

PROMOTING STEM CELLS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

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ABSTRACT

Social media is broadening opportunities to engage in discussions about biomedical advances such as stem cell research. However, little is known about how information pertaining to stem cells is disseminated on platforms such as Twitter, Face book, YouTube. To fill this gap, we conducted a content analysis and we found that the discussion about stem cells revolves around different aspects of the research process. We also found that the tone of most twitter, Face book posts and YouTube videos and comments about stem cells are either positive or neutral. Social media offers a tremendous opportunity to use social networks as a way to inform the public about stem cell research and the risks involved with unproven treatments. Recently, a public information campaign using Twitter was designed to explore the potential use of online networks as a way to share evidence-based information and encourage people to engage in discussion about stem cell-related topics. The findings contribute new knowledge about Twitter, face book and other social media as a connecting platform for many voices and as a key tool for the dissemination of information about stem cells.

KEYWORDS: Social Media Marketing, Stem Cells, Communicators, Twitter and Face Book

INTRODUCTION

Social media marketing refers to the process of gaining websites traffic or attention through social media sites. Indian marketers are moving at a fast speed to tap the new normal opportunity social media has gone mainstream. And for businesses, it represents an unprecedented marketing opportunity that transcends traditional middlemen and connects companies directly with customers. Customer acquisitions remain to be a prime goal of Indian marketers (59%). According to leading marketers of India, the top three online investment channels for 2011 are social media, Email marketing, and search marketing. 52% of the top marketers said that it is extremely important to integrate email marketing and social media. This is why nearly every business on the lancet is exploring social media marketing initiatives. The focus of marketers is shifting from sending the message out 'to start engaging with customers'. In this context, the role of marketers is changing from batch and blast processing to creating listening posts' and dialogue hubs' in customer communities. Indian marketers are leveraging the power of various communication channel and technologies be it Email, sme5s or social media in their portfolio. The main trend of social media marketing in India, the scope of it, the future and will undergo a research to follow the customer perception about social media marketing for stem cells.

In addition to traditional media, new forms of social media are encouraging conversations about innovations in health research, and the opportunity for online interaction and communication flow represents a shift that has wider implications for public discussion. Some research has revealed risks of anonymity and personalized information with online health information and tools, as well as variability in the accuracy of information. Qualitative analyses of online, direct-to-consumer advertisements for stem cell treatments show that this type of online content capitalizes on the high optimism surrounding new technologies to contribute to the political economy of hope. Nonetheless, numerous benefits have been linked to online health platforms including the possibility of greater interactions between health care professionals and patients, more accessible and tailored information, and lower costs for health surveillance and communication.

Qualitative studies of the role of social media in relation to stem cell research and therapy specifically also point to use that extends beyond information exchange and includes journaling and fundraising. Overall, online platforms are providing new forums for fostering important discussions regarding health, disease, and research. Among social media networks, Twitter is the most popular micro-blogging platform and one of the most popular social networking sites. Twitter allows users to post or read short messages limited to 140 characters, and provides accessibility to a range of content, varying from emergency news updates to personalized health information. Information shared on Twitter has been shown to have an impact on health behavior, health behavior tracking and public engagement with health information. To date, however, little attention has been paid to who participates on Twitter and the information that is shared about stem cells. Specifically, there is a lack of research examining how Twitter is used to disseminate information and engage discussions on specific and different health issues within the context of stem cell research.

The goal of the present study is to fill this knowledge gap through a rigorous empirical content analysis of Twitter posts. We sought to examine who is sharing what information about stem cells in samples centered and specifically i) characterize the participants of each sample; ii) explore the sources of information shared and iii) identify the content of the discussion.

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Social media marketing programs usually center on efforts to create content that attracts attention and encourages readers to share it with their social networks. A corporate message spreads from user to user and presumably resonates because it appears to come from a trusted, third-party source, as opposed to the brand or company itself. Hence, this form of marketing is driven by word-of-mouth, meaning it results in earned media rather than paid media. Social media has become a platform that is easily accessible to anyone with internet access. Increased communication for organizations fosters brand awareness and often, improved customer service. Additionally, social media serves as a relatively inexpensive platform for organizations to implement marketing campaigns.

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING TOOLS

Besides research tools, various companies provide specialized platforms and tools for social media marketing:

- Social media measurement
- Social network aggregation

- Social bookmarking
- Social analytics Automation
- Social media Blog marketing
- Validation

Different Methods of Social Network Marketing

Social network marketing is popularly called Internet marketing. Today you can find many ways for internet marketing. Many people who enter this online marketing are less worried because of its guaranteed success. Some of the most recognized network marketing tools are Face-book, MySpace and LinkedIn. Twitter became a regular place for people who have newly entered the field of social network marketing.

- Blogging
- Personal website or blog
- Article selling
- Email sending
- Use social networking websites
- Video promotion
- Press Release or media release
- Search Engine Optimization
- Social networking websites and blogs
- Engagement

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Scott (2009)¹ states the reasons for brand promoters preferring online web for marketing is that the tools, techniques, and content are constantly evolving. The buyers reward creativity by responding to online efforts like: If you are open to trying out new things, you can be first in your industry to use something new to communicate to your buyers. Marketing in some social networking websites is still the most popular in their niche. Shih (2009)² says that there are hundreds of millions of active users across sites like Face book, Hi5, Orkut and MySpace. 2.6 billion min are spent on Face book each day. These websites are enabling brands to engage the right people in the right conversation at right time. Marketing the brands through social media is becoming precise, personal, interesting, interactive and social. Weber (2009)³ says promoting a community is just like as promoting a new brand product or service to the consumers. Social media is used to communicate people in the promotional aspect and inclined to involve the236 J. Media Commune. Stud. People. Traditional advertising and direct marketing in social media are to send people to the digital community to be informed, entertained and heard. Users find appealing, a value high enough to encourage them to participate. The research study based upon the descriptive method of collecting data and analyzing. In the present study, an extensive use of both primary

and secondary data has been made in order to achieve the objectives of this study. First-hand information was collected through online basis. The sampling type incorporated in the research is Non-probability Convenience Sampling. Percentage analysis is used to analyze the level of users using social media networks and their involvements were used to analyze the data collected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Social Network Users of Social Media Platforms

Various Social Media Platforms	Social Network Users (%)
Facebook	84
Google+	40
Twitter	44
Instagram	36
Pinterest	33
Snapchat	23
Tumblr	14
Whatsapp	9
Foursquare	6

Social media platforms are now a day's became huge viral among the public. Social network platforms are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Whatsapp etc among these social media networks

Facebook and twitter is highly preferred by users. At the same time, each communication networks are preferred by various users according to their usage.

Table 2: Growth of Social Media Platforms

Social Platforms	Social Media Growth (%)
Facebook	115%
Twitter	114%
Instagram	143%
LinkedIn	229%
Youtube	50%
Google+	128%
Pinterest	207%

Growth rate increase day by day by the use of social networks comparatively to last five years. Social media reach the customer's very fast manner because of mostly spending time with it.

Table 3: Advertisement Reach through Social Media Platforms

Social Media Platforms	Ads Reach
Facebook	93
Youtube	11
Twitter	15
Instagram	16
Pinterest	3
Snapchat	1
LinkedIn	16
Whatsapp	24
Foursquare	2

Advertisement will help to promote our product or service to reach particular customer. It may be through tv, newspaper, radio etc. But now it is directed through social media which leads to high marketing power. In this Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are filling the first place of preference that reaches ads to the public in a fast manner.

Table 4: Benefits of Social Media Ads Impact

Impacts of Ads Benefit	Benefits %
Very beneficial	27
Somewhat beneficial	30
Not very beneficial	10
Do not use	33

Advertisement through social media reaches the users in a very effective manner. Impact of social media ads is beneficial to both the organization and to the customers. Most of the ads attract the youths and reach to the extent.

Communication about the product or service provides a major contribution to brand competition in the market. It not only provides information about a product or service but also promotes creative innovation. Besides advertising, it also facilitates consumer satisfaction. The hidden fact is that no brand can progress without an effective communication strategy to attract their customers or users. Big and small variety of brands nowadays laid their base on social network communication to get recognized in the target market. Social networking sites users of Facebook, Twitter and Orkut have become a personal, product and corporate branding hub in India nowadays in the digital era. Every brand that exists on social networking sites has the same core features and benefits, such as the ability to create a page, share resources, add multimedia and much more. Social networking sites are filled with potential users who are mainly young adults. They spend more time on these networking sites due to heavy commercial contents, entertainment, and social gathering. So, product or service communicators through their ads in these areas with more and more interactive and with fascinating factors so that their brand identity is developed among the right choice of focused audience. Advertisers and brands use social networking sites as the major resource for their promotion and developing the brand identity among the focused market. This analysis of posts relating to stem cells shows that: a large variety of stakeholders are engaging in the discussion about stem cells, (2) research is at the forefront of the discussion, with the most retweeted content among both samples focused on publications, and (3) the tweets in both samples are mainly neutral or positive. The findings contribute new knowledge about Facebook, Twitter, as a connecting platform for many voices, and as a key tool for the dissemination of information about stem cells.

SUGGESTIONS

Communication should be more preferred than advertising: people do not prefer buying products through social networking sites. So, if the brand is communicated well and remembered by the audience, then it is the greatest success to the company for their promotion through social media. A Promotional way of advertising is best: the usual banner ads and pop-up ads make the users ignore them. So advertising must be an interactive, promotional and innovative form to hold the audience. It should target the individuals than the mass. If an ad is hosted for a group then that would be no advantage in delivering specified information. Adding more multimedia elements to have more interactive factors in fan pages and group would benefit the brand user. At the same time, not only the products but also technological advancements like stem cells also reach the customer in an effective manner. There must be some positive thoughts related to stem cells if it promoted through social media networks.

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