

# Social ENGAGEMENT

by Taren Grom

*Pharma companies continue to struggle with how to be socially acceptable within an increasingly more mobile ecosystem.*

**T**he growth of the mobile health (mHealth) industry is exploding. According to a new IDC Health Insights Report, clinical mobility spending in the United States is expected to grow from \$2.9 billion in 2011 to \$5.4 billion in 2016. Furthermore, the report notes that physicians and other healthcare professionals are integrating mobile capabilities into their workflow to help improve the coordination, delivery, and cost of care.

This emphasizes and validates the label “Digital Omnivore,” a term coined by Epocrates for clinicians who use a tablet, smartphone, and laptop/desktop computer routinely in a professional capacity. In Epocrates’ second Annual Mobile Trends Survey, almost half of the 1,063 physicians surveyed are Digital Omnivores — a significant increase of 68% compared with 2012.

Epocrates predicts that Digital Omnivores will become the majority by 2014. In 2012, 28% of those surveyed were deemed Digital Omnivores. This year, 47% of physicians use a combination of the smartphone, the tablet, and the computer professionally. The Digital Omnivore segment is expected to grow to 82% in 2014. This increase is due to more widespread use of tablets, like the Apple iPad.

Additionally, growth is trending across specialties — from primary care, cardiology, oncology, and psychiatry to nurse practitioners and physician assistants. Healthcare professionals of all walks are taking advantage of the convenience and utility of today’s sophisticated mobile devices and laptops. For example, physician assistants (PAs) and nurse practitioners (NPs) were expected to claim a Digital Omnivore market share of 30% and 40% respectively in 2013. And these numbers are expected increase significantly in 2014, jumping to 76% of PAs and 77% of NPs to be Digital Omnivores.

What does this upward mobility trend mean for social media? Experts say it means pharmaceutical companies and brand managers need to understand the various audience segments and engage with them in a meaningful, substantive, and socially acceptable way. And, most important of all, they have to remember social means just that — being social.

According to PwC’s Social Media Likes Healthcare white paper, patients place moderate to great value in drug companies using social media to offer discounts or coupons (68%), customer service (65%), information to find the

cheapest medications (65%), treatment reminders (60%), appointment reminders (58%), support groups for similar patients (56%), sharing of positive experiences with other patients (53%), and games/contests encouraging healthy behavior (42%). Based on this survey of 1,060 respondents, PwC analysts recommend that pharma companies should consider using their social media accounts to inform users of patient assistance programs and coupon information.

## Creating the Right Engagement

According to Sofie De Beule, community manager at Engagor, an all-in-one social media management tool for companies that want to monitor and manage their online presence, there’s no secret formula to successfully engaging with an audience on social media, but applying the 80/20 rule should always be a big part of the social media strategy.

“It simply comes down to this: use 20% of your content to promote your brand, and dedicate 80% to content that really interests your audience and engages them in conversations,” she says. “Don’t get me wrong, social media is a large part of the marketing mix. But because people use social media to be social, they don’t want to be subjected to an online sales pitch. Always make it about building relationships, rather than annoying the audience with irrelevant content and boosting your own image.”

Ms. De Beule says because content marketing is an important component of any social media marketing strategy, there are a couple of strategies that can help frame the 80/20 rule.

“When working on the 20% of content that deals with your brand, also include info that benefits your audience,” she recommends. “Include a discount, add a special offer, provide useful statistics, etc. Make sure you integrate a persuasive call-to-action that inspires your audience to learn more about your company so it possibly leads to conversion in the future.”

As for the other 80% of the content, Ms. De Beule says make it interesting and shareable.

“Dedicating 80% to interesting content that caters to the interests and needs of your audience means compiling content from influencers with whose ideas and insights you agree,” she says. “It supports your thinking, the way you do business, or what you believe is going on in your industry. Think about retweets, inspirational quotes, links to news, questions, etc.”

## VIEWPOINTS



### ASHEESH SHUKLA

Associate VP  
Cognizant Life Sciences

### Needs Assessment

Social media continues to be underutilized due to a lack of clear

guidance around pharma companies’ responsibilities to respond to information that is gathered. However, the industry engages with its various customer groups, including providers, patients, and caregivers for reasons beyond marketing products. Many pharma companies have used social media to engage these customer groups in learning about their needs around managing disease states for various impacted lives. These needs range from information access, such as disease states, diagnosis paths, lifestyle changes required to support treatment, and support group access, to transactional, for example, benefit level access under health plans, access to patient assistance, and treatment reminders. The tactics often deployed range from focusing on a therapeutic area or supporting disease specific programs with people-engagement driven primarily through social media.

These needs are often explicitly expressed by various customer groups, but many times these are reflected in social media as causes or impact due to unmet needs and personal choices. Hence, inferring unmet needs become a critical activity requiring analytical models. The scale of social media, often resulting in data exhaustion, and monitoring the most impactful exchanges present many challenges. Other challenges, though not unique to social media that impact a pharma company’s ability to respond include: validating the accuracy and authenticity of information, the ability to personalize responses with little contextual information, and gaining regulatory reviews for some responses in real time, which is often an expectation of social media.

Social media continues to be a powerful mechanism for pharma companies to reach diverse sets of customer groups, effectively covering informational gaps as uncovered through customer questions, engagement with



Ms. De Beule offers three simple steps to make the sharing process a lot easier. First, she says, follow influencers, and learn from what

they find interesting. Second, share interesting content with your own followers, and try to connect to them. And third, engage with your

influencers so it motivates them to want to share your own content.

"In short, if a brand focuses too much on it-

patient and provider communities focused on their needs, and developing a powerful set of communities enabling sharing of curated information.

### SEAN NICHOLSON

Senior Director, Social Media  
Intouch Solutions

#### Listen and Learn

Listening is key to determining what consumers want and

need through social media. The rise of the digital patient has created a great opportunity for pharma. For the first time ever, patients and their caregivers are sharing their thoughts, experiences, opinions, and wants and needs in a format that can be easily captured, analyzed, and acted upon. While some pharma companies might be hesitant to engage in online conversations, the least they can do is to implement an online listening process. Through listening, companies can determine whether their current products and services are meeting patient needs, identify ways to improve their products and services and even generate new ideas for innovation.

Yes, while engaging in online listening, you are going to encounter adverse events (AEs) that will need to be analyzed and reported, but the volume of AEs is minimal, while the value of the insights you receive far outweigh the effort required to report AEs.

#### Give Up Control

The first step to keep conversations with digital consumers compliant and meaningful by successfully engaging online is to recognize that you can't control the conversation. You can participate and help guide the conversation, but controlling it just isn't possible. With that understood, one of the best ways for regulated industries to contribute to the conversation is to use channels or tools that allow for the pre-moderation of comments. For instance, YouTube and WordPress both offer channel owners the opportunity to review comments

before they go live on the site. The key to success with pre-moderation, however, is to review and respond to comments quickly (24 to 48 hours). Even if the comment is not able to be posted, letting the user know why it can't be approved is critical. Just remember, if someone took the time to write a comment on a channel, the pharma team should take the time to respond in a timely manner.

### MALCOLM BOHM

Chairman and CEO  
Liquid Grids

#### Understanding the Disease State

The best course of action in leveraging what is learned from analyzing digital data to create effective marketing campaigns is to market to consumers on their terms. We must recognize that 98% of online health dialogues are about diseases — symptoms, diagnoses, treatments, and procedures. Understanding where a person is in the disease lifecycle is critical. People talk about themselves but often refer to the health of others they are connected to, we must align to this perspective. Because 95% of healthcare decisions are emotional, we must appeal to these emotions. Using these analytics and insights allows us to identify specific online disease personas, which yield highly scalable and precise marketing campaigns.

### JOANNE WUNDER

Business Unit Head  
OgilvyHealthPR,  
part of Ogilvy  
CommonHealth  
Worldwide

#### Understanding the Conversation

By understanding what is driving conversations in social media and what questions consumers are asking, the industry can identify information needs that can be addressed via disease-

awareness or patient-support programs. Although many cite pharmacovigilance as the key challenge to listening, reportable adverse events are rare in social media and the potential benefits outweigh the risks.

### SEAN HARTIGAN

Senior VP, Multichannel/  
Digital Strategy  
Ogilvy CommonHealth,  
part of Ogilvy  
CommonHealth  
Worldwide

#### Analytics Key to Tracking the Journey

Companies need to insist on analytics reports that reveal how their content propels their customers through their own personal user journey. Measuring general site metrics usually doesn't tell the entire story. You must assign KPIs who actually matter. Overly simplified measurements, such as "Did I tweet my message?" don't tell if you actually motivated patients to take action. Your analytics should reflect the longitudinal impact of your multichannel social media marketing campaign.

### JIM ZUFFOLETTI

President  
OpenQ

#### Free-Flow Communications

Social media success depends on a

free flow of communication to be both meaningful and impactful for manufacturers and consumers. However, truly social communication is not possible without monitoring and risk management to further ensure information is accurate and compliant. Next-generation social media risk management (SMRM) technologies enable biopharmaceutical and medical device companies to ensure social dialogue is accurate and compliant with regulations. Similar to deploying anti-virus software, SMRM tools help organizations protect business-critical assets such as brand reputation, data protection, and regulatory compliance.



self within social media as a means for boosting sales, its audience will immediately see through it and tune it out,” she says. “Only by discovering what your audience is really interested in and responding to those needs will your brand be able to maintain a consistent, sustainable, and engaging online social media presence.”

### Where is Pharma?

With patients increasingly searching for medical information on their smartphones, surprisingly few websites for prescription pharmaceuticals are ready for them. Just 28% of the 160 pharma-owned websites reviewed in Manhattan Research’s ePharma Competitive Analysis Series were mobile-optimized.

“Some brand teams are stuck when it comes to mobile,” says Manhattan Research VP of Research Monique Levy. “They know it’s a critical channel, but aren’t executing on mobile optimization plans fast enough.”

Ms. Levy says part of the problem is figuring out which content and scenarios to prioritize

### Online Patient Audiences

**Manhattan Research identified audiences most likely to be mobile health users**

1. Cystic fibrosis patients
2. Growth hormone deficiency patients
3. Acne patients
4. ADD/ADHD patients
5. Hepatitis C patients
6. Migraine patients
7. Crohn’s disease patients
8. Chronic kidney disease patients
9. Generalized anxiety disorder patients
10. Bipolar disorder patients


and deciding whether a complete website redesign is necessary.

Another key finding in the ePharma Competitive Analysis Series revealed that pharma companies continue to shy away from social media; according to the research only 17% of

unbranded websites reviewed had a dedicated social media presence. Instead, many brands opt for peer-to-peer elements that aren’t live or tied to social media platforms, such as inviting visitors to submit their stories or mentor and advocate programs. Additionally, one-third of unbranded websites reviewed linked to product websites. And almost half of all websites tracked offered branded patient-support programs, often promoted under different names on product and unbranded sites.

“Emerging models of pharma website design, such as multi-indication hubs such as Genentech’s BioOncology.com, portal-like sites such as Sanofi’s The DX, and branded support programs like Novartis’ Care to Care Program for Exelon Patch, are breaking the mold,” Ms. Levy says.

Despite pharma’s overall struggle with mobile and social, the report highlights instances where some brands are trailblazing.

“There are pockets of strong digital innovation, particularly among new products,” she says. “Multiple sclerosis, hepatitis C, and oncology are three categories worth watching closely.” 

## 5 Surprising Social Media Statistics for 2013

There has been a lot of growth in social media websites lately. Many observers are following this growth quite keenly for various reasons. Some of them are looking to invest in companies. Others are looking to build a better brand awareness. In any case, here are the five most surprising social media statistics from the year 2013.

### 1 Mobile Only Users on Facebook

Of Facebook’s nearly 1 billion strong users, about 200 million are mobile only. In other words, nearly one-fifth of Facebook’s user-base don’t own a PC. Therefore they are compelled to access their favorite websites through their smartphones. This underlines the growing importance of smartphones and mobile devices in general. It also makes it clear that to attract a large smartphone-based audience, a company needs to provide smart apps to its customers. In many cases, these apps provide a better user experience than websites.

### 2 YouTube is More Popular Than Cable Television

YouTube reaches more adults than any cable network. In the United States, the number of people who watch television has fallen behind the number

of people who watch YouTube on a regular basis. Many companies have taken advantage of this by releasing their marketing campaigns as videos on the Internet first and on television later. This has shown to work in favor of many companies, which has been shown to be true on the InMotion review with online promotion costing less than television advertising.

### 3 Some Social Media Networks are More Popular Than Others

Some social media networks have a more active user-base than others. Statistical research has revealed that more than 95% of Facebook users log into their account every day. The same number for Twitter is 60% and for LinkedIn is 30%. To cut costs, social media networks are now avoiding websites like LinkedIn, which have a very small reach in terms of market impact, because their users are not active when compared with Facebook or Twitter.

### 4 Children on Facebook

More than 5 million Facebook users are under the age of 10. This is a stunningly large number, which shows that young children have easy access to social media. This is a new

demographic that can be tapped by social media marketers. Companies can offer discounts and prizes that are directly targeted at a young demographic. Using social media in these cases can be more effective than other media such as television or radio. At a young age, brand loyalty is yet to be formed therefore it is the right time for marketers to target young children with their brands and promotions.

### 5 International Users of Facebook

The number of Facebook users is almost three times the population of the United States. This shows the extent of globalization that has occurred in the Internet age. This also shows that companies can expand their reach and presence in international markets quite effectively by using social media. Today, the Internet is easily accessible in most parts of the world. These new markets can be tapped by social media marketers who can directly reach out to their customers through the internet.

These statistics reveal emerging trends in the social media space. However, we are still in the early stages of growth in social media and one will only have to wait to witness the far-reaching impact of digital media on businesses and their marketing efforts.

Source: Mark Scott, SocialMediaToday. For more information, visit [socialmediatoday.com](http://socialmediatoday.com).



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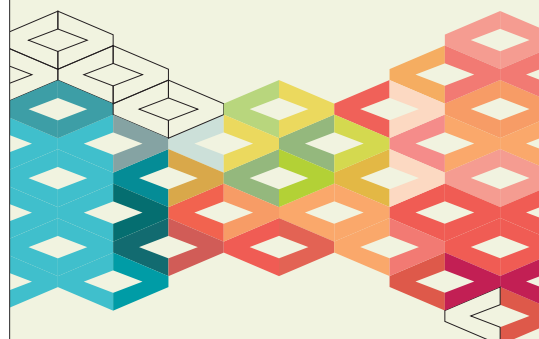
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