

MULTICHANNEL
PHYSICIAN
ENGAGEMENT



JIM MCDONOUGH
VP, Marketing and
Customer Advocacy
Frontline Medical
Communications

Jim is a long-time industry veteran. Frontline MedCom provides more than one million HCPs with relevant news and clinical content in a range of print and digital assets. Ensuring deep physician engagement is a key enabler for effective brand communications. He can be reached at jmcdonough@frontlinemedcom.com.

How Physicians Like to Gather Info in a Multichannel World

Knowing what info physicians want and how and where they want to receive it is key to shaping an effective communication strategy.

By Jim McDonough

With a goal of understanding the what, why, when and how behind physicians' information gathering during a busy day, Frontline Medical Communications observed 16 physicians in action across four specialties. We endeavored to identify key "information buckets" for ONCs, PCPs, Neuros and OB/GYNs, how each navigated favorite medical websites and what the doctors particularly liked or disliked.

WHAT PHYSICIANS SEEK

Physicians generally seek two kinds of information: 1) The "latest" news that directly affects their clinical practice and 2) specific patient centric point-of-care information. For the former, *push-oriented* emails or eNewsletters were a key source. Doctors received up to 35 emails a day of this type—source credibility and subject line relevancy were key determiners for engagement. Said one neurologist, "Many companies send me emails daily, and I click on the 20% or so that are most relevant at the time." Communications that tracked MD interests increased relevancy and hence, open rates.

Conversely, information searches related to specific medical conditions are *pulled* from a trusted reference source—website, app or Google search. Credibility and ease of navigation were key: A search was deemed successful if it provided the answer to a query with as little effort as possible. "Go to" websites were specialty-specific and included all the usual suspects—as well as websites associated with trusted publications such as *Ob.Gyn. News*, *Neurology Reviews* and *Oncology Practice*.

The "Top 3" information buckets include treatments (drugs, dosing, etc.), specific diseases and conditions, and the latest specialty-specific news and views. Also important: Information pertaining to clinical trials and newly approved drugs, conference coverage and CME.

The tasks and devices used during a typical

MD's day include:

- Morning emails—the latest news—often on their iPhones.
- Point-of-care searches during the day to websites or apps of choice.
- "Lean back" reading of medical journals on tablets, laptops or in print.

MD CHANNEL AND INFORMATION-GATHERING PREFERENCE AND PATTERNS

Doctors love effective *information compartmentalization*. For example, providing separate links to disease, diagnosis, treatment and side effects ensures that MDs get only what they need at the time of their search. Time is money. Another essential time saver: Article summaries.

In terms of *multimedia preferences*, results were mixed. While some physicians opted for text only, younger practitioners clicked on short-form videos, while doctors with specialty-driven information needs chose long form. Likewise, *digital conference coverage* was deemed important as a means of staying up-to-date—as fewer MDs travel to meetings. "Seeing a conference video is like being there," one doctor noted.

Physician *community* (e.g., Sermo) and "deep engagement" *interactivity* (gaming, video, quizzes, medical roundtables, etc.) proved a big draw for some. While some doctors had limited time for the former, others found it a "must have." Concluded one specialist GYN surgeon: "Getting feedback from 'like' doctors is crucial. I can get immediate advice or perspective on tough-to-treat patients."

Physicians—like any of us—have deeply engrained multichannel preferences to help them efficiently gather information to carry out their daily tasks. Pharma brands would do well to understand these patterns of engagement—as well as the context—to effectively communicate to their targets. ●

"Many companies send me emails daily, and I click on the 20% or so that are most relevant at the time."

True HCP Engagement!

IN EVERY WAY, ON EVERY DAY...

As a trusted source to over 1,000,000 HCPs, Frontline publications and digital assets provide unrivaled access and attention for your brand messaging and communications.



To learn more, contact:
Phil Souferis
973.290.8224
psouferis@frontlinemedcom.com

FRONTLINE
MEDICAL COMMUNICATIONS
www.frontlinemedcom.com