

Social and Mobile Pharma - the State of the Digital Landscape

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Abstracts

Tightly-regulated and conservative in outlook, the pharmaceutical industry has largely been slow to react to the challenges and openings offered by the loose-knit, fast-moving world of social media.

Whilst this has been true of much of the industry, the growing importance of social media as a marketing tool has encouraged forward-looking companies to engage with the online community via websites such as Facebook and Twitter, albeit with mixed results.

At the same time, social media itself is constantly evolving; new platforms such as social gaming and smartphone apps add to an already complex world, where a regular blog can prove a surprisingly effective marketing tool and where consumers themselves are able to express concerns online.

The influence of social media on pharma marketing is such that even the largest and most conservative of major brands now have to decide how best to interact with this relatively recent phenomenon. Although it presents both risk and opportunity, companies with effective social media engagement can expect to reap rich rewards.

Report Overview

As social media assumes ever-greater importance in the world of pharma marketing, FirstWord has worked with leading authorities on the use of social media to build a comprehensive report that details how the leading players use the various platforms available, investigates what can go wrong and offers guidance on every aspect of the subject from mobile apps to gaming.

The report opens with an overview of the current state of play in social media and moves on to analyse the experiences, both favourable and disastrous, of some of the industry's online trailblazers. It looks at leading-edge activities such as data mining, investigates the future of mobile access, outlines legislative and regulatory efforts worldwide and offers perspectives on the broader health conversation online.

In-depth studies of the activities of leading pharmaceutical companies on the social Web are backed up by appendices showing data ranging from pharma-sponsored smartphone apps to pharma Twitter feeds.

This comprehensive investigation of the subject will prove invaluable to pharma executives wishing to develop a successful social media presence.

Key Report Features

Discussion of the new reality in which pharma companies do not always have control of the marketing message

Case studies of successful and unsuccessful social media marketing campaigns

How to understand and manage market and regulatory risk associated with promoting pharmaceuticals via social media

Advice on picking the proper social forums for engaging with doctors and patients, including key opinion leaders within the healthcare professional and patient communities

Best practices for participating in social media

Detailed listings and statistics of major pharma companies' presence on the most popular social media sites

Listings of key online communities for medical professionals and patients

Key Questions Answered

How can you develop workable policies for using social media?

What is the overlap between social and mobile?

What can drug marketers learn from the computer gaming industry?

How can you leverage social media to fight drug counterfeiting?

When is use of social media appropriate, and when is it not?

Who Should Read This Report?

Pharma marketing directors

Brand managers

Pharma public relations and media executives

Social media marketers

Patient advocates

Vendors involved in developing apps for pharma and healthcare

Key Quotes:

'If you're saying that your primary concerns are a patient's health, you should do more than just have conversations with investors. That's where media opens up a route, a direct route between CEOs and their patients, their constituents, let's say, beyond the stockholder.' John Mack, publisher and editor, Pharma Marketing News

'A lot of large media companies are following Boehringer, as are physicians. We've got a high number of physicians following us, because we've tried to give those groups the information that they want, rather than just the usual corporate statements.' John Pugh, director of digital communications at Boehringer Ingelheim

'As marketers, if we navigate well, this phenomenon [of social media] holds the potential for enhancing customer relationships, collaborations, and trust building as well as

leading to a product and service co-creation environment that we have not witnessed in the history of this industry. If we fail to navigate well, there is the potential to do more damage to our image as an industry.' Craig A. DeLarge, leader for multi-channel marketing and customer business-line support, Merck & Co., US

'If you just look at social media as another platform to just throw an ad down with a 'push' approach, it's completely wrong.' Dennis Urbaniak, US vice president for diabetes care, Sanofi

'Successful social media is social media that is not on its own. It can be successful on its own, but I think it's even more successful if it's integrated with the other media that you're always using, and this is a huge forward looking opportunity.' Craig A. DeLarge, leader for multi-channel marketing and customer business-line support, Merck & Co., US

Key Benefits

The hype and the promise of social media are the same as in any other aspect of pharma marketing; the only thing that has changed is the platform, so social media needs to be part of an integrated marketing strategy.

Understand the two-way, conversational nature of social media.

How social media sites are proving to be rich stores of data to mine for marketing purposes.

Receive practical advice on what social media to use in different situations.

Understand that social media is evolving and that nobody has mastered this relatively new phenomenon.

Be ready for future developments.

Expert Views Include:

Craig DeLarge, leader for multi-channel marketing and customer business-line support, Merck & Co.;

John Mack, publisher and editor, Pharma Marketing News

John Pugh, director of digital communications, Boehringer Ingelheim

Marco Smit, senior vice president, Health 2.0

Dennis Urbaniak, US vice president for diabetes care, Sanofi

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Table 6: Pharma sponsored patient communities

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