

Community Engagement Social Media at Hospital ABC

June, 2009

A note on this version

This document was written by Nick Dawson - www.nickdawson.net - with the invaluable input from the leadership of the health system for which he is employed. The majority of this document is unchanged from the original version which was presented to the leadership of a large, faith-based health system.

It is the intention of the author that the publication of this document will help other non-profit health systems realize the benefits of social media within their organizations. It is also the goal of this publication to assist leaders within skeptical organizations to address concerns about the use of social media.

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The Format

The content of this document is largely unchanged from the original. However, to facilitate sharing and collaboration the names of some organizations have been “de-identified”. Proprietary information has also been censored.

Credits

With gracious appreciation for the discussions and collaborations that led to the research in this document, the following thanks are given:

Ed Bennett - www.foundincache.com twitter.com/edbennett

Lee Aase - www.social-media-university-global.org twitter.com/leeaase

Childrens Hospital of Los Angeles - www.childrenshospitala.org twitter.com/debbradic

Troy Bell - www.flyric.com twitter.com/flack4ric

Overview

A revolution is taking place in the way people communicate with friends, companies, employers and professionals. Known popularly as “social media” or “social networking”, individuals and businesses are using internet communities to connect with one another. The conversation is open, and candid with topics ranging from mundane to powerful stories. In *The Clue Train Manifesto*¹, the authors contend: “A powerful global conversation has begun...” people are already discussing engagement, patient care and [the Hospital ABC brand]. Social Media is about joining the conversations already in progress.

Healthcare is on the bandwagon. Successful industry leaders are using social networks to connect with patients, employees and physicians in a bi-directional way. This new communication comes with **low costs and a word of mouth impact** that goes beyond the one-way nature of traditional media.

Social media offers benefits in both demographics as well as reach. Traditional media such as newspapers and television are seeing a decline in circulation. Currently, it is estimated that 75% of US households have an internet connection. That number tracks closely with the medically insured rate of 80%. While social media continues to gain wide-spread popularity, recent figures highlighted the fastest growing group on Facebook are Baby Boomers with a median age of 55 years old.

²

Media	Circulation	Daily Site Views	Site Rank
Anyville Times Dispatch	161,000	8,800	652,575
New York Times	1,000,000	35,000,000	128
Wall Street Journal	2,000,000	2,600,000	1,257
Twitter	3,000,000	230,000,000	37
FaceBook	250,000,000	3,000,000,000	4



¹ Levine, Locke, Searis and Weinberger *The Cluetrain Manifesto*. New York, Basic Books, 2001

² Wolfram Alpha Data Research Inc

Competitive Analysis

Other Health Systems in our state

- ▶Med-System - one of Virginia's largest health system is using FaceBook, Twitter and YouTube. Most messages focus on driving traffic to news updates about their system. However, Med-System teamed up with ORLive.com to broadcast several live surgical Q & A events, taking questions from a Twitter audience (similar to a traditional seminar).
- ▶University Health - Using FaceBook to push news mostly to employees. Using Twitter as a news feed.
- ▶**ForProfit Inc** - Twitter and FaceBook pages, pushing one-way information updates and general health news (helps increase search engine rankings making it easier for people in Anyville to find ForProfit Inc hospitals on a health related search).
- ▶Other Virginia adopters: Hospital 1, Hospital 2, Health System X, **Competitor Y**, Major Teaching Center

Current Hospital ABC Social Media activity

- ▶Registered Twitter and FaceBook accounts.
- ▶Working with Women & Children service line leaders to develop Expecting Parents FaceBook Group

Nationally

- ▶**Mayo Clinic** - industry leader with <http://sharing.mayoclinic.org/> portal site for multiple blogs (patient, physicians, employees), Twitter for customer service and sharing positive stories, YouTube and Podcasts ranging from clinical videos to organizational overviews.
- ▶Henry Ford Health System (Michigan) - Broadcast the first live twitter surgery; resident surgeons posted updates and answered questions from Twitter audience during a kidney removal. The event was covered by CNN.
- ▶Community-driven grass roots "HealthCamp" conferences, thousands following twitter topics on healthcare, health groups on facebook, medical blogs and more.

The Hospital ABC Way

While cutting edge health systems are garnering attention for their use of social media tools, most are staking their ground by regurgitating links to existing news stories. Where those organizations go astray is in their lack of participation in the communities at large. Those successful at social networking understand that the tools are not as important as the conversation itself. Bank of America and Comcast Cable both received fanfare by assigning a social media director to actively participate in multiple communities. Those directors field questions and respond to customer service issues when their brand is mentioned. In our state, Competitor Health System has had similar results addressing patient concerns through social media.

<edited to remove proprietary information>

Model

The social media tools to reach our audiences have significantly lower costs than traditional marketing tools. These practices can be implemented easily by empowering knowledgeable individuals within the organization while reducing dependence on traditional, expensive media. In short, **the risks and costs are low compared to the high impact.**

This sample ROI is based on an estimated 10% annual savings in traditional media spending by using social media. Costs may be incurred in the form of local event sponsorships and minimal IT support costs (eg: blog design work)

current spend	\$4,000,000
10% reduction	\$3,600,000
Social Media Role	\$100,000
Social Media Costs	\$35,000
Net Savings	\$265,000

Social Media Networks	Membership	Potential Impact
#ANV (Anyville Twitter Tag)	1,800	18,000
Anyville Va Flickr group	500	5,000
Anyville Va on FaceBook	5,000	50,000
Total	7,300	73,000

An example of how the reach of tools like twitter can grow organically.

Each user has "followers" that see their posts; often times followers may overlap between multiple users.

In this example one user's compliment can extend well beyond that user's followers through "Retweets" (RT) and through soliciting interaction

Unlike a traditional ad that exists for a defined period, social media word of mouth is searchable in perpetuity. As an organization's online reputation grows, so do search results based on social media exchanges.



Combined - this example could reach 700 people

Tantamount to connecting with any group is to produce content that audiences find interesting. Hospital ABC should develop a site, similar to <http://sharing.mayo.com> that functions as a “portal” for online content and community development. Following the content, it is important to cultivate the communities and relationships that grow as a result.

The audience for social media is widespread and diverse. Social media tools can be used to connect with employees, patients and physicians. Hospital ABC has the added benefit of pre-existing marketing relationships within our local community. Existing databases can be used to spread the word on new ways to connect with Hospital ABC. Children’s Hospital of Los Angeles has successfully invited their local community, including donors, to participate in their social media presence by including references to their community portal site on mailings and traditional communications.

Participation in social media networks creates disintermediation and transparency. By asking candid questions and earnestly evaluating the feedback, healthcare organizations can use these networks as low cost focus groups. Hospitals and medical practice groups can solicit feedback simply by asking followers to give their opinion. This technique is also a powerful tool for employee engagement and physician satisfaction.

Social media also affords organizations a chance generate and control a stream of news and PR. Using these new tools it is possible to reinvent the news cycle and submit stories without relying on traditional outlets. As an example, Troy Bell, Director of Richmond International Airport has received several calls from local reporters based on Twitter updates regarding the airport. Innovis Health in Fargo, North Dakota successfully demonstrated how social media could be used in a crisis situation. During the historic floods in the winter of 2009, Innovis used their blog to disseminate information; reaching the press and public directly as events unfolded. According to Carol Russell, who manages social media for Innovis: ³“The crisis has clearly proved the value of Social Media...” by communicating with constituents directly, it is easier for organizations to report news directly.

³ Ed Bennett, *Found In Cache*, 2009 <http://ebennett.org/>

Community Engagement At Hospital ABC

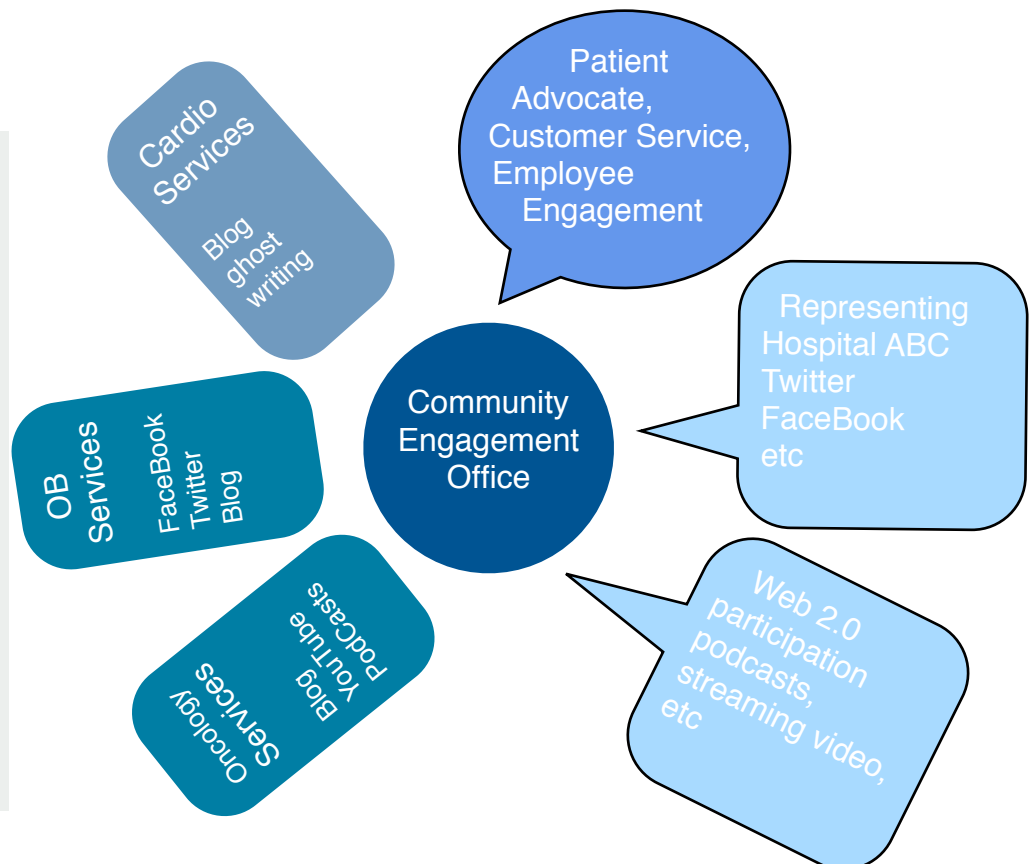
As shared services model, a community engagement role is the most effective way to serve both internal and external communities. A community engagement leader would manage Hospital ABC's presence through content generation and participation in communities both online and in the physical world. Additionally, the role would function as a support service to internal customers. Service line leaders and other internal team members with marketing needs could leverage the community engagement role(s) to help them:

- ▶ Create blogs
- ▶ Create online video content (podcasts, streaming video, etc)
- ▶ Connect with professional and patient groups, conferences and discussions online and in our physical community
- ▶ Understand, use and participate in Twitter, FaceBook, YouTube, Flickr, Yammer, Angies List, LinkedIn, and more.

In a shared services model, the Community Engagement roll(s) would service both internal and external customers.

Internal customers may have their own content creators, people who are savvy with the tools and communities who need help connecting with the Hospital ABC audience and "umbrella". Other internal groups may have the desire to participate but need a turnkey solution including someone to write and be responsible for replies, etc.

Externally, the community engagement role(s) would participate on behalf of Hospital ABC in online and real-world communities to build the brand, generate word of mouth and connect with patients, employees and physicians



Note: service lines represented here are examples. Actual work will not be limited to those listed above

Pilot

A pilot program is suggested to better understand the potential of a community engagement role at Hospital ABC. A pilot period will help all interested parties evaluate the value of a social media program for Hospital ABC.

The Hospital ABC Community Engagement pilot will be led by the Marketing and Public Relations. Mr. Smith will function in the following capacity:

- ▶Daily monitoring of Hospital ABC brands online
- ▶Participation in Twitter and FaceBook social media platforms on behalf of Hospital ABC using Hospital ABC branded accounts
- ▶Facilitation of discussions with interested internal parties on the use of social media at Hospital ABC
- ▶Participate, as time permits, in local and national social media gatherings and events on behalf of Hospital ABC
- ▶Advise Hospital ABC marketing teams on community engagement and the use of social media

The pilot project will run from January through March 2009. Mr. Smith will spend approximately 20 hours a week in the pilot community engagement role. **Targets** for the pilot include:

- ▶Develop and grow communities around the Hospital ABC brands on Twitter and FaceBook
- ▶Demonstrate ROI in the form of cost savings over traditional media in at least once instance. eg: leveraging online tools to promote the Women & Children's Safe & Sound program
- ▶Demonstrate employee engagement through social media. eg: publishing of huddle stories to the Hospital ABC facebook page and inviting employees, as well as "fans" to comment.

While it is possible to undergo a limited pilot with a part-time resource, there are some **caveats**. In order for community engagement efforts to have the maximum affect, it requires a full time, dedicated resource. During the pilot it will be difficult to have in-person meetings with patients and employees; limiting the opportunity for patient and employee contributed content. There will not be adequate resources and time to develop multimedia (podcast) content. It is important to note that a full time resource will be able to deliver a more substantial program.

Pilot Metrics

Social media in Healthcare is an evolving methodology. The following metrics are proposed based on advice solicited from thought-leaders in healthcare social media as well as that of the author: for pilot period

Metric	Goal
FaceBook Fans	3 / week
FaceBook Interactions (likes, comments, tags..)	5 / Week
Twitter Followers	10 / Week
Twitter ReTweets	2 / Week
Twitter Mentions (@ replies)	10 / Week

Summary

Hospital ABC is well positioned to share our passion for the mission & Service Excellence by joining conversations with all of our constituents in new ways. The costs and risks are low, all it takes is a role to coordinate the use of these tools and participate in communities. As the needs grow and move away from traditional media towards social media, it will be cost effective to leverage existing staff as content producers and online community activists.

“If AT&T offered you a free phone in the 1960s and said ‘here, reach your customers for free’, would you turn it down?” - Paul Levy, CEO Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital and author of www.runningahospital.com