

An estimated 4.9 billion people worldwide used social media in 2023, spending an average of more than 2 hours daily across seven to eight different platforms.<sup>1</sup>

## TOP PLATFORMS FOR FACULTY TO CONSIDER JOINING



In a 2021 study of physicians affiliated with the top 10 hospitals ranked by *US News and World Report*, 70% had at least one public social media profile, but only 1 in 10 physicians with profiles posted at least once a month.<sup>2</sup> Female and younger physicians were more likely to have a social media presence, but surgeons (as compared to medicine physicians) and older physicians had greater activity and more followers.<sup>2</sup>

**Benefits and Uses:** Professional networking and support, recruitment of new trainees and faculty, teaching students and residents, sharing educational innovations and curricula, staying up to date in one's field.

**Risks and Pitfalls:** Trolling, "doomscrolling" (spending excessive screen time absorbing negative news), amplifying misinformation, violating confidentiality, misbehavior reflecting poorly on one's employer.

## SOCIAL MEDIA DOs<sup>3,4</sup>

- Go beyond the headline to add your unique perspective to a shared article or story.
- Credit the original source of a statistic, idea or opinion.
- Check with institutional leadership and/or public relations staff prior to posting content that could be controversial or inflammatory.
- Post visually appealing, noncopyrighted images.
- Stay true to yourself and your goals for being on a platform.

## SOCIAL MEDIA DON'Ts<sup>3,4</sup>

- Add to the noise by reposting content indiscriminately.
- Amplify scientific claims whose accuracy you can't verify.
- Get involved in public arguments (instead, ignore disrespectful users or take grievances offline).
- Share photos or videos of patients without obtaining informed consent.
- Judge success exclusively by numbers of followers, likes, and "viral" posts.

## DETERMINING YOUR GOALS<sup>3</sup>

### Short-Term:

- Provide health education to the general public.
- Connect with others with common academic interests.<sup>4</sup>
- Promote your practice, department, or residency program.

### Long-Term:

- Advocate for a cause or health-related policy.
- Improve representation and diversity.
- Build a grassroots movement or community of solution.<sup>5</sup>

## GROWING YOUR AUDIENCE<sup>3</sup>

- Follow academic thought leaders who are already achieving similar goals.
- Post new messages at regular intervals.
- Cultivate a clear, authentic voice to engage in conversations that matter to you.
- Take time to listen to the needs and concerns of online communities you are trying to join.

Attracting followers on social media is important because the more followers you have, the farther your voice reaches. No matter how great the content you share is, it won't be influential if no one is listening.

### References:

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