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# SURGE

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## THE HAIR ISSUE

STATE-OF-THE-ART  
ADVANCEMENTS IN  
HAIR RESTORATION

+ ABCS: The Value of Board Certification

+ PRACTICE MANAGEMENT:  
Preparing for the Unexpected



Monique Ramsey, CSMS  
Founder & CCO of Cosmetic Social Media

## Five Biggest Mistakes Doctors Make in Social Media and What to do Instead

Here's a staggering statistic – did you know that 96% of people who like a Facebook page NEVER go back to that brand's wall? But it doesn't have to be that way. We're here to help you avoid the costly social media mistakes and give your fans a reason to show up and engage with your practice.

Whether your practice is on Facebook, Google+, Twitter, LinkedIn or just thinking about "going social," there are some things you'll want to avoid if you are going to have the best chance for social media success.

### Mistake #1 – No Plan in Place

You know the old saying, "Failure to plan is planning to fail." This also applies to your social media efforts. Ask yourself, "What am I looking to gain? What are my objectives and goals?" For example, do you want:

- ◆ More new patients?
- ◆ A larger percentage of patient referrals?
- ◆ More repeat customers?
- ◆ Increased visibility to market a new service or physician in the practice?

If you take the time to define your objectives first, it will be much easier to know which indicators to watch by which to measure your success.

### Mistake #2 – Billboard Marketing Syndrome

This is one of the most common mistakes we see, using social spaces as marketing spaces. Social media is NOT just another marketing vehicle. Yes, there are opportunities to get business from social media, but it is not the primary *raison d'être*.

Let's take an example of a social function like a cocktail party. Would you bring your host a gift of a branded mug and then proceed to go up to other guests showing them before and after photos of your latest surgical masterpiece? And then start handing out coupons for a Botox special to those at the dessert buffet (after asking them to sign up for your email list, of course). No. All of this seems absurd. People don't behave that way in a civilized society. And social media is no different.

Facebook, Twitter, Google+, etc. are primarily places to be social (notice I didn't say "sold to"). It's fine to mention your practice, specials, events and the like, just don't do it every day or on every post. A good rule of thumb is no more than about 25% of your posts should be promotional in nature. The other 75% should be something valuable and relevant to your audience. Something that makes them want to click "like," re-tweet, comment and share with friends. This is called engagement, and your goal is to create an environment that encourages it.

### Mistake #3 – Lack of Consistency

We see companies whose posts range from too frequent, too infrequent or (sadly) non-existent. The frequency and timing of your social media posts will be determined by a few factors: the platform, the audience and what you see works based on analyzing your data.

The number one fear about social media is that it will open the floodgates for negative comments.



## Facebook, Twitter, Google+, etc. are primarily places to be social (notice I didn't say "sold to").

1. The social platform: For example, on Facebook, one post a day may be perfect for your readers. On Twitter, however, one post a day will be so lost that you may as well save yourself the 140 characters.
2. The audience: Does your reader want or need constant updates from your brand throughout the day? Unless you are a news network, the answer is probably no. We find that your fans are less likely to "hide" you from their newsfeed or (gasp!) unlike you when you are respectful of their news feed.
3. Your data: Look to your Facebook Page Insights to see the optimal frequency and time of your posts. Look at re-tweets in Twitter (time, topic, etc.). Experiment and tweak as necessary based on what the data tells you.

### Mistake #4 – Not Allowing Comments

The number one fear that brands have about social media is that it will open the floodgates for negative comments. So, they set up their Facebook page and then disable posts from everyone. In Facebook terms, it is called "turning off the wall," making it impossible for anyone other than the administrator to make a post or comment. Hmm, sounds a little like that billboard again, doesn't it?

Social media is a two-way conversation. If you block your fans from using the social platform the way it is intended, not only will your fans leave, they will leave with a bad taste in their mouth.

Likewise, if you have your wall turned on, and a fan comments on one of your posts, then comment back to them. Start a conversation. If they re-tweet one of your brilliant tweets, be sure to thank them.

Don't let nice comments sit there untouched – it is a goldmine of goodwill and the best free advertising you can get. People love to be heard and made to feel important. Of course, this means that you need to have someone looking after the page(s) every day and throughout the day, but that's another discussion.

### Mistake #5 – Illegal Contests & Promotions

Imagine this scenario: You have worked hard to build up your fans and followers to some nice, big numbers. Your fans are engaged and contributing to the community atmosphere. You give away a free sunscreen for every "like" on your post about skin cancer, and people are loving you. Things are good. And then Facebook shuts down your page. Why? You violated Facebook's Promotions Guidelines.

Long story short; don't risk all of your hard work over failing to follow the rules. There are plenty of apps out there to help you administer everything from a little contest to a full-blown sweepstakes. And it goes without saying that you follow your state's medical board regulations, as well as those of your board specialty society and the FTC. S

Monique can be contacted at 877.401.5485, via email [monique@cosmeticsocialmedia.com](mailto:monique@cosmeticsocialmedia.com) or via Cosmetic Social Media's website <http://www.cosmeticsocialmedia.com>.

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