

# Free social media tools literature review example

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Recently, the use of YouTube, Facebook, twitter and other social media tools to pass health messages across has grown immensely and continues to trend upwards. The use of social media tools has become an effective way that health organizations use to foster engagement, expand the reach and increase access to the credible science-based health information to various population sets. According to Nelson (2014), different social media platforms and other forms of communication can connect different people, and their voices can increase the timely dissemination and the potential impact of the health-based information and safety. Additionally, the social media tools can leverage the different networks to facilitate the sharing of information. Apart from sharing information, the social media tools can expand the reach of the message as most people are able to use the different social media platforms. Finally, some of the social media tools can personalize and reinforce the health based messages by making the information more tailored to suit the specific need of the targeted population (Thielst, 2010).

There are various social media tools that can be used to provide users with health information and how to utilize the information provided. There are three attributes that make the social media tools highly effective as communication tools. These three attributes include the participation of the partners and the public who create and contribute the content, presentation which is the relevant and timely accessible of contents in multiple formats and contexts and finally personalization. This means that the content is tailored to fit the specific needs of the individuals. The social media tools include Facebook, YouTube, and twitter (Blackburn, 2011). These tools can provide the greatest scope towards the dissemination of information. The

population that is considered in this instance is the individuals aged between 16 years and 30 years. These are the individuals who are mostly interested in accessing the different social media platforms.

## **Facebook**

Facebook is a social media platform that enables image sharing. Individuals can create pages for organizations that are willing to share health-related messages. The image sharing platform provided for by Facebook offers value to health communication activities by offering different ranges of public health images that users can easily place on the social media platform (Harmon and Messina, 2013). As content creation continues to develop, Facebook continues to reach a wide range of users. The widespread use of mobile phones that support the use of the internet and the phones with cameras makes it easier to take photos and upload to Facebook so that one can share the information. According to Parvanta (2011), more than 100 million photos a day are uploaded to Facebook. Organizations can take advantage of this trend by offering images to fans who follow them on Facebook that depict public health in action or reinforce the health messages that they are trying to pass across. Additionally, health organizations can provide the existing messages but only in a new and existing format. The images can be used in teaching, as reference materials and in presentations.

## **YouTube**

The other social media tool is YouTube. YouTube provides a great way to share and exchange information, personal stories and even engage audiences. This trend is becoming increasingly popular as any individuals

with a device that can record video and has access to the internet can upload, share and view or comment on the footage on the YouTube platform. Househ (2014), shows that Youtube provides an engaging experience to different consumers who can be able to share the health and safety information. According to Rice and Atkin (2013), the largest users of YouTube users is in the 18-29 age group. Additionally, the uniqueness of YouTube ensures that the site receives more than 490 million monthly visitors worldwide. The scope of YouTube is global, and anyone can access the information so long as it has been uploaded with the correct descriptions.

## **Twitter**

Twitter is one more social media tool that can be used in the dissemination of health-related messages. The uniqueness of twitter is that the platform is able to offer opportunities to listen to the different conversations that people are having and gather the information in real time. Twitter offers only 140 characters. This means that the information posted on this social media tool is short, easy to read, and anyone can access the information. Additionally, the messages in twitter can be submitted in a variety of ways that include text messages, mobile websites or even computers. A diversity of techniques can be used to disseminate information by either sharing different videos, links retweeting the information that have been provided by other users, and photos. This makes twitter an all-inclusive social media tool.

The best social media tool that can be used is Facebook. This is due to its simplicity, and its nonrestrictive nature in terms of the number of characters that one can use. Additionally, Facebook only requires short procedures to sign up. Everybody can follow the different organizations by liking his or her

pages. Nelson and Wolf (2011) note that the information can easily be searched over the Facebook search engine. In order to target the specific population, it is best if pages of health information are created and the followers of such pages encouraged to share the pages to increase its reach to the other populations and individuals using Facebook.

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