

CASE STUDY: Key Stakeholders and Their Use of Social Media



In today's digital world, social media is emerging as an important channel for building brands, as well as engaging in global healthcare dialogues and staying informed of regulatory, public policy, and market developments. Thus, social media may be an important consideration in your stakeholder engagement strategy.

How Truven Health Can Help

At Truven Health Analytics, we understand the challenges of identifying and engaging with the right audience — whether you're interested in reaching provider networks, advocacy groups, patients, or payer decision-makers — and we can help you identify and engage with the right stakeholders for your business questions.

Beyond individual diseases or therapeutic areas, when it comes to hard-to-reach, less conventional, or specialty settings, we can help you identify patient populations and accompanying KOLs, including practicing physician networks, to deliver important insights that help you commercialize your drug.

For more information, please contact us at lifesciences@truvenhealth.com or truvenhealth.com/lifesciences/sms.

We recommend that part of developing a successful stakeholder engagement plan includes identifying and interacting with stakeholders using social media, and including the community *they* are communicating with online. You would want to know who they are following and being followed by through social media channels, what they are communicating about, and with what frequency.

Using social media analytics as part of our stakeholder engagement projects, we rank stakeholders according to their social media reach. We look at key opinion leaders' (KOLs) and other stakeholders' online social networks to see how they interact with others within the online community. By delivering social media scores as part of stakeholder profiles, we help clients identify:

- Stakeholders who may not be identified through other sources
- Less prominent but recognized stakeholders who are actively engaging in social media, are reaching important stakeholders, and could be included in the final selection for a stakeholder identification and engagement project
- The digital KOLs and other stakeholders with top social media rankings who could be part of the secondary desk research we deliver as part of our projects

Following is a case study for one life sciences client of Truven Health Analytics,™ an IBM® Company, that wanted to build upon its own social media strategy by gaining insights into which social media channels its key target stakeholders are using, and how.

Background: A pharmaceutical client wanted to better understand the social media universe of Tier 1 clinicians for the treatment of asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) in one European country.

In order to reinforce its own social media strategies, the client wanted to find out which of its Tier 1 KOLs, as well as Tier 2 physicians, were active on social media — particularly Twitter,® YouTube,® Facebook,® LinkedIn,® and individual or group blogs. While the main focus was to look for social media posts specifically about respiratory diseases, the client also wanted to verify which of its target clinicians were using social media in general.

Objective: Truven Health sought to analyze and identify respiratory care physicians who were using social media by conducting a social media audit. This process involved a name and keyword search of the top 200 COPD clinicians in the country in combination with the social media sources mentioned on the previous page. A social media user qualified as active by having at least one match with one of the sources, irrespective of the frequency of activity.

Approach: We conducted desk research and primary market research to identify leading asthma and COPD physicians in the selected country. The top 200 identified experts were then analyzed once more, with a particular emphasis on their link to social media sources. This was conducted through extensive Google® searches.

Results: We provided the client with a comprehensive dataset that reflected target KOLs at three distinct levels: Tier 1 (Top 30), Tier 2 (Top 100), as well as the relative rank of the remaining KOLs (70), based on the analyzed social media data. Furthermore, we provided social media and online analyses to reflect the prominence of each KOL across the individually analyzed social media platforms and other online sources. In general, younger, less experienced, and/or lower-ranked experts (Tier 3 and below) were found to be using various social media channels, as opposed to older and long-established stakeholders.

The client's objective for using the information was to see which top experts would potentially be willing to support the client in its own social media strategy, which involved conveying different value messages to the public through social media.

By applying a social media score for the client's target stakeholders within the research phase of this project, we were able to help the client better understand online activities of its KOLs and thus select not only classical but also internet-savvy stakeholders for in-depth profiling. By adding social media scoring to the project, we were able to narrow our focus to the clinical stakeholders of interest who were more actively engaged in social media.

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