SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN MEDICAL LIBRARIES: CREATING VALUE FOR USERS

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FOCUS

Focus
The use of social media for service delivery in medical library; its purpose of usage, specific service delivery, how to engage with audience, ethics of social media use, and qualities of medical librarian as a social media manager.

The Medical Library
* Assist physicians, health professionals, students, patients, consumers, medical researchers and information specialists in finding health and scientific information to improve, update, assess or evaluate health care.
* They are usually managed by professional medical librarians who are an integral part of the health care team.
* They have a direct impact on the quality of patient care, by helping physicians, allied health professionals and researchers to stay abreast of new developments in their specialty areas.

ROLES OF MEDICAL LIBRARIES

* Provision of current information to users in a quick and cost effective manner;
* Provision of balanced perspective on medical issues;
* Provision of alternatives to formal learning in form of material support for continuing medical education;
* Provision of value services, which improves information delivery;
* Dissemination of health information and promotion of healthy lifestyles;
* Satisfying the health information needs of the community;
* Locating and assisting in the development of relevant information or materials;
* Pairing information outreach with other activities in which the populations already engaged e.g. workshops, conferences, community events etc. and;
* Integrating health information into ongoing programs of the target population in the community,

TYPES OF SOCIAL MEDIA CATEGORIZED BY USE IN LIBRARIES

Facebook: Used to share informative resources to users and also advertise different upcoming events;
Twitter: used by the libraries to market library reference/research services;
Blogs: building ties with users by creating and posting content (images and text) such as library product, services and programs;
LinkedIn: used to create professional connections, market library services among other professionals, solicit for ideas and professional experiences;
Instagram, Flickr: share and upload pictures of different library events and services.
YouTube: marketing by uploading videos of products or events.

PURPOSE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN LIBRARIES

* Presence
* Real-time interaction with users
* Information needs
* Groups
* Conversation

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR SPECIFIC SERVICE/ INFORMATION SERVICE DELIVERY

Announcements about new or improved services/resources; Reminders about existing services/resources/guides; Notices about dates and times of drop-in or staff training sessions/exhibitions and similar events; Information on E-journals, E-books and Open Access developments; Highlights of items added to the repository; Highlight key resources/services; Notices of consultations of users; Less formal requests for feedback/notices of quick polls; Reminders about opening times and information on any changes; Returns/renewal inter-library loans related reminders during holidays; Catalogue/e-resource downtime notices; Announcements of new blog posts; Sharing/tweeting of interesting Medical related breakthrough/ development news or updates; Welcome new/returning students.

REFERENCES


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