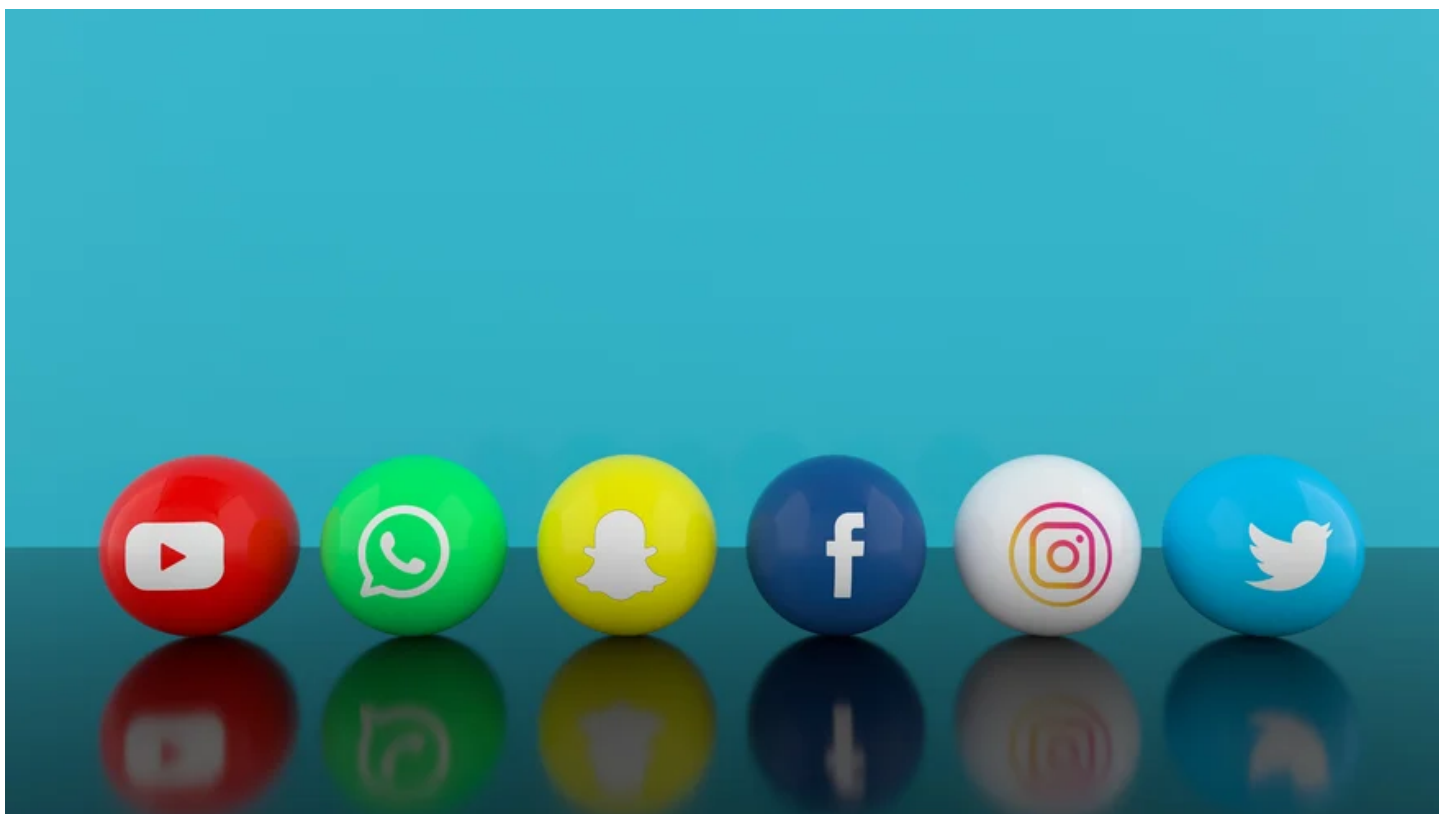




Marketing

Pharma's 'painful' social media start morphs into refined content strategies across even hipster channels: experts

by Beth Snyder Bulik | Sep 30, 2021 10:20am



Pharma brands' social media strategies have now arrived—with sophisticated strategies and test-and-learn models across all channels. (Getty Images)

From drab to fab, pharma social media promotions and campaigns are not only getting better but have gotten up to speed with the rest of the marketing world.

That's according to a panel of digital experts at Digital Pharma East this week. While pharma was once hesitant to even try consumer-driven channels, brands today have adopted sophisticated social strategies along with test-and-learn models across platforms—including even the newest “cool” channels like TikTok and Clubhouse.

“Pharma adoption of social has grown like crazy,” Ryan Burchinow, vice president for social at CMI Media Group, said. He added that the growth is not just because pharma marketers are trying lots of new ads here or there but because they're expanding into full channel campaigns with awareness, lead generation and measurement built in.

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That includes emerging social media that may seem too edgy, like TikTok, for instance, which is no longer a teens-only hangout. In fact, 19% of TikTok's 110 million monthly users are now older than 35, a big jump from far less than 10% in 2019, Burchinow said.

Of course, good pharma social media work isn't just about great media plans. It's also content—kept fresh and delivered in “snackable” bites, Joyce Ercolino Archinow, director of digital excellence at Harmony Biosciences, said.

But how does a company come up with all the content needed to fill social media? Use the content multiplier, Milena Mitova, digital brand activation lead at Merck & Co., said. Starting with just 40 already created marketing assets such as a webinar or brochure, she can get “close to 2,600 snackable pieces” of content that can be used in email, social posts or paid ads.

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Still, whether cutting-edge, new or “old” social media like YouTube and Facebook or repurposed traditional media print content, the key is strategy. Goal setting, detailed planning, managing expectations and measurement are all important to pharmas' social success.

“It's not always about doing something new, it's about doing what you're doing, just better,” Archinow said. “And you can't just take any of these channels and throw stuff out there and think that it's going to run on its own. ... There's a lot you can do, you just have to constantly think about it and how to tie it all together.”

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