



7 Reasons Why the Time for Social Media Is Now!

One in a Series of Whitepapers
Healthcare Marketing That *Clicks!*

Whitehead
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Health & Wellness Marketing

As social platforms are growing in popularity, people are discussing their health and wellness online. Articles about fitness and nutrition, chronic illnesses and mental health constitute some of the most shared content on the web. Developing your own content for social media can convert your brand into an industry thought leader. Healthcare brands must convey a strong presence online — increasing your knowledge of social media and its benefits can allow you to create an effective online strategy.



1. Get to Know Your Social Media Platforms

A social media platform refers to any user-driven or user-populated channel (such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) that exchanges interactive content with verbal communication and dialogue. Social media gives users and businesses the opportunity to engage with one another and facilitate meaningful discussion on the issues important to consumers. With 82% of adults aged 27–50 using social media, your brand needs to be an influential participant in the discussion.

Getting to know your social media platforms involves possessing a thorough understanding of each outlet's specialty and how to optimally use them to benefit your marketing mix. Facebook is a great platform for sharing images, stories, testimonials and other personal content catered to your subscribers. On the other hand, Twitter is a strong networking and microblogging platform geared towards recruiting new consumers by sharing industry news and insights. Incorporating multiple social media platforms into your marketing mix will help retain existing customers, recruit new ones and further your brand image online. Using these channels correctly will help you maintain an optimal conversion rate.

2. If You're Not Present, Your Competitor Is!

They say "Keep your followers close, but your competitors closer." You should know who your competitors are, where they are positioned online, and how they are servicing their online community. For the brands that are in direct competition with yours, are they offering similar services? The next question to ask is: Are they present on social media?

If the answer is yes, then it's time to conduct some research, especially if your brand has yet to invest in social media. A great starting point is to observe what the competition is doing. How are they successful? In what areas do they lack? If they are engaging their audience successfully, take note. If not, take it as an opportunity to fill a void. By conducting a thorough analysis, you can prepare yourself for what strategies your brand will adopt online.

Competition online is growing (as an example, two-thirds of healthcare providers are using social media to promote their brands) and your brand must have a meaningful presence. Appointing one individual to manage your social media communities will ensure your message is being conveyed consistently with the same tone. Promote an internal social media policy for your associates to advocate for the brand to their own followers.

3. Added Credibility and Reputation Management

The breadth of an individual's research begins at the Google search bar. Ranking highly on search engines is not only important from an SEO standpoint, but also from a credibility standpoint. Social media pages provide added value to your online presence by creating additional profiles connected to your business. Supplementing your website with an extensive social media roster not only ensures potential consumers can find you online, but it also develops a higher degree of trust in your business.

An impressive 41% of people said that social media would affect their choice of a specific healthcare facility. As consumers are increasingly using social media for open discussion, specifically about healthcare, it is important that you actively listen and respond. Garnering feedback from social media provides valuable insight into your target audience and demonstrates to your customers that you're willing to hear out their concerns. If you're complacent while people are commenting on your business, you risk losing their trust and hindering those relationships.

4. Branding – Identify Your Core

Branding connects viewers to your company's identity and vision. What is your brand's unique selling point? Is it your value, compassion or special expertise? What makes your brand better than your competition's?

Building a brand online requires sharing content that answers all of these questions. Your social media strategy must identify with who you are as a business and how you provide invaluable service to your community. The content you share must align itself with your individual brand, while presenting a unique viewpoint on the industry. Sharing generic content that's been rehashed again and again isn't going to bring the leads you want. It's important to develop your brand through catered content that speaks directly to your company's branded identity.

Making a lasting impression is about providing content that resonates with your audience. If you are the best in your field but you haven't made that clear through your published content, you could be giving away new business to your competitors. Fostering a solid social media following is a devoted process, but your business' social media pages make up the prime space to make a lasting impression on a potential customer.

5. Branding – Cohesive Planning for Multiple Platforms

Each social media platform comes with a distinct repertoire of features and customizations, so it's integral to adapt your content to each platform's abilities. For example, the photo sharing app Instagram is best suited for sharing visual content, thereby rendering written content or links ineffective for this outlet. Segmenting your content according to the best practice for each platform will ensure you're reaching the biggest audience and making a worthwhile impression for your business.

That being said, all channels should maintain a sense of cohesion. If your business' social pages look and feel entirely different, it'll ultimately confuse your customers and reflect poorly on your brand. Individuate your shareable content by including links, visuals or multimedia content, but make sure it translates tangibly through multiple channels. One way to do this is to streamline your messages by linking your social media accounts. This ensures your followers are being notified on every level — Your Facebook followers should know when you've shared an article via Twitter, posted a new blog or shared a photo on Instagram. A multi-channel strategy will direct your web traffic through the various accounts connected to your business and help recruit new followers.

Another thing to keep in mind is the spec differences with the size, shape and resolution requirements of images on different platforms. A Facebook profile image has different dimensions than that of a cover photo, Instagram post or Twitter avatar. When uploading your company logo or other related marketing material, ensure that it displays properly according to the dimensions encoded.

Developing a cohesive strategy with segmented forms of content may require investing more time and resources into your social media plan, but it will improve the overall user experience and boost your conversion rate. Making a good impression through social media isn't always easy or predictable, but keeping each platform's best practice in mind will ensure you are reaching your maximum potential for building rapport with your followers and targeting new business.

6. Converting New Business

When a brand builds a solid online following, it gains access to a boundless audience of people. Whether your followers consist of new customers, prospects, affiliates or even just casual browsers, your social media pages are excellent opportunities to invite new business. The content you post is your chance to inform your clients about your brand. In turn, it's their chance to get to know who you are. Make an impression that counts.

There are many ways to invite new business via social media. Encourage engagement with your followers by posting promotional material, special offers or product launches. Make your followers feel like a part of an exclusive community, and then they'll have more of a reason to engage with your content.

Careful consideration should be taken when deciding what content to share. Social media reminds consumers that there are real people working behind brands. A successful poster will incorporate content that resonates with viewers and helps them identify with the core image of your brand. Establishing these connections builds brand awareness and positive recognition online. An unsuccessful poster can illicit negative responses and ultimately harm your public image. Understanding your audience thoroughly is key to executing an effective content marketing strategy.

7. Your Time Is Valuable

Your time is better spent building your business and dealing with your clients, not generating new Twitter followers. At Whitehead Agency Group, we understand the business you're in and the market potential for social media. We'll craft a personalized and highly effective strategy that uses proven marketing methods with the latest digital strategies to turn impressions into leads. With our team of social media experts, you can watch as your audience starts to grow and your business flourishes online.

With over 20 years of expertise in marketing campaigns, Whitehead Agency Group has been managing highly engaged online communities for scores of brands. Contact us today to see how we can help you.