

MAY/JUNE 2018

The trusted source of
information for today's podiatrist

APMA News



Climbing the Social Ladder

How Improving
Our Approach to
Social Media
Could Advance
the Profession

Also in this Issue:

Full Coverage of
2018 HOD Meeting

MIPS 2018 Cost
Performance Category

SPECIAL SECTION
APMA Educational
Foundation
Pages 20-32

The Importance of Social Media Adoption in Podiatry: Can We Improve?

By Christopher R. Hood Jr., DPM, and Jeffrey D. Lehrman, DPM

Dubbed "medicine 2.0" or "health 2.0," health information disseminated over various web and social media outlets¹ is here to stay.

In this article, we examine Twitter, in particular, to better understand how it has been adopted within the medical community in general, and the podiatry community specifically. Twitter has grown rapidly since its inception in 2006.² Between June 2008 and 2009, worldwide Twitter use grew 1,460 percent with an estimated 30 million active monthly users by 2010.^{1,3} Twitter continues to grow, with 336 million monthly users as of 2018.³

This large network of users allows information to be distributed worldwide through tweeting, retweeting, and hashtag use. It has been a boon for physicians and professional organizations in communicating with patient audiences. APMA, for example, has nearly 40,000 followers on Twitter, primarily members of the public. Because many of those users retweet or share APMA's content, Twitter ultimately allows APMA to reach an audience of nearly 8.6 million annually with the health-care information it disseminates. But the growth and popularity of Twitter have also become key in how doctors and medical societies find and spread information and ideas.¹

From 2010 to 2011, one study noted social media use by doctors increased from 41 percent to 90 percent.⁴ The medical and scientific communities have jumped aboard the Twitter bandwagon, with a study showing 3,725 of 3,812 scientific/medical journals having Twitter accounts.⁵

One study conducted within the urology specialty surveyed physicians about the perceived utility of Twitter for various ac-

tivities, and respondents (n=234) noted the benefit of Twitter for networking (97 percent), dissemination of information (97 percent), remote conference participation (79 percent), advocacy (73 percent), and research (72 percent).⁶ Because of these benefits, it is important for physicians and medical societies to have a grasp on the value of social media and to adopt it as they are able.

McGowan et al (2012) found that physicians use social media platforms such as Twitter to find, search, and contribute knowledge, while others have demonstrated that physicians use Twitter as a form of professional communication and growth.²

Podiatry, however, seems to be lagging behind other specialties in its adoption of this channel. In an attempt to evaluate how the podiatry community is using social media professionally, we performed two retrospective reviews between 2016 and 2017 and presented them at podiatric medical conferences.*

The first study took a general look at how our professional organizations are using Twitter. Our methodology included a Google and Twitter search of "X podiatric medical association ± Twitter," with X being substituted for each of the 50 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The full list of states; their Twitter handles; and the number of tweets, followers, and following members was reported. (See Table 1 on page 14.) Furthermore, the overall use of social media platforms was reviewed and reported to evaluate integration of modalities. (See Table 2 on page 15.) The number of state podiatric association Twitter accounts was a mere 14.

continued on page 14

1. Daniel Scamfield, Vanessa Scamfield, "Dissemination of health information through social networks: Twitter and antibiotics," *American Journal of Infection Control* 38 (2010): 182-188.
2. Alexander Djurichich, Janine Zee-Cheng, "Live tweeting in medicine: 'tweeting the meeting,'" *International Review of Psychiatry* 27 (2015): 133-139.
3. Michelle Castillo, Julia Boorstin, "Twitter Shares Jump after Earnings Beat," CNBC, April 25, 2018, accessed May 7, 2018, <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/04/25/twitter-earnings-q1-2018.html>.
4. Daniel George, Liza Rovniak, Jennifer Kraschewski, "Dangers and opportunities for social media in medicine," *Clinical Obstetrics and Gynecology* 56 (2013): 453-62.
5. Austin Chiang, "How social media impacts public health," *Medical Practice Insider* (2014).

6. Hendrik Borgmann, Sasha Dewitt, Igor Tsaur, Axel Haferkamp, Stacy Loeb, "Novel survey disseminated through Twitter supports its utility for networking, disseminating research, advocacy, clinical practice and other professional goals," *Journal of the Canadian Urological Association* 9 (2015): E713-E717.

- * An abridged version of this work was previously presented in poster format at the American Podiatric Medical Association Annual Scientific Meeting (July 2017) and Goldfarb Clinical Conference (November 2017):
 - Christopher Hood, Jeffrey Lehrman, "Twitter Use at the APMA Annual Scientific Meeting" (poster presentation, APMA Annual Scientific Meeting, Nashville, TN, July 27-30, 2017).
 - Christopher Hood, Jeffrey Lehrman, "Podiatric State Association Adoption of Twitter—Where Are We?" (poster presentation, Goldfarb Clinical Conference, November 10-12, 2017).



continued from page 13

Of the 14 states with Twitter accounts, 11 had links on their association homepage to that account, with a 12th association placing that information on the "Contact Us" page. Of additional social media platforms listed on association homepages, Facebook (n=12, 86 percent) was used the most. The majority of the states that did not have Twitter accounts also did not have any other social media platforms listed on their association website, whether on the homepage or other pages (e.g., "Contact Us," "About Us"). Overall, this audit suggests that state associations in our profession could increase their visibility on social media.

In our research, we uncovered multiple examples of users attempting to create connections on social media even when a state component organization did not have a Twitter account. Users physically typed out the organization name in their tweets because they were unable to tag the organization or use a hashtag specific to the organization. (See Figs. 1–2 on page 17.) Those same organizations may be trying to

connect to their key audiences, but are unsure exactly how to do so, not making a full effort, or experiencing an overall disconnect between platforms. Multiple examples arose in our research:

- One state website has an icon link for Twitter, but no active Twitter account
- One state without any social media platforms has a blog on its website with only two posts, both from May 2013
- One state has an active Facebook account but no found link on the state organization's official website
- Some states with social media accounts did not feature links on their homepage or made the links difficult to find
- A few state associations still lack an official website

These associations—and our profession, as a result—are missing an opportunity to integrate and engage with their audiences. We encourage members involved at the state level to work toward better and more extensive use of their overall web presence, and social media in particular.

TABLE 1
Societies Identified with Twitter Accounts with Account Metrics

State	Username (@)	Months Active	Tweets	Following	Followers
California	CPMATweets	41	137	69	88
Florida	FPMATweets	58	253	114	137
Idaho	idpodiatrists	13	11	10	16
Illinois	IPMA	110	371	796	983
Iowa	IowaPodiatry	72	72	30	164
Maine	Maine_Podiatry	12	0	1	3
Maryland	MarylandPodia	14	2	0	4
Massachusetts	masspodiatrists	62	194	129	60
Minnesota	MNpodiatrists	58	0	11	23
New Hampshire	NHPMA	21	44	35	22
New York	theNYSPMA	15	89	288	97
North Carolina	NCFASweets	68	4	6	40
Pennsylvania	PPMAAssoc	7	184	34	58
Texas	TPMATweets	23	893	167	149
APMA	APMA	102	6024	809	38,200



Twitter for Medical Conferences

The second study looked at trends in Twitter use specifically at our professional gatherings. We looked at Twitter use at the APMA Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) from 2010 to 2016 with comparison to other foot and ankle or podiatric societies (e.g., the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons Annual Scientific Conference and the American Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Surgeons Annual Meeting) during the same timeframe. A Twitter advanced hashtag search was performed for the years in which the officially promoted conference hashtag by APMA for the ASM was used, ranging from the first to last day of the published conference dates, and the number of tweets was counted and reported. (See Table 3 on page 16.)

Other specialties have witnessed a much higher number of tweets around their meetings. The American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) found an 83-percent increase in number of tweets and a 2.4-fold increase in physician Twitter use be-

tween the 2010 and 2011 meetings, while both the American Urological Association (AUA) and Canadian Urological Association national meetings between 2012 and 2013 found a 5-fold increase in number of tweets and number of urologists contributing online.² #AUA15, the official hashtag for the AUA (@AmerUrological, 16,000 followers) Annual Meeting 2015 had 13,933 mentions. Yearly growth from 2011 to 2015 increased exponentially from 12 in 2011 to 93 in 2012 to 3,990 (2013); 9,938 (2014); and 13,933 (2015). It should be acknowledged that ASCO and AUA are large organizations of 45,000 and 21,000 members, respectively, and both host significantly larger meetings than any of the foot and ankle meetings examined here. Although APMA's Annual Scientific Meeting outperformed other foot and ankle conferences, the raw number of conference hashtag tweets was low across the board.

continued on page 16

TABLE 2
Podiatric State Association Social Media Use

State	Username (@)	TW Link on Website	Other SM
Arizona	none	no	FB
California	CPMATweets	YES	FB, TW, IG
Florida	FPMATweets	YES	FB, TW, PIN, IG, YT, LIN
Idaho	idpodiatrists	no	none
Illinois	IPMA	YES	FB
Iowa	IowaPodiatry	YES	FB, TW, LIN
Maine	Maine_Podiatry	YES	FB, TW
Maryland	MarylandPo7dia	no	none
Massachusetts	masspodiatrists	YES	FB, TW, PIN
Minnesota	MNpodiatrists	YES	FB, TW, LIN
New Hampshire	NHPMA	YES	FB, TW, YT
New York	theNYSPMA	YES	FB, TW, VM
North Carolina	NCFAStweets	YES	FB, TW, YT
Pennsylvania	PPMAAssoc	no	FB, LIN
Texas	TPMATweets	YES	FB, TW
Utah	none	YES^	FB, TW^, PIN
APMA	APMA	YES	FB, TW, LIN, PIN, YT

Abbreviations: Social media designations: Facebook (FB), Instagram (IG), LinkedIn (LIN), Pinterest (PIN), Twitter (TW), Vimeo (VM), and YouTube (YT). The ^ denotes a Twitter account listed on association webpage that is a "deadlink"



continued from page 15

Some ways to increase awareness and use of social media at podiatry meetings include:

- Organizations should provide obvious links to their social media accounts on their websites and promote them there.
- Organizations hosting major meetings should promote the next year's meeting hashtag year-round once the preceding year's conference concludes.
- Organizations hosting major meetings should offer an event mobile app with social media integrated into the app (e.g., Twitter feed).
- Foot and ankle meetings should continue to provide (and expand) social media lectures and workshops.
 - ◆ In 2014 and 2015, the American Society of Breast Surgeons Annual Meeting had a five-minute "Twitter 101" presentation at the beginning of the general session, and formal social media lectures were given at pre-meeting courses and breakfast workshops.⁷
 - ◆ At the 2015 APMA Annual Scientific Meeting, there were two social media sessions: "Social Media 101" and "Advanced Social Media" (non-CECH). APMA has repeated those sessions each year since.
- Organizations hosting meetings should recruit physicians who have a recognizable name and established professional following to tweet during the conference.
- Our professional organizations should increase promotion of social media at a conference. Examples include:
 - ◆ consistently displaying the recognized conference hashtag on slideshows between lectures or media around the event space;⁷
 - ◆ broadcasting real-time displays of the Twitter feed and/or hashtag use around the conference center;
 - ◆ including Twitter usernames on conference badges;
 - ◆ offering moderated Twitter Q&A sessions (questions taken via Twitter from both attendees and non-attendees);
 - ◆ conducting live surveys via social media during educational, abstract, industry-supported, and poster sessions;
 - ◆ enlisting conference volunteers to "tweet the meeting,"⁷ and

7. Deanna Attai, Diane Radford, Michael Cowher, "Tweeting the meeting: Twitter use at the American Society of Breast Surgeons annual meeting 2013-2016," *Annals of Surgical Oncology* 23 (2016): 3418-3422.

- ◆ providing a sign for attendee "selfies" that includes the conference hashtag.

What Does It All Mean for APMA Members?

We encourage you to develop a professional presence on social media if you have not already. The more members communicate via social media and attract followers within and outside the health-care profession, the better we can educate the public and other providers about podiatry.

One of the many reasons this concept is important is because of the current drive to promote awareness of the profession and recruit a large, high-quality pool of student applicants. It's critical that both our professional organizations and our individual members understand and actively participate in social media to advance our profession.

A challenge for some new users as they attempt to develop a social media presence is curating content. We recommend the following sources of content:

- General information about the profession (e.g., What is a podiatrist? Why should someone see a podiatrist? What are some pathologies a podiatrist treats? Answering these questions alone could inspire hundreds of posts.)
- Reposted or retweeted content from APMA, your state association, or other professional societies.
- Your personal (positive) reflections about your career and the value of podiatric medicine and surgery.

Don't forget to include relevant tags, hashtags, usernames, and links to ensure you are integrating your social media platforms and building exposure.

TABLE 3
Foot and Ankle Annual Conference
Hashtag Use, 2010-2016

Year	Tweets—ACFAS	Tweets—APMA	Tweets—AOFAS
2010	n/a	n/a	n/a
2011	n/a	n/a	n/a
2012	76	n/a	n/a
2013	79	0	11
2014	71	15	23
2015	53	90	26
2016	66	135	65



Further Reading

- "How to Keep Viewers Engaging with Your Social Media," APMA News January/February 2017, page 60.
- "Three Convention-Friendly Social Media Tips," APMA News March/April 2017, page 56.
- "APMA Tackles Career Awareness with #OperateLikeAGirl," APMA News September/October 2017, page 10.

- "How to Engage with your Social Media Followers," APMA News November/December 2017, page 61.
- "What is Pinterest? How Do I Use It?" APMA News January/February 2018, page 48.
- "Need Help Setting up Your Practice's Social Media Account?" APMA News September/October 2017, page 52.



For questions about how to best use social media in your practice, contact APMA's Communications department.



FIGURE 1. This figure depicts an attempt to create a social media connection when a state organization Twitter handle or conference hashtag does not exist by simply typing out the name of the host organization. (Screenshot taken April 13, 2018.)

Dr. Hood is a fellowship-trained foot and ankle surgeon working at Premier Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine in Malvern, PA. He is an associate of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons. Dr. Hood writes a monthly blog for Podiatry Today magazine and is a part of the APMA Young Physicians Leadership Panel. Outside of work, he runs his own website (www.footankleresource.com) focusing on podiatric student, resident, and new practitioner education and guidance. Follow him on Twitter at @crhoodjrdrpm.

Dr. Lehrman is an attending physician at the Crozer-Keystone Health System Podiatric Surgical Residency and in private practice at Foot & Ankle Specialists of Delaware County, Springfield, PA. He is the current chair of the American Society of Podiatric Surgeons. He serves on the APMA Coding Committee, serves as an expert panelist on Codingline, and is a fellow of the American Academy of Podiatric Practice Management (AAPPMP). Follow him on Twitter at @drlehrman.



FIGURE 2. Website screen shots taken from the Twitter search "Alabama/Colorado Podiatric Medical Association." Note the acknowledgement of a state meeting but inability to create any social media "buzz" due to the lack of conference hashtag. (Screenshots taken April 13, 2018.)