

THE IMPACTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA: PLANNING AND EXECUTING A CONGRESS

Author: Iman Leanora Gähwiler
Marketing Manager at CPO HANSER SERVICE

Whether it is Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn or Twitter – social media has become a significant part of our daily lives. Not only do these platforms update us about current affairs, but in some instances they act as personal blogs or simply enable companies to gain valuable insights into their customer behavior. They even allow us to promote events – an important trait in the event business. At CPO HANSER SERVICE, we have discovered that to effectively promote congresses, a social media strategy has to be included.

Before getting started, it is important to identify the relevant target groups. These will determine the social media channels and content to be used. Due to the nature of our congresses, the target groups tend to vary significantly – we cater to medical professionals of all disciplines and ages. Our predefined persona templates enable us to determine our target groups' interests and other requirements they may have.

The next step would be to define the appropriate channels. Factors that should be taken into consideration for this step are the type of medical profession and of course the age of our target group. Younger generations may be found on channels, such as Instagram, whereas an older target group may prefer to use Facebook. Over the years, networking platforms, such as LinkedIn, have seen a significant increase in popularity.

Each channel has different content requirements. Instagram is a preferred visual tool, whereas LinkedIn and Twitter can be used in a more professional context. Thus it is important to identify which content will be most appealing to the target groups. Regardless of whatever channel a company decides to use, it is important that it is regularly updated for current and potential followers. We provide our followers with an excellent content mix defined with the help of our content plan, which should ideally be made up of articles, white papers, videos and pictures. Due to the nature of our business, we utilize Facebook to promote events within our networks.

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When planning our content, we put great emphasis on having a mix between organic and paid ads. All campaigns run on paid ads and whenever possible, we use A/B testing to maximize the outcome. For our A/B testing we aim to use two unrelated pictures pertaining to the same topic with varied texts containing certain keywords. This enables us to see which campaign is most popular amongst our target group.



Katrin Suchi, Director of Sales and Marketing

With the help of Google Analytics, we are able to manage our past and current campaigns. The tool not only shows us which campaigns have the highest reach and their popularity amongst our target groups, but it also shows us whether our budget is being implemented effectively. Based upon the data provided, our campaigns can be adjusted accordingly. Google Analytics enables us to plan and manage future campaigns and budgetary requirements.

Katrin Suchi, Director Sales and Marketing, has stated that "Ever since CPO HANSER SERVICE has started using Google Analytics, we have been able to create more effective campaigns that appeal to a larger target group".

However, social media channels are of no use if the target group is unaware of them. To create awareness for the social media channels, CPO HANSER SERVICE uses the congress websites and monthly newsletters. Additionally, paid services, such as Google Ads, can be used.

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We have discovered the power and benefits of using different social media channels. This powerful tool has enabled us to not only create awareness for our congresses, but to also increase our follower base, which can have many benefits. We look forward to seeing how social media will help our congresses grow in the near future.

Iman Leanora Gähwiler is Marketing Manager at CPO HANSER SERVICE and is responsible, among other things, for planning and implementing the conventions' communications and social media strategy.

Iman is truly international: she is half Swiss and half Caribbean (Trinidad & Tobago), was born in Hong Kong and has spent time in the USA. Thus, she fits in perfectly with CPO's global, intercultural fields of activity.