

THE **9** MISTAKES THAT WILL **SINK** YOUR PHARMA  
CONTENT MARKETING  
(AND HOW TO AVOID THEM!)



BrainstormDigital



# DISCOVER HOW THE RIGHT CONTENT CAN **WIN** YOU CUSTOMERS

The Pharmaceutical industry is still feeling its way around social media. While a handful of the larger drugs companies have embraced it imaginatively, others in the sector are still very tentative and the majority are completely absent.

Yet social media is increasingly hard to ignore. The nature of marketing has changed irreversibly, and companies that want to grow have no choice but to embrace it. Meanwhile, patients are increasingly reliant on the internet for health information. In the UK, 43% of Pharma companies say they plan to increase their social media activity<sup>1</sup>. Doing it *well* is a different story!

In this guide, we walk you through the 9 biggest mistakes Pharma companies make with their content and show you how to sidestep them, so that you can build a truly effective, and safe, social media presence.

For over a decade, Brainstorm has helped hundreds of clients gain the skills, knowledge and confidence to boost their brands, and (where regulations allow) generate leads and bring in those sales.

We hope you find this guide equally valuable, helpful - and fun.



**Miriam Shaviv**  
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<sup>1</sup>Click for reference

Because Pharma as a sector has still not worked out the best way to use social media, many companies are fumbling in the dark as well.

For too many companies this has meant investing resources without the faintest idea of what they actually want to accomplish, or how they're going to get there.

They wouldn't launch a new product without market research and a marketing plan (at least I hope not) – but when it comes to social media, the attitude is, 'let's dabble a bit and see what happens'.

To get your content pitch-perfect – to make it grow your business – takes focus and planning.

#### HOW YOU CAN EASILY START TODAY:



##### Clarify your goals.

Think carefully: **why** do you want to use social media?

Do you need to:

- Increase your brand awareness?
- Manage your reputation?
- Recruit?
- Launch a specific product?
- Reach out to suppliers, doctors or patients?
- Drive traffic to your website?
- Or generate actual sales?

Each of these will be approached differently. Be precise: It will be easier to figure out how to 'get 50 people on Twitter to register for my next seminar' than a broader target, such as 'make my seminar a success'.



##### Develop a strategy.

Consider **how** you are going to use social media. Which platform suits your goals best? Who are you going to target? How are you going to engage them?

Again, the more precise you get, the better.

Saying that "we'll increase awareness of our Corporate Social Responsibility programme" is fine.

Knowing that "We'll develop a company Facebook page that will appeal to people interested in health in the developing world " is more useful.

**Planning** to "develop a Facebook page that will draw in people interested in health in the developing world by highlighting inspirational stories of patients we have helped and doctors we have worked with", will set you on your way.

Companies from every industry need a social media policy, which sets out general rules for staff members updating the corporate accounts.

For Pharma, this is particularly crucial in order to prevent misunderstandings with the ABPI.

Make sure your policy is short, easy to read and jargon-free. Summarise the particularly important clauses on one page near the beginning, to make sure staff can't miss them. A table of do's and don'ts might be helpful.

**Your document could include:**

- Re-iteration of relevant ABPI guidelines on digital communications (**here** and **here**).
- Instructions on how to deal with customer queries
- Rules about when (if ever) they are allowed to post without approval from a manager
- Clarification of what they are allowed to say about work on their private accounts
- Procedure to follow in a PR emergency
- Best practice (consider illustrating these with visuals)
- A reiteration of your company's values
- Appropriate tone and image to be conveyed
- Brand guidelines and/or style guide

**HOW YOU CAN EASILY START TODAY**

Check out other companies' social media policies for inspiration. Roche has posted its **internal guide online**, as have numerous **other companies from other industries**.

There are 33 million members of Facebook in the UK. 15 million active members of Twitter. 11 million of LinkedIn. 3.2 million on Pinterest. Probably more by the time you read this!

So how do you reach them all?

You can't and you shouldn't.

Social media is all about relationships and personal connections. If you try to speak to everyone, you'll speak to no-one. **That is why this mistake is one of the top three!**

To get the right kind of content, you need to focus, focus, focus on the niche group or groups to whom your product might appeal: Managers who need someone else to manage their medical rep teams? Mothers of young children with diabetes? Pharma companies that need to package medicine for children?

The more you know about what interests them, what information they want from you and what will prompt them to buy your product, the easier it will be to shape your content in a way that appeals to them.

### HOW YOU CAN EASILY START TODAY

You probably already know more about your target audience than you imagine.



Tap into your company's knowledge. Start with any demographic information and surveys that have been carried out in the last few months. Then speak to your customer service people, who know your clients best of all!



Try to find out where your clients hang out online. That is just one of the nine insights that will help you target your content directly at them.



If you are able to sell directly, the second and third are, what is holding them back from buying your product? And who else do they need to persuade before they can buy from you (for example, do they need permission from personnel in other departments – who might have different concerns)?



Want to find out the other six? Check out our unbeatable method of getting into your clients' heads at [brainstorm-digital.co.uk/personcreation](https://brainstorm-digital.co.uk/personcreation)

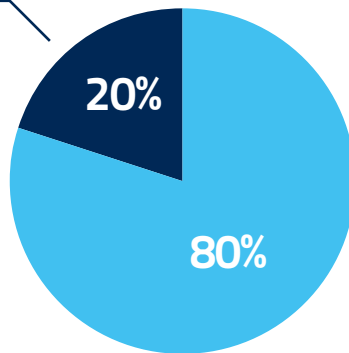
# TALKING ABOUT YOURSELF TOO MUCH

Some companies think social media is all about them. They talk about their business; their products (where the ABPI allows); their members of staff; their events. After all, that's what they're there to promote, right?

The problem is, the people they are trying to reach are also only interested in themselves. They don't really want to hear about your upcoming seminar or the launch of your new respiratory device. They are put off by what comes across as pushy sales tactics.

**How do companies bridge that gap? With the 20-80 rule.**

**For 20% of the time**, go right ahead and talk directly about your news, events and products (again, if regulations allow).



**Draw them in with added value, make your brand relevant to their lives, and build an emotional connection for when they really do want to find out about your products.**

**For 80% of the time**, talk about issues that are tangentially connected, but of great interest to your audience. (See why understanding them is so important? We're back to Mistake #2.)

# TALKING ABOUT YOURSELF TOO MUCH

One company that does this really well is Johnson & Johnson. Once in a while on their Facebook page, they'll explicitly talk about themselves::



#### Johnson & Johnson

Did you know that Johnson & Johnson offers several free apps covering everything from health to workouts to social good? Check out our selection here: <http://jnj.me/1hB8TmT>

Like · Comment · Share · 21 February



But most of the time, they much more subtly promote health and wellbeing, with inspirational stories about patients overcoming adversity...



#### Johnson & Johnson

What would you accomplish in a world with no limits? Sebastien Sasseville is running the equivalent of 180 marathons in 9 months – with Type 1 diabetes. Read his story: <http://jnj.me/1fqAEDE>

Like · Comment · Share · 22 February

...tips about health and safety...

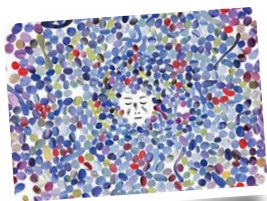


#### Johnson & Johnson

TVs are thinner, lighter, and better these days but many of the older TVs end up in the playroom. Take a moment to get to know a few facts about TV safety from Safe Kids USA on National TV Safety Day!

<http://www.safekids.org/recycle-old-tvs>

Like · Comment · Share · 1 February



...and discussion of general health issues



#### Johnson & Johnson

This article from the New York Times takes a different approach in answering the question: why does everyone seem to have cancer? <http://jnj.me/1afhaQo>

Like Page

With over 600,000 'likes', they've got it down pat.

## HOW YOU CAN EASILY START TODAY

Resist the urge to send out your latest press release on Twitter, and start thinking about what your niche target market wants to hear – rather than what you want to tell them. This can take a big attitude shift, but it's key.

For Pharma companies that are restricted about how they can promote their products, this is good news. Focusing on your patients' lives and healthcare issues rather than on your medicines is not a compromise. It's the way social media is supposed to be done!



# NOT PLANNING YOUR CONTENT AHEAD OF TIME

"I haven't updated Facebook in 48 hours... What on earth am I going to write about?... I'm completely uninspired!"



## Does that sound familiar?

Working on the hoof is a problem that plagues everyone in the workplace. When it comes to social media, the result is that the content of your campaign is not as well thought out as it could be – and does not consistently align with your goals and strategy.

Posts that are written quickly are also more likely to contain errors that lead to trouble with the ABPI.

The solution? Create a content schedule, which will map out what themes to follow, and what material you need to produce in the month, quarter and even half-year ahead. You can be incredibly detailed, planning right down to the individual Tweet or YouTube video.

Although this sounds like a lot of work – and is – it will ultimately make your life a lot simpler. You will never have to scramble around for something to write about. And it will make your material much easier to vet.

Much of the material can be created ahead, in chunks – for example, why don't you write all your Tweets that tie into World Cancer Day in one afternoon, and then use them in the run-up over several weeks?

Best of all, everything you produce will be on-message and effective.

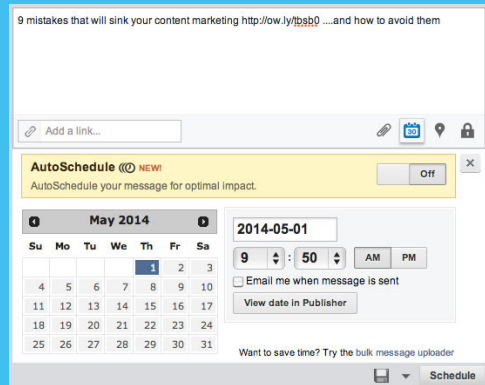
# NOT PLANNING YOUR CONTENT AHEAD OF TIME

## HOW YOU CAN EASILY START TODAY

Use Hootsuite to upload batches of pre-scheduled Tweets, as well as updates on Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+ and Wordpress. You can programme them to be sent out over a year ahead!

After you compose your message, pick the platforms on which you want to post it. Then click on the calendar icon, and select a time and date.

Hootsuite can even pick the ideal time for you. What an incredible time-saver.



## ...WHOOPS!

It was one of the most misjudged Tweets ever. At the end of the work day, Tesco's social media team sent out a message to over 47,000 followers, which read, "It's sleepy time, so we're off to hit the hay!"

Unfortunately, the supermarket giant was right in the middle a national scandal over the revelation that some of its beef products contained large amounts of... horsemeat. The tactless Tweet went viral, the papers picked up on it, and the company was forced to issue a humiliating apology.

It turned out that the Tweet was written several days earlier, before the horsemeat story broke. The moral of the story: If you're going to pre-schedule Tweets, make sure they're reviewed before publication!



Many companies only do one thing on social media: they write. Blog posts, Tweets, Facebook posts. It's words, words, words.

But that's not the best way to go about it. Research has shown time and again that what social media users want is actually images and videos. In fact,

- Facebook posts with images are twice as likely to be shared as text-only posts and links. Those with a clear focal point and strong colours do best. Videos are 12 times more likely to be shared!
- On Twitter, messages containing a picture are 91% more likely to be engaged with than text only.
- Uploading photos is the most popular activity on both Facebook and Google+
- Users are a whopping 85% more likely to purchase a product after watching a video about it.

Turns out it's true: a picture really is worth 1,000 words.

## HOW YOU CAN EASILY START TODAY

Start attaching images to all your written content. To attach a picture to your Twitter post, have you ever noticed the little camera icon?



Think, too, when you can use visuals to tell the whole story. Instead of writing up a long interview with your CEO – can you video them? Can the statistics in your latest customer survey be turned into a colourful infographic? They will suddenly seem so much more exciting....

Which would you rather click on?

THIS



OR  
THIS



One company that uses videos very effectively is Boehringer Ingelheim. Its YouTube channel includes videos about the company and its vision, its social responsibility programme, as well as interviews with patients and educational videos about various illnesses.

Not surprisingly (if you read Mistake 3....), those that do not concern the company directly, but offer useful information about diseases, get by far the most views. Popular videos include:

**Diabetes and Associated Complications** (over 150,000 views)

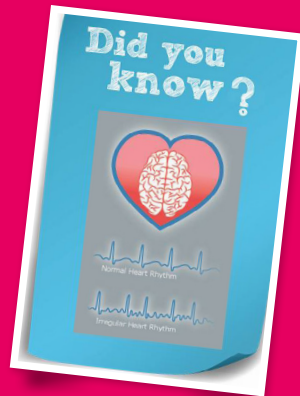
**Stages of Ovarian Cancer** (over 18,000 views)

**AF and the risk of stroke** (over 36,000 views)

This makes terrific content for other platforms:



...Just like its picture boards from Pinterest:



There is no definitive rule as to how often you should post on social media to be effective. But one thing's for sure: if you're only tweeting once a day, and your Facebook page isn't touched from one week to the next, you are never going to build up your readership.

So what should you aim for? As a rule of thumb:

Of the major platforms, update **Twitter** most often – six times a day is ideal.

Keep in mind that because the audience at 9am is not necessarily the same audience as at 3pm, it's okay to repeat some posts. You will also be responding to other people's Tweets.

To maximise the chances of your fans seeing your material on **Facebook**, post two to three times daily, with a gap of at least three or four hours between posts.

On **LinkedIn**, actively participate in forums and groups, but post links once a day.

**Blog** every day or two. You need to keep your website lively to bring that audience back again and again. It's also great for SEO purposes.

Send out **email newsletters** on a regular basis: Weekly, every two weeks or every month.

Update **Google+** twice a day minimum.

#### HOW YOU CAN EASILY START TODAY:



A lot of what you produce can be shared across different platforms. Write a short blog post, then tweet the link, ask your fans for their feedback on Facebook, and use it to showcase your value-added content in your next email newsletter. There you go: Four in one!

**TIP: Don't update when you have nothing to say. You will just annoy people. This is where your content schedule (Mistake #3) will come in handy!**

**TIP: Not everything you post to social media has to be original. Don't forget to share great material from elsewhere!**

## NOT MOVING YOUR FOLLOWERS TOWARDS A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP

Ok, I know. Mistake #3 was being too pushy about your own services and products. But you still need to find ways to draw your online fans and followers closer to your company.

At the end of every piece of content, you need to figure out what next step you want the user to take. If, for example, they have just browsed a blog post comparing prices of laboratory equipment, they are probably gearing up for a buy.

- Would it not be useful to include a link to a guide about picking the best equipment? Or give them the option of a call from your sales team?
- Or maybe they have downloaded your useful guide to recruiting Pharma reps. Perhaps you can ask for their email address so that you can send them monthly emails about managing rep teams – and begin to build a relationship with them?
- Always think ahead, and consider how you can encourage your audience to deepen their relationship with you with subtle '**calls to action**'.



Make your call to action stand out

**Register now** to receive your weekly round-up of news concerning medical packaging and labelling.



# NOT MOVING YOUR FOLLOWERS TOWARDS A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP

## HOW YOU CAN EASILY START TODAY:



Make buying easy! You wouldn't believe how many companies make customers jump through hoops to complete that sale.



Check that your contact details are clearly visible on every page of your website and social media pages. Make sure that customers do not have to click through reams of pages just to get to that final sales page.



Don't ask them to fill in lengthy forms before they get information from you.



Think about what big-impact pieces of content you can offer readers who come to your blog. Common examples include white papers, eBooks, infographics, reports based on surveys, webinars, videos and podcasts.

They have to be of genuine use to potential clients – for example, if you manage distribution centres for pharmaceutical products, you could create an infographic outlining some of the features companies might look for, or run and share a survey about which features are most important to those in the industry.

The more valuable these big pieces are to your potential clients, the more they will regard you as an expert in your area, and the more likely they will be to approach you when it's time to buy.

# NOT MONITORING YOUR STATS

No social campaign is perfect from the get-go. Some tactics just don't work. Others need refining. Or perhaps you are not producing enough of your most popular content.

The only way to know for sure is to monitor the performance of your content. Some measures are obvious: How many 'likes' do your Facebook posts receive? Which get the most interaction? Which are ignored?

Others take a little more digging.

How many – and which – of your posts resulted in people clicking through to your website? How many of your new Twitter followers are influential amongst your target market? How many leads did you generate online? Which competitions and offers actually resulted in sales?

Act on this information, and your campaign will become increasingly, and unbeatably, powerful.

## HOW YOU CAN START TODAY:



Sign up to Hootsuite, which will give you customised analytics reports about your activity on all the platforms it supports, including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Google+.

### Special offer for my readers!

Get a **FREE 30 day trial** of HootSuite Pro by clicking on the image below



- Schedule and automatically publish hundreds of messages
- Manage and post to multiple social profiles
- Add up to 9 team members to your account
- And, of course, track the performance of your social media campaign!



# THAT'S IT!

You have now discovered the top 9 mistakes in Pharma content marketing.

Useful? Want to know the next 9 mistakes, so you can avoid making them?

How about discovering an unbeatable way to deliver the exact content your target market is looking for?

To find out how you can achieve success on social media, visit [www.brainstorm-digital.co.uk](http://www.brainstorm-digital.co.uk) for details of our bespoke programmes, workshops, live online meetings, strategic guidance and blog, where I share with you:

- **5 ways to minimise risk on social media in a regulated industry**
- **8 tips for Pharma companies struggling with social media strategy**
- **10 ways to get your colleagues on board with social media**
- **Examples of Pharma companies with outstanding blogs ...and LinkedIn company pages ...and some that are making critical errors**

As well as:

- Which 'quick wins' will make a difference to your social media straight away
- Crucial 'do's' and 'don'ts' for each of the major social media channels, which will save you time and money

Wishing you every success in achieving your social media goals.



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PS. Any questions?  
Why don't you email me on  
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