



How Will Location-based Social Media Affect Healthcare?

If you've been following the social media trends over the last year or so, you've been inundated with information about location-based social media applications such as Foursquare (www.foursquare.com), GoWalla (www.gowalla.com), and, most recently, Facebook Places (<http://www.facebook.com/places>). For those who are not familiar with these programs, consider this a location-based social networking 101.

The idea behind each of these services is for people using them to "check in" and post their current location when they're visiting businesses, retailers, and other attractions. By doing so, users are able to check on the location of any friends who are in the area (assuming their friends are using the service as well). Here's how it works: smartphones running one of these services use GPS functionality to populate a list of businesses within a small radius, allowing users to select the one where they are and complete the check in. In doing so, they can opt to share their real-time information with friends (people they have approved to see their check-ins). If one of the user's friends happens to be in the same locale, these apps are a great way for people to coordinate activities and meet up.

These applications are rapidly gaining popularity, and with good reason; consumers are finding that with every use, they are being presented with coupons, offers, and other perks from participating businesses. Users who check in to a certain location more frequently than anyone else become the honorary "mayor" of that establishment, and many businesses have started rolling out special privileges for their mayors. For instance, Starbucks mayors get an extra discount on their coffee drinks, and retailers like Ann Taylor and Gap have begun to roll out similar offers. This is just the tip of the iceberg; new businesses are jumping on the bandwagon every day. And users don't have to be mayors to be offered a deal; by checking into a location, they could be presented with a notification that a business in the general vicinity of where they are is having some kind of special discount for these application users.

So right now you are probably thinking, "Ok, so I can get some good deals if I feel like getting involved with location-based social networking. But how does this affect healthcare?" Glad you asked.

About a year ago, location-based social networking apps like these were still in their infancy, and aside from diehard social networking junkies, there weren't too many people jumping on board. However, as the word got out, more and more people started signing up. Foursquare recently surpassed 3 million registrants (<http://hcrp.lv/9pW8T5>). Businesses know that they can use these services to offer deals that entice customers. Users know that they can utilize information to meet up with others (some users have even created scavenger hunts and other



similar events in major cities). But now, as with anything that rapidly grows in popularity, people are starting to think outside of the box and come up with all sorts of ways to use these services. In late August, Foursquare became the first service to incorporate location-based social media applications into healthcare.

In addition to working toward becoming the "mayor" of a particular location and possibly reaping any additional benefits, users can also earn "badges" for completing certain tasks. For instance, a certain amount of check-ins in a day or a certain amount of check-ins at a particular location will earn users different badges. The badges don't necessarily translate to any special benefits; they are more of an interactive and fun way to keep users interested in the applications.

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 Beginner  Intermediate  Advanced

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With that in mind, MTV has teamed up with Foursquare to create a special badge that users will receive if they check in at a location to have an STD test performed (<http://hcp.lv/b4LTm0>). The campaign is called MTV's GYT: Get Yourself Tested, and users who do so during the month of September will receive the first-ever cause-related badge. In addition, all users who get an STD checkup and the related badge will be entered to win a trip for two to New York City and backstage passes to MTV's 10 on Top show. The initiative seeks to "help young people become more aware of how common STDs are — according to MTV, one in two people will contract an STD by age 25."

It may not be a monumental splash in the world of healthcare-meets-location-based social media, but it's certainly a start. The initiative has received plenty of publicity. If it's successful, it will almost certainly lead to more ideas to incorporate these applications into healthcare down the road. We are social by nature, and applications like this can help to inject some fun or incentive into something that would otherwise be mundane.

What possibilities do you see for the future of healthcare-related incentives in location-based social media?

Mark Your Calendar

Partnerships in Pharma

When: October 1

Where: London, UK; Rodisson Blu Portman, London

What: Although you'll have to travel across the pond to get to this event, it promises to be worth the trip. Registrants will hear insights from industry leaders including Nycomed, Roche, AstraZeneca, Pfizer, and Merck Serono. Topics include partnerships in an era of proliferating business models, strategic partnering to improve R&D productivity, and the ever-increasing importance of partnerships all along the pharma value chain.

To find out more and register, visit <http://hcp.lv/ayhkv1>.



PharmaForce: The Premier North American Pharmaceutical Sales and Marketing Conference

When: October 12-14

Where: Princeton, NJ; Hyatt Regency

What: This event will help you "identify actionable strategies to increase your sales growth, invest your budget most effectively and boost the effectiveness of your pharma promotion and marketing campaigns." Attendees will have the opportunity to listen to more than 35 pharmaceutical experts present strategies to implement efficient sales and marketing models, sustain growth despite the economic downturn, and remain compliant while facing increasing regulations.

To find out more and register, visit <http://hcp.lv/b5zbgD>. (For a special discount on PharmaForce, visit <http://hcp.lv/ar0ihQ>.)

Reddit's Audience Is too Big to Ignore

For those of you who are not familiar with the Conde Nast-owned social media site Reddit, it's time to become so. Although Reddit recently shifted to a "freemium"-based business model (read more about the "freemium" model here: <http://hcp.lv/bcVEEdM>), don't be fooled—they still command quite an impressive amount of traffic. In fact, Reddit recently released a Google Analytics snapshot of their traffic from June 14-July 14 of this year, and it's a remarkable report. Some of the highlights include 36 million visits, 429 million pageviews, and over 8 million unique visitors.

These staggering numbers mean one very important thing: there are a lot of people checking out the site on a regular basis. And since the site is based on user-submitted content from across the Web, it means that there's literally something for everyone. Think of it as a website with Facebook-like traffic that is



designed to help users find things to read and discuss. If you want to get a small snapshot of the amount of subdomains dedicated to different topics (appropriately called "Reddits") then check out <http://hcp.lv/c4oyaz>. At the very least, the site does a nice job of keeping track of what is buzzing in just about every industry. Users can either "vote up" or

"vote down" user submissions, meaning that the ones with a ton of votes generally get the most traffic and discussion. So while Google Trends is an excellent service to keep track of what people are searching for, think of Reddit as a way to drill down even further. You might even find some users discussing your brand.

Have You Set Up a Custom Short URL Yet?

While back, when the whole short URL craze began, *Avatar* readers got the inside scoop on how to amend lengthy URLs for the purposes of sharing on Twitter. After that, big brands like Coca Cola, Budweiser, and the *Wall Street Journal* began creating custom short URLs for branding purposes, and this is a trend that spread like wildfire throughout the digital world. The question now is: have you implemented custom short URLs for your brands and businesses? If not, here's how to get started. First, think of the brand/business for which you would like to implement this feature. Then go to <http://domai.nr/>, where you can type in the name without spaces. In doing so, this website will generate a list of short URLs that are possible to create based on the list of existing domain extensions (a list of which can be found on Wikipedia at <http://hcp.lv/d1pzmj>). After all your options are presented, pick the one that you think fits best, and then set out to purchase the domain. Keep in mind that high-profile services like GoDaddy may not have the extension you are looking for, especially if your extension is a country code. You may need to look into more niche websites like 101domain.com that can offer a wide variety of extensions. In most cases, domains should not cost more than \$50/year, which is a small price to pay for adding such a sleek, technological feature to your brand. Once you've picked out and purchased your new custom short URL, you'll need to either enlist your IT team in helping to set up a subdomain, or you can rely on a service that can help you in setting it all up, such as bit.ly. The latter is usually a better option only because you can work with the bit.ly team to make it extremely easy for you to integrate the new URL and begin using it in just one mouse click. By utilizing services like bit.ly, you can also capture important data about the links you are shortening, such as who else is pointing to that page and how many clicks those links have produced.



Confused? Don't be. It sounds much more complicated than it is. To get started, check out some of these resources (provided, of course, with custom links):

It's Awe.sm: Create a Powerful Custom URL Shortener for Your Own Domain
[TechCrunch]
<http://hcp.lv/c3UyG4>

Make Your Own URL Shortening Service [Lifehacker]
<http://hcp.lv/czgNsZ>



Webinar Watch

Best Practices in Online Community Management

This archived webinar from March of this year features Tamara Mendelsohn, Director of Marketing at Eventbrite; Jeff Schwartz, CEO of Pathable; and Jeff Hurt of Velvet Chainsaw Consulting discussing best practices in online community management for events. Just under 45 minutes, this free webinar will help you build up a community by creating events that are interactive and dynamic! Check it out at <http://hcp.lv/aaOnt3>.

Social Media Numbers Surge in Older Adults

It's no surprise that the younger generations are quick to adopt social media, but you may be surprised to learn that older users have been increasing in numbers quite dramatically over the last year, according to a report from Pew Research Center. In fact, "social networking use among Internet users aged 50 and older nearly doubled—from 22% in April 2009 to 42% in May 2010." Some other interesting takeaways from the report include:

- During the same time period, social networking use among users age 50-64 grew by 88% (up to 47% total)
- 13% of users age 65 and older claim to log on to social networking sites on a typical day (up from just 4% in 2009)
- One in 10 Internet users age 50 and older say that they use Twitter or some other service to share updates about themselves or to see the updates of others

The data from the report was mostly generated from telephone interviews conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International. The sample size was 2,252 adults age 18 and older. To read more about the report, visit <http://hcp.lv/dA3J61>.

Social media is growing up in more ways than one, and it continues to dominate the Internet, in part because older generations have finally begun to use these services. In addition, social media continues to evolve into a more sophisticated way of communicating and networking. Biz Stone, founder of Twitter, discusses this very topic in this interview with Inc.com. Check it out at <http://hcp.lv/9y4r5M>.

Watch, Listen, Learn



Watch: Google Goes Instant

In case you've been hiding under a rock and/or using Bing and Yahoo! exclusively, then you've probably already seen Google's new way of presenting search results, a feature called Google Instant. If you haven't, then give it a try and prepare to be impressed. Google now presents your search results as you type. That's right. Simply type in the letter "w" and you'll get the local weather instantly. According to some studies, this new feature will save 2-5 seconds per search, which can obviously add up to a nice time saver over an extended period. Read all about it and access a video about the feature at <http://hcp.lv/ayoeYv>.



Listen: Norbert Stone Talks Pharmaceutical Sales Training

Norbert Stone, National Senior Director, Sales and Marketing Training and Development, Astellas Pharmaceuticals, talks pharmaceutical sales training in today's challenging pharma environment. Stone also answers questions like "How do we increase clinical and disease state acumen of our reps?" and "How do we meet guidelines of states with regards to regulation?" Download the podcast at <http://hcp.lv/czPhps>.



Learn: 10 Guidelines for Creating Great Social Media Content

Unfortunately, there isn't any recipe you can follow to create viral content. Sure, you'll find some sources who claim to know what they are talking about or who simply tell you to create content around sports or humor, but it's far from that simple. Although there isn't a step-by-step process you can follow to produce viral content, there are some things that we can learn from campaigns that have gone viral. ClickZ, a leader in marketing news, recently compiled a list of 10 guidelines for producing viral content. Although there are never any guarantees, just being familiar with these campaigns may help you come up with some ideas for that elusive viral campaign for which you have been looking. Check out the article at <http://hcp.lv/b4iFHk>.



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Larry Kramer – "Founder and CEO, CBS Marketwatch. President, CBS Digital Media. Media Consultant, Author Journalist."

<http://twitter.com/lkramer>

Maverickdigital – "An award-winning, New York City-based digital agency specializing in Marketing, Social and New Media."

<http://twitter.com/maverickdigital>

MedThink – MedThink Communications is a healthcare communications agency where insight, creativity, and common sense make the most sense for our client partners.

<http://twitter.com/MedThink>

Novo Nordisk GA&PP – We are changing diabetes in America!

http://twitter.com/NovoNordisk_GA

Roche_com – Official twitter site for Roche, with news & updates on how we work toward making personalized healthcare a reality.

http://twitter.com/Roche_com



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