning Guide

It's brand and budget planning season.

Savvy pharma marketers are taking stock of existing programs and performance, planning for new products in the 2023 pipeline, and looking ahead for ways to optimize reach and persuasion among healthcare professionals (HCPs). Effective planning requires understanding and accounting for seismic changes in the marketplace and in the professional mindspace.

The biggest new recurring factor is the increased use, reliance, and credibility of public and private social media for peer-to-peer clinical conversations among HCPs. From private Facebook groups to open forums or journal clubs on Twitter to diagnostic conversations on Sermo or Medscape, HCPs are embracing and actively using social media. A recent study conducted on Sermo, and designed by the Digital Health Coalition (DHC), found that 89% of responding HCPs consider social media a credible information source. 75% spend at least an hour per week on social media. 75% follow other physicians on social media platforms. 67% use the same user ID for both personal and professional social media properties opening up multi-channel targeting options. And 69% share treatment tactics and techniques while 50% post professional content frequently. A third follow a pharma brand on social media and subscribe to medical videos on social platforms.

Private gated professional communities have expanded membership, usage and functionalities. 86% value the information they get from physician-only social platforms. Sermo reported 15% growth in unique logins and noted its users spent an additional 28% of time on the platform. Doximity, with its telehealth dialer, experienced similar growth in users and time spent on-site.

There is growing evidence that HCP social media use varies by specialty and that private groups on Facebook and Twitter attract significant participation.



Consider this 6 point HCP social media planning guide

1

Plan for Public & Private Social Media

Expect HCPs to be present and active on several social media sites. Identify critical inflection points in the customer journey. Then decide where and when to intersect with them. Focus either on a one-message-everywhere roadblock strategy or a distributed strategy with different messages for each HCP segment parsed among the social platforms. Short videos, infographics, case summaries, and data sets or imaging will be generally expected.

2

Focus on Peer-to-Peer Promotion

HCPs are eager to connect with peers and share cases, treatment tactics and clinical information. Physicians grant great credibility to other physicians and specialists facing the same patients, diseases, treatment options, and diagnostic challenges. Mobilize brand advocates, strong brand writers or key investigators to spread the word. Explore the feasibility of using MSLs more broadly to engage practitioners.

3

Factor in DOLs

Mobilize digital opinion leaders (DOLs) to augment your promotional plans. Like KOLs, these emerging voices with significant social followings, want access to real world data, clinical trial information and the fundamental science which they will process and interpret on their own. Wary of becoming shills for big pharma they are open generally to conversations and the exchange of ideas around new medications, evolving treatment options, novel procedures, and insightful case studies.



4

Utilize the Walled Gardens

The NPI-gated HCP communities offer a wide range of options for engaging HCPs and generating interactions and conversations. Each platform has unique features and functions. Competition among the platforms offers some wiggle room for pharma marketers. Sermo's polling and drug ratings, Skipta's online ad boards or case challenges, Doximity's specialty feeds, Medscape's content curation or G-Med's multiple contact packages offer marketers an array of tactics, at negotiable price points, to reach and persuade selected HCP audiences.

5

Bracket Congresses

Live and hybrid congresses are making a comeback. HCPs are eager to get back to some sense of normalcy. Savvy marketers plan for a supportive campaign that includes before-during-and-after messages that drive booth and session attendance, engage HCPs on site with games, quizzes or interactive panels and offer post-Congress white papers or presentations. Twitter and LinkedIn have relevant targeting capabilities.

6

Supply the Tools HCPs Ask for

Surveys have shown that HCPs want practice enhancing tools and patient support. Patient education materials, digital discussion guides, pre-authorization help, co-pay cards and samples are universally in-demand. Fulfilling these articulated asks opens the door to more clinical conversations.

The embrace of social media by HCPs and the growing body of professional content can create a force multiplier for marketers. Understanding and addressing the changing HCP mindset and grasping the expanding range of social media features and functions is a formula for success.

Learn more at www.liveworld.com. Contact us at hello@liveworld.com