

The Power of Social Media

The PharmaVOICE 100 honorees discuss how social media is changing how they work.

Social media is a tool, an essential part of today's workplace. And increasingly, social media is becoming a critical part of healthcare. Patients are using the Internet and social media outlets to gain knowledge, communicate with each other, and compare therapies.

An average of 172 million different people visit Facebook every day, and during an average day, 40 million visit Twitter and 22 million visit LinkedIn, according to Ernst & Young. And according to a 2011 EY survey in the United Kingdom, almost 80% of social media users use social media to connect with friends and family, to read reviews, and to provide feedback.

Social media is changing how people communicate. Many of this year's PharmaVOICE 100 use social media as a way to connect with colleagues and clients.

Social Media Impacts Organizations

- » Organizations use social media to engage customers and other stakeholders to help shape the conversation around their products, services, and brands.
- » Employees use social media either internally or externally.
- » External stakeholders converse publicly online about the organization, its products and services, giving the organization market insights and perspectives.
- » Rules regarding the use of social media in social networking environments often shadow those for medical record — keeping, privacy, training, disclosure, and healthcare warning requirements. Both the FDA and HIPAA closely regulate how social media can and should be used.

Source: EY

“LinkedIn groups, for example, allow me to connect with my clients and colleagues in a virtual room where great ideas can flow freely.”

CALVIN BUTTS JR. / CMI/Compas

Calvin Butts Jr., VP, strategic services at CMI/Compas, says he is able to stay connected with peers and colleagues around the world and learn in real-time.

“LinkedIn groups, for example, allow me to connect with my clients and colleagues in a virtual room where great ideas can flow freely,” he says.

Social media is really becoming more commonplace for business rather than purely as a social tool now, says Tim Davis, co-founder and CEO of Exco InTouch.

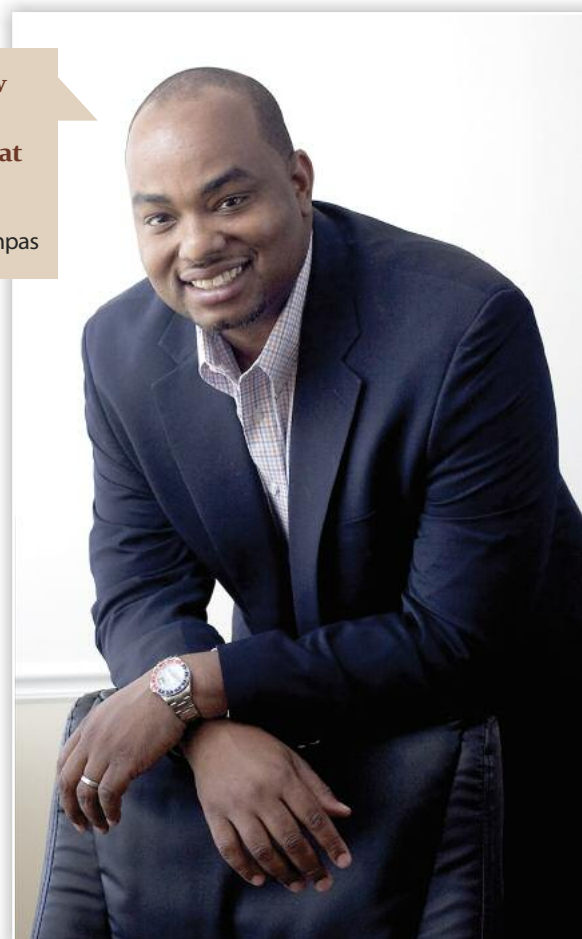
“It is interesting how social media is broadening professional networks, not just creating links, but actually encouraging interaction,” he says. “At a recent event I noticed that those entrenched in the space use social media in preference to email to make direct contact, and I think this will become an increasing trend in business relationships.”

Tim McCort, executive VP, general manager, GSW, points out that information available about customers today is unprecedented because of social media.

“Our ability to see more deeply into the lives of people is changing our world view and we need to design marketing communications that don't just connect, but are infused with how people want to connect,” he says. “Understanding connected consumer ecosystems that blend private, work and brand preference lives give us better clues to do our work.”

Joanne Kamens, Ph.D., executive director of Addgene, and Kerry Thomas Hilton, founder and CEO, HCB Health, both use LinkedIn to stay connected to people, help other people connect, and connect with prospects.

“These interactions have led to all kinds of interesting business and personal opportuni-



ties,” Dr. Kamens says. “I like these added ways to meet and interact with people.”

David Rear, president and founder of Advanced Clinical Concept, points out that instant access to colleagues and contacts has never been greater but there is a downside to this.

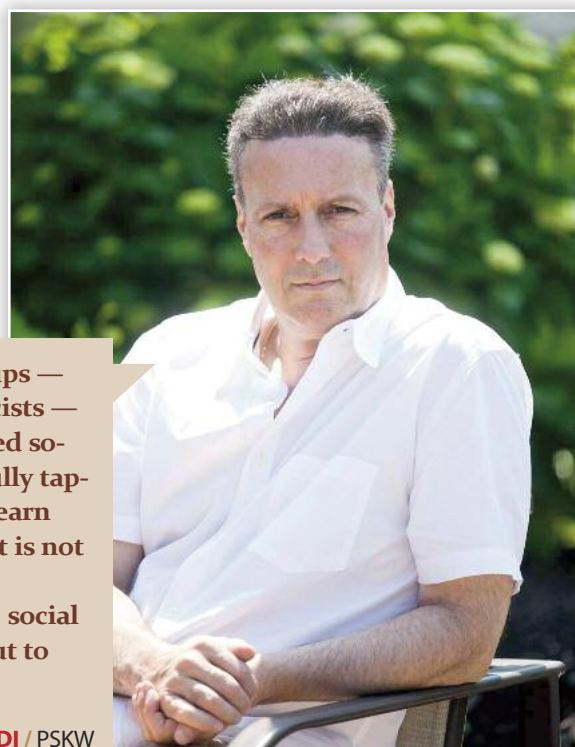
“News travels at the speed of light,” he says. “On one hand, this is a great because instant access to information is greater than ever, but on the other hand, it also means we're never more than a couple clicks away from work. I'm not sure the latter is a good thing. We all need some downtime to recharge our batteries. Without it, our creativity and effectiveness decrease.”

Dr. Kamens says face-to-face contact is just as important.



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TIM MCCORT / GSW



“Many of our key customer groups — patients, physicians, and pharmacists — already interact on well-established social media platforms. By successfully tapping into these networks we can learn very quickly what is working, what is not working, and how to adjust and strengthen our tactics. In essence, social media can help us to not guess, but to know.”

ROBERT PREVIDI / PSKW

“I have had a rule for 20 years to have lunch with another person at least twice a week, and I managed this even when I had two small children and all I wanted to do was eat my sandwich at my desk and listen to the quiet in my office,” she says.

Social Media In the Workplace

Social media is changing how people work within organizations and externally. In fact, social media has the potential to save money and offer cost-effective options for employee recruitment and communications. The survey by the Society for Human Resource Management found that 56% of companies use social media to find candidates, up from 34% in 2008.

“Social media is directly influencing every aspect of running a commercial business from research, marketing, sales, delivery, and customer service/support,” says David Escalante Jr., senior VP, OneKey and marketing at Cegedim Relationship Management. “A company and its leadership team need to consider seriously the increasing importance of social media to running a successful business.”

According to a 2011 survey by the Society for Human Resource Management, 68% of organizations reported currently engaging in social media activities to reach external audiences such as potential customers. Within companies that currently engage in social media activities, marketing (67%), human re-

sources (44%), and public relations (38%) were the groups most likely to use social media on behalf of their organization to reach external audiences (e.g., current customers, potential customers, potential employees).

“Using our newly revamped intranet is changing how we communicate with employees and how they communicate with each other; social media professional sites such as LinkedIn have evolved our recruiting practices,” says Denise Duca, senior VP, human resources at Acorda Therapeutics.

McCann Regan Campbell Ward, a division of McCann Health, also uses social media to help with talent acquisition.

“Last year, our agency saved a significant amount of money by using social media as the primary vehicle for finding, selecting, and hiring qualified candidates for our business, says Mathew West, VP, chief talent officer, at McCann Regan Campbell Ward. “Not only is it cost-effective, it is also quite effective at creating communities of people with similar skill sets, category experiences, and backgrounds.”

Julie Kampf, CEO and president at JBK Associates International, says social media has helped her company set itself apart in the executive talent solutions field, which has lagged in social media adoption.

“We’ve gained a competitive edge by integrating social media into our efforts to find the best diverse talent for our clients, communicate our commitment to diversity, and build relationships with individuals and organiza-

tions from many perspectives who share our vision for excellence,” she says. “We take advantage of LinkedIn to present our company and its focus on diversity in a forum with more than 200 million members. Our Facebook page gives us access to an even wider audience, including millions of groups representing different genders, generations, ethnicities, abilities, interests, or experiences. Our YouTube channel engages hard-to-reach audiences with our diversity platform, and Twitter gives us a way to strengthen relationships and share news related to diversity and inclusion in the workplace as well as great things that are happening in our company. As a platform that performs strongly with minorities as well as the young adults who represent our clients’ future leadership, Twitter adds value to our diversity communications and branding.”

Social Media in Pharma

Social media is also impacting how pharmaceutical companies reach out to patients and providers. Almost three-quarters (72%) of online U.S. adults have looked for health information on the Web in the past year, and pharmaceutical companies that are not taking advantage of social and digital channels are missing a major opportunity to reach consumers searching for healthcare information, according to a June study from Weber Shandwick.

The Weber Shandwick survey found that companies are trying different methods to use social media while also staying within current



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DAVID ESCALANTE
Cegedim Relationship Management

regulations. For instance, companies often create disease-specific, as opposed to brand-specific, Facebook pages. While many companies question the return on investment of social media, the survey also found that increasingly companies are recognizing that listening to patient communities via these channels provides a powerful benefit. The insights that can be gained through monitoring and assessing so-

cial media postings is akin to participating in a 24-7 focus group at a fraction of the cost.

PharmaVOICE industry leaders say social media allows companies to develop new strategies and content based on consumer feedback and provides a way to directly communicate a message, but some remain cautious about the need for accuracy.

“Social media allows us to engage with doc-

tors, advocacy groups, and patients, and share my perspective with others as well,” says Punit Dhillon, president, CEO, and cofounder of OncoSec Medical. “Social media make information exchange easier. It’s allowed me to interact with different people who are affected by cancer or who are in the industry working toward solutions to cure cancer.”

The potential for social media to be used to reach patients is huge, says Kent Thoenke, executive VP for scientific and medical affairs at PRA.

“Within some indications, everything happens within social media,” he says. “There are chat rooms based on diseases. People are tweeting about their course of their therapy. It’s phenomenal what’s happening and it’s worldwide.”

Bob Previdi, chairman and CEO at PSKW, says there is potential to tap the power of social media in ways that could revolutionize pharmaceutical marketing.

“The basic building blocks are largely in place,” he says. “For example, many of our key customer groups — patients, physicians, and pharmacists — already interact on well-established social media platforms. By successfully tapping into these networks we can learn very quickly what is working, what is not working, and how to adjust and strengthen our tactics. In essence, social media can help us to not guess, but to know.”

Social media is making the sharing of information more immediate and inclusive, says Matthew Stumm, principal, creative and media strategy, at BBK Worldwide.

“But because it is so immediate, you have to be diligent about ensuring the accuracy of the information conveyed,” he says. “It’s exciting to be part of a company that takes a proactive approach listening to the marketplace and then applies its creative vision to developing solutions to engage and educate audiences.”

Jorge Lee, associate director of consumer marketing at Questcor Pharmaceuticals, says because this is such a regulated industry social media hasn’t had much impact in pharma.

“We love it, but at the same time we don’t understand it,” he says. “Social media hasn’t really wielded its head completely in pharma. Once everyone gets an agreement on what we can and cannot do, then it will play a bigger role. Right now, most of us are keeping an eye on social media.”

Michael Kelly, CEO of Kantar Health US, emphasizes the importance of finding new ways of analyzing and communicating information.

“Oftentimes innovation of information is simply in its visualization. Finding that perfect infographic to communicate an important concept can help give the broadest audience access to the most essential information.” **PV**

10 Rules of Engagement: Building Social Confidence in Pharma

1. Start Small. Test the waters with focused projects — perhaps around corporate goals, news, and reputation issues — to gain an understanding of what works, how to begin finding audiences and building reach. Starting small, such as with pilot programs, is key to gaining the experience and assurance they need to build their digital social strategies.

2. Prepare But Remain Flexible. Many state that preparation is important, principally to anticipate problems and devise solutions. But don’t devote significant resources to developing a fully buttoned-up strategy, as it will change and evolve over time.

3. Focus on the Content, not the Channel.

Anything you can do offline, you can do online, as long as the content adheres to current regulatory standards. Companies have had difficulties with regulators when they have not followed standards that apply to nondigital rules of communication.

4. Choose Channels Wisely. Some may be quick to jump into social media simply for the sake of being there. A more strategic approach is advised, especially in choosing platforms.

5. Ensure Transparency and Honesty. There should be rules of engagement and make them plainly visible on all social platforms. Some companies make a digital code of ethics available

to both internal and external audiences. Others point to softer and more genuine tones as more effective with consumer audiences.

6. Deputize a Person or Team and Give Them Full Support. Allocating staff resources for social endeavors and providing appropriate training and support are key for successful social programming.

7. Bring Others into the Fold. Working to gain the support of internal colleagues, especially from legal, regulatory and medical teams, is critical. Additionally, including socially supportive leaders from business units in strategic planning will ease the process of resolving any issues that arise in social media programming.

8. Ramp up Internal Education Efforts. Sharing the benefits and best practices around social communications will go a long way toward gaining broad support for the medium.

9. Staff for Social Confidence. Staff experience in some companies may be lacking, while others recognize that they require additional resources to effectively execute social media programs.

10. Continue Pushing the Limits of ROI. While no one has answered the unique ROI (return on investment) challenges faced by the pharma industry, it is imperative to persistently seek better ways to articulate the ROI from social media.

Source: Weber Shandwick



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