

IS YOUR PRACTICE USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO MARKET TO WOMEN?

BY KRISTIE NATION

Is your practice missing out on targeting social media's most important demographic? If you aren't using your platforms to target women, you could be missing out in a big way.

Except on LinkedIn, which is really more of a career-networking site than a social platform, women outnumber men on social media. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, and Pinterest all see more female users on a daily basis, and the gap is ever increasing.



WOMEN AND MEN USE SOCIAL MEDIA DIFFERENTLY

According to the Pew Research Center, when it comes to social sites, men are more likely to:

- Log on infrequently and for specific reasons, rather than for browsing;
- Try to get dates using social media; and
- Use social media to discuss outside interests, such as sports or cars, rather than personal stuff, such as relationships.

In contrast, women are more likely to:

- Log on to social media sites more than once per day;
- Get their news from social websites;
- Follow and interact with brands; and
- Go to social sites for help when making purchasing decisions.

According to ExactTarget, men may be more likely to click coupons on social sites, but women are more likely to “follow” a brand to stay informed of current and future offers. Women also tend to crowdsource information about products and services before making purchasing choices, and they use social media to do this on a regular basis. FleishmanHillard Inc. estimates that women will be in charge of two-thirds of consumer spending in the U.S. over the next decade. All of these statistics mean that social media can be a powerful tool for marketing to women.

RELATING TO WOMEN ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Far too many brands completely miss the boat when it comes to marketing to women. They “pink up,” “dumb down,” and “shrink” their products, thinking it makes them appealing. *News flash:* Women don't want a pink pen, a pink

car, or a pink toothbrush. It's like assuming every woman wants a man, kids, and a cat and, quite frankly, it is insulting.

Brands that “win” at marketing to women treat them like real human beings, with brains, jobs, and lives that span every conceivable inch of the spectrum:

- Panten's “Don't Let Labels Hold You Back” campaign encouraged women to reject being called “pushy” when a male acting the same would be called “persuasive.”
- Dove's “Real Beauty” campaign reached out to women of all colors, sizes, and shapes.
- The e-commerce company HelloFlo works toward demystifying bodily functions and focuses on real day-to-day issues instead of pretending that feminine products make menstrual periods “happy.”
- Sheryl Sandberg encouraged women in all walks of life to “Lean In,” and Getty collaborated with her to create a visual representation of real women living real lives.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

We come back to what we always come back to with social media: it's about being social. It's about conversations and what your practice brings to the table. If all you have to offer is a pink toothbrush to attract women, you are missing the boat. If “Get a new smile to attract the man of your dreams!” is the only thing you have to say, you are missing the boat. If every patient picture you share on your Facebook page looks the same, you are missing the boat.

Your goal for your practice should be to have women say: “*They understand what is important to me!*” If you can achieve that, you'll stand head and shoulders above the competition. Use analytics, insights, and reporting to see which social posts generate the most engagement from women. Listen to what women have to say, both in your practice and online. Craft great content that answers their questions and addresses their needs, and you'll be amazed at how popular your practice's social presence becomes. **DE**

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