

HELP WANTED: Pharma Bloggers

Blogging is the latest job function in the marketing tool kit for some pharma companies. And as the industry's social media presence continues to grow, so will the need for those who can create a comprehensive user experience.

Social media specialist positions are growing exponentially — just Google the term to view the jobs that pop up. Many colleges and universities are now offering degrees in how to write, publish, and strategize in this new media field. Hospitals, clinics, and other healthcare organizations have enlisted staff to blog and tweet about programs and treatments.

As social media gains more attention at companies such as Johnson & Johnson, AstraZeneca, Roche, Pfizer, Novo Nordisk, Boehringer Ingelheim, and at least a dozen others, the role of the healthcare social media specialist will no doubt emerge as a new career choice in the pharma industry.

HIRING A SPECIALIST

Full-time social media positions are being filled in other industries, but with pharma in the infant stages of social media adoption, most people who are performing corporate tweeting or blogging also have other marketing and public relations duties to perform. The model for pharma is to start small, most likely with someone who is already on staff and who is a social media advocate. In many cases, pharmaceutical and biotech marketers have already established their own presence online, and their tweeting or blogging for the company becomes an extension of these efforts.

“When it comes to social media, no one pharma company is entering the space with guns blazing,” says Adam Cohen, partner at the digital agency Rosetta. “The industry has some big cultural lines to cross when it comes to engaging customers in different forums. Part of blogging is commenting on other

blogs and responding and engaging, and this is a big line for companies to cross. They have to be ready to do it and be committed to the engagement, even if they are starting small.”

Mr. Cohen encourages pharmaceutical companies to first set an objective for their social media plan and build a small team around accomplishing those goals.

He leads the search, online, and social media business units at Rosetta and, along with establishing the company's own online presence, advises clients how to take part in social media.

Most of Mr. Cohen's pharma clients have started small by picking someone already within the communication branch of the PR department. This person is responsible for social media as well as other traditional duties.

Marc Monseau, director, corporate media relations, at Johnson & Johnson, often regarded as the social media leader in the industry, tells PharmaVOICE he has a team of four to oversee and manage the company's efforts. In terms of Mr. Monseau's responsibilities, he creates and maintains the external face of J&J by engaging and interacting with people online. He works collaboratively with the different business units within the organization to advise them on how to effectively create an online presence and take part in social media. And he tracks new trends and developments and helps the company respond. For example, he recently worked with a team to produce the company's presentation at the FDA social media hearing in November.

The other members of the J&J corporate communications team also have multiple responsibilities. Margaret Gurowitz, senior specialist, organizational communication, is the



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MARC MONSEAU
Johnson & Johnson



author of the Kilmer House blog, which is just one of her many responsibilities. Rob Halper, director of video communication, also manages the company's unbranded YouTube channel and contributes to the JNJBTW blog. Melissa Waggenspack, assistant, helps the team create content, among her other responsibilities. Everyone's job contributes to creating a far-reaching footprint for J&J.

“We realize that people look in different places for information, so we have developed several destinations for them,” Mr. Monseau says. “For example, we have the YouTube channel with unbranded health content. We have multiple corporate blogs; the Kilmer House company history blog; and the JNJBTW — J&J By The Way — blog, the purpose of which is to provide insights on what is happening inside the company, as well as to provide a voice to other people in the organization.”

SPECIALIST FOR HIRE

A person looking to secure a job as a professional social media specialist obviously needs solid communications skills, but the perfect candidate also needs to understand how people use social media, Mr. Monseau says.

Mr. Cohen agrees. “There are a lot of people looking for jobs in social media, and while it can be quite easy for someone to become rela-

Help Wanted: Pharma Social Media Specialist

A social media specialist must be able to:

- Create and execute integrated social media strategies
- Manage the social marketing strategies, calendars, content development, creative relationships, and coordinate efforts of copy and design to ensure business objectives
- Meet/exceed traffic and sales goals based on key-performance metrics across multiple marketing channels
- Monitor competitive activity and make recommendations based on strategy and trends
- Manage responses to negative and positive feedback
- Generate buzz and interest in various forms of digital media such as online videos, blog posts, news articles, images, and more
- Create and maintain visible Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Loopt, Digg, Fark accounts, and other social media profiles

tively well-known and influential within social media circles, that alone does not qualify him or her to blog on behalf of a company," he says.

The right person for the job, according to Mr. Cohen, should be able to develop and implement social media strategies, including on-location events, podcasts, online advertising, blogs, developing and implementing SEO strategies, social networking, social bookmarking, and Web site submissions. In addition, the social media specialist should be able to participate in several online communities, including Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and MySpace, on a daily basis.

"A social media specialist is responsible for devising a strategy and delivering interactive content to promote the company, create engaged communities, drive innovation, and drive traffic and conversion," Mr. Cohen says.

Mr. Monseau agrees that engagement goes beyond blogging.

"A good social media person will understand how people are living and reacting and finding information online and be able to use those data to find out how he or she, as well as their company, can become a meaningful part of that conversation," he says. "The conversations should lead to a level of service and support, as well as being a resource."

Mr. Cohen recently hired a director for Rosetta's social media practice. He needed someone who understood the difference between reaching an audience of eyeballs and building and engaging a community.

"I was looking for someone with a marketing background and who really understands

The qualifications for a social media specialist include, but are not limited to the following:

- Bachelor's degree in Communications, PR, English, Marketing, or other related field
- Experience with high-volume, consumer-facing Web sites with meaningful annual revenue
- Proven ability to analyze, organize, and integrate large amounts of information into clear, concise presentations and plans
- Ability to use a broad spectrum of resources, social networking and shopping Web sites, blogs, search engines, and free online press release distribution services
- Computer literate, marketing-minded, strategic yet creative thinker, self-starter, able to manage multiple projects simultaneously
- Ability to maintain and increase professional knowledge of the latest trends, practices, and programs in social media/networking

social media," he says. "Finding someone with experience and an appreciation for both can be difficult."

But without someone who can help design a social media strategy, many companies may get burned.

"Anyone can learn how to use Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube," Mr. Cohen says. "But the best person for the job is a candidate who can think strategically about the best way to communicate with advocates of the brand."

Other qualifications for this emerging role include excellent written and verbal communication skills, stellar interpersonal skills, deep Web knowledge, an interest in emerging media and technology, and expertise in current and emerging social media applications. Most positions require a bachelor's degree in communication, marketing, public relations, or English, and several years of blogging experience.

In the pharma industry, candidates also need to understand the complexities of the business and the many regulations.

"A social media specialist in the pharma industry would have to be well-versed in what companies can and can't say and what the limits are from a legal point of view," Mr. Monseau says.

Knowing the regulations surrounding pharmaceutical marketing can be extremely helpful, but can be simplified by having specialists teach and advise marketers, Mr. Cohen says.

"When we engage with a client from the healthcare space, we immediately pull in people from that regulatory vertical who have the



Being a social media expert takes more than having thousands of followers.

ADAM COHEN
Rosetta



expertise," he says. "The only way to sensibly enter the social marketing space is to have someone with this knowledge or expertise on board."

Mr. Monseau points out that while knowing how to play within the regulatory guidelines is important, the ability to build online relationships is paramount.

"This expertise can't be underestimated; it's that important," he says. "Don't just hire someone who is only going to end up reiterating press releases. If companies are going to engage with consumers via social media, they need to do so in a real way."

Mr. Cohen agrees candidates should understand that a social media strategy is more about creating a footprint and less about bringing customers to a company or product site.

"If a company wants to build a social media presence, someone needs to be out there on its behalf commenting on other blogs and linking to other information sites where their customers are, so that the customers can stumble upon the input," he says. "If the company's efforts are adding value to a conversation, then these will start to create a social media presence." ♦

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Experts on this topic

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MARC MONSEAU. Director, Corporate Media Relations, Johnson & Johnson Pharmaceutical Services LLC, part of the J&J family of companies. For more information, visit jn.com or jnbtw.com.

Social Media Specialists:

Ben Martin and Maggie McGary, online architects of participation, consulting, writing, speaking, and blogging launched a social media salary survey to gain insights on comparative salary information for social media pros. With little data available, Mr. Martin and Ms. McGary, whose blogs help prepare individuals for a new era of association leadership are on a “quest to gather it and give it away.”

The two launched the first survey on Nov. 4, 2009, and plan to release new salary survey data every quarter. To subscribe to their RSS feed, link to socialmediasalarysurvey.com/feed or follow them on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/socmedsalaries> to stay in the know about their progress.

The survey will break down salary ranges for social media professionals by location within the United States, by length of time in the work force, by level of education achieved, and more.

According to Mr. Martin, more and more companies are hiring social media professionals, but even though this trend is on the rise, there's still very little comparative salary data for social media managers out there.

SALARY INFO

On Mr. Martin's blog, he quotes one social media headhunter's professional opinion about salary ranges for different kinds of social media professionals.

FOR HIRE

Mr. Martin says since the author is in the business of placing social media pros in new positions, there's very little reason to doubt these figures.

- **ENTRY LEVEL: \$30K;** online writing background, at least three months consistent writing experience, familiarity with social media tools.
- **COMMUNITY MANAGER: \$60-\$80K** (midwest); if you're the sole CM, 5 to 10 years in the industry, minimum.
- **STRATEGIST: \$80-\$150K;** based on past experience, and the interview has to be a road map of what is accomplished. Do not hire someone who has not shown experience in the field. They don't have to work in your industry, but they better have some kind of track record in achieving business goals traffic, advertising, conversions, sales, etc.
- **ENTERPRISE ARCHITECT: \$120-\$250K;** this is a very rare find, and is a position for companies looking to completely revamp

their content management strategy and internal networks. This is the most exciting job in social media, and requires someone with broad experience in networks, multiple platforms, development, security, and political infighting. It could be the most important role in a company in the next five years.

- **DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL MEDIA: \$60-\$90K;** this is a manager who has a background in building teams, who really gets the promise and the purpose of social media. A great voice for the company. Should be wary of new technologies, but know blogs, RSS, have Facebook and Twitter accounts, and know the difference between his or her employees playing and researching on MySpace and YouTube.

For more salary info, the following are additional links to social media surveys:

- **CONSTANTLY UPDATED:** Simply Hired's national average salary for social media jobs: <http://www.simplyhired.com/a/salary/search/q-social+media>
- **SEPTEMBER 2009:** Wordstream's Search Marketing and Social Media Salary Survey: <http://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2009/09/10/search-marketing-social-media-salary-survey-2009>
- **OCTOBER 2008:** Read Write Web's anecdotal salary survey of bloggers and social media pros: http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/how_much_do_top_tier_blogger_s_make.php
- **AUGUST 2008:** Online Community Report's compensation study: <http://www.onlinecommunityreport.com/archives/407-Online-Community-Compensation-Study.html>.

Source: Social Media Survey. For more information, visit socialmediasalarysurvey.com/about.

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