



SOCIAL MEDIA ACRONYMS ELI5 (EXPLAINED LIKE I'M 5)

Wendy Lewis decodes the acronyms all social media marketers need to know – no millennials require

KEEPING UP WITH THE MINUTE-BY-MINUTE social media acronyms is quite a task, especially for English major boomers like me for whom it may not always come naturally. My father was a war correspondent for the *Stars & Stripes* during WWII, my mother was a teacher for over three decades, and my aunt was a publicist for Warner Brothers in the 1950s, so I come from a long line of able wordsmiths. I attended an Ivy League college where I was taught to use big words with multiple syllables and continually strive to increase my robust vocabulary. Even contractions were frowned upon, and I still resist using them in prose most of the time.

Fast forward to 2017 where extra syllables are considered overkill and if you can't get your message across in four letters or less, you're toast. I have had to be retrained to adapt to a whole new way of writing across Twitter and Insta that runs counterintuitive to my education and training. My English professor from Barnard College must be turning over in her grave.

Social media shorthand

In the modern world, where 140 characters can cause an international incident, every character counts. A good way to flex your social media clout is to talk the talk, especially if your target audience is under 35.

Many of the commonly used acronyms have crossed over into social media from texting or back to the days of AOL and online shorthand. Some of these have been in use for years, while others are variations or new abbreviations

on a common theme. Lastly, a handful of these acronyms have also evolved into popular hashtags that can be used to make your social campaigns come alive.

If you're ready to take your social to the next level, these uber popular acronyms hold the keys to staying up to date on how your patients and consumers like to communicate. Take advantage of this edited list of medical marketing appropriate acronyms to use right now.

Glossary

AFAIK: As far as I know

Straightforward. You probably won't use this frequently, but it's good to know what it means should you encounter it.

AMA: Ask me anything

Usually used for crowd-sourced Q&A sessions.

BAE: Before anyone else

This is one of the more recent creations. Typically it refers to a person's significant other, but could be a very close friend as well. It can also just be used to denote keen interest in a product of any sort. For example, that ZO Skin Health SPF50 is bae.

BD: Big Deal

Rare to see it standalone and you are more likely to encounter NBD (see entry under N).

BFF: Best Friends Forever

An oldie but goodie, this still stands for 'best friends forever.'



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BFN: Bye for now

You're more likely to encounter its more popular variant, TTFN (ta-ta for now).

BRB: Be right back

This comes up most often in the context of real-time messaging or chat services.

DM: Direct message

A DM is a messaging function used on Twitter and Instagram that allows you to send a private message to another user. You can only send a direct message to a Twitter or Instagram user who is already following you, and you can only receive messages from people you follow.

F4F: Follow for follow

This is an invitation to follow a user on Twitter or Instagram with the assurance that they will follow back.

FBF: FlashBack Friday

A useful hashtag in case you forgot to do a 'blast from the past' post on Thursday (#TBT, people!).

FBO: Facebook official

This most often refers to making a public announcement of a life development, such as a new job or new relationship, on Facebook to your entire social audience. Considered a marker of importance. For example, if your relationship is FBO, it's probably quite serious.

FF: Follow Friday

This trend began as a Twitter hashtag for recommending people who merit attention on social. Most users save it for especially interesting shout outs.

FOMO: Fear of missing out

FOMO, not to be confused with FroYo (aka frozen yogurt), is the fear that you are missing out on a great experience, like a party, event, concert, trip, etc. This is a cornerstone of the millennial mindset.

FOTD: Find of the day

More of a hashtag than an acronym to sprinkle into verse, often used to signal your "find of the day," that could be a product or another user's post.

FTW: For the win

Used to add excitement or emphasis at the end of a social post, but more often used sarcastically, e.g. 'He missed his deadline again, FTW!'

FWIW: For what it's worth

Easy to use, try prefacing an aside with this acronym.

FYA or FYE: For your amusement or for your entertainment

Not so frequently used, but it's good to know what it means in case you encounter it.

GTG/G2G: Got to go

A good signoff to keep in your back pocket in case you need to exit a live chatting situation quickly.

HT or H/T: Hat tip

Used to credit someone else in your post, to signal that you used some of their ideas/content or whatever.

ICYMI: In case you missed it

Catching you up on the latest information and news. Usually used to signal vital information. Example: ICYMI, our geo-political situation is volatile.

IKR: I know, right?

Used to signal shared disbelief between speaker and reader. Also, affirmation or agreement with someone's statement.

IMO/IMHO: In my opinion, In my honest/humble opinion

Especially popular in the era of 'fake news' and fact checking, this is a way to clarify that you are offering your opinion, and that it is open to interpretation.

IRL: In real life

To let people know you are talking about something in the real world. Used to distinguish between the real world and the online world. Example: You won't know if you like him until you meet IRL.

JIC: Just in case

In the event that you might need something, e.g. 'Bring your sunscreen JIC.'

JK: Just kidding

Used to convey a light-hearted tone when there's a possibility for a statement to be misconstrued.

KK: Ok; cool

Used a response, not as a descriptor. Example: 'Hey, just a head's up the train's not running.' 'KK.'

LMK: Let me know

If someone writes this in a message to you, they're expecting a response. Variant: LYK which means, 'I'll let you know.' Example: 'I'll LYK when I'm on my way.'

LOL: Laughing out loud

A well-used phrase from the beginning of online chat culture that is good to use for a reaction to a post or text.

MCM: Man Crush Monday

A trend on social where you reveal who your 'man crush' is on social. You use #mcm on a post to signal its belonging to the set of posts about man crushes. It must be done on a Monday for the hashtag to have any meaning (and to optimize visibility).

MT: Modified Tweet

If a manual Retweet is edited for length, use MT to signify that you've changed the original author's words.

NBC: Nobody cares

Don't see this used much, but handy to recognize.

NBD: No big deal

Aside from using it genuinely, you can also use it in a playful or sarcastic way. Example: 'They fixed my skin, nbd.'

NSFW: Not Safe For Work

Usually designates material that is violent, sexual or otherwise inappropriate for a professional setting. Your boss would find it inappropriate, in other words.

Obv/Obvi/Obvs: Obviously

Feel free to take this abbreviation from the screen to the street!

OH: Overheard

Generally used as context for quotes or comments.

OMG: Oh my God/Oh my gosh

Used to convey emotions like surprise, excitement, horror. Use the acronym where you would use the phrase in your day to day life.

OMW: On my way

Used more in texts than anything else.

OOTD: Outfit of the day

A popular Instagram hashtag, #OOTD means you're showcasing an outfit ▷

“ In the modern world, where 140 characters can cause an international incident, every character counts. ”

SMP (SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM) ABBREVIATIONS

- FB – Facebook
- TW – Twitter
- IG – Instagram. Also called Insta for short.
- LI – LinkedIn
- SC – Snapchat. Most millennials call it Snap, which is the name of the parent company that just went public
- G+ – Google +. A good way to manage contacts, but not your best bet for content
- YT – YouTube. Still going strong for video content.

NSFW ACRONYMS TO AVOID

Take note of this short list of acronyms that your social media marketer should NOT be using:

- AYKMWTS: Are You Kidding Me With This Sh—?
- FFS: For F—'s Sake
- FML: F— My Life
- HYFR: Hell Yeah F—ing Right
- IDGAF: I Don't Give A F—
- BAMF: Bad Ass Mother F—er
- LMAO: Laughing my a** off
- MYOB: Mind Your Own Business
- NFW: No F—ing Way
- PITA: Pain In The A**
- POS: Piece of Sh—
- SOL: Sh— Outta Luck
- STFU: Shut the F— Up
- TF: The F—
- WTF: What The F—



▷ you've worn that day or an outfit that is suited for that day, or spotted someone wearing something you like.

OTD: Of the day

Recipe OTD, post OTD, tweet OTD, etc. You get the idea.

POIDH: Pics or it didn't happen

This is another mainstay for millennials. Basically, the idea is that if you didn't document an event with photos, which you then shared on social media, the event didn't happen.

POTD: Photo of the day

If you're in the habit of posting a daily photo on Instagram, this acronym is useful as a hashtag to make sure your photo gets seen by people looking for accounts to follow.

PRT: Partial retweet

See 'retweet' below, and then imagine only part of the tweet retweeted. That is a partial retweet. I have never written 'tweet' so much in my life.

QOTD: Quotation of the day/Quote of the day

Theoretically similar to POTD and OOTD, a way to denote a post belonging to a series of daily posts including quotations.

ROFL: Rolling on the floor laughing

Substitute for LOL and LMAO or LMFAO. Used to convey high degrees of amusement.

RT: Retweet

A Retweet is a Tweet that is re-shared to the followers of another user's Twitter account. You can click the official Retweet button or type 'RT' before the @username and content of the tweet you're re-sharing.

SMH: Shaking my head/Shaking my damn head

If you find something really stupid and you don't have the words to respond. Also good to express shock and dismay.

SO or S/O: Shout out

To credit/attribute something in a post, or to reference another person. It's like saying 'kudos.'

TBH: To be honest

When someone wants to emphasize that they are giving their honest opinion, often

used for negative feedback, e.g. 'Tbh I don't like those sunglasses.'

TBT: Throwback Thursday

A trend on social media where people post old photos of themselves or others on Thursdays (#ThrowbackThursday, #TBT).

TIL: Today I learned

More a hashtag than anything else, this is used to signal your post's belonging in a category of posts highlighting something you learned today.

TL;DR: Too long; didn't read

When someone hasn't read what you've written but wants to reply anyway. You can also use it to give a brief synopsis of a post or article. Following the 12 page *New Yorker* story about Putin, you might write 'TL;DR: We might be in a Second Cold War.'

TMI: Too much information

Typically used to respond to someone who has over-shared. Example: 'Ew, Pamela, don't tell me about your UTI, that's TMI.'

TTYL/TTY: Talk to you later/soon

Another quick little sign-off to use when chatting with someone.

TY/TYVM: Thank you/thank you very much

When you should already know what someone is talking about.

WCW: Woman crush Wednesday

A trend on social where people reveal who their female crushes are on Wednesday. Like MCM, it should be done on the day stipulated by the hashtag for it to be relevant.

WTH: What the hell

People more commonly use the NSFW variant, WTF (What the F***).

YGTR: You got that right

Like saying 'amen', but in an abbreviation.

YOLO: You only live once

Another millennial mantra, YOLO is often said before (or after) you take a risk in life or if you splurge on something. It signifies a tone of throwing caution to the wind and is closely aligned with the theme of FOMO.

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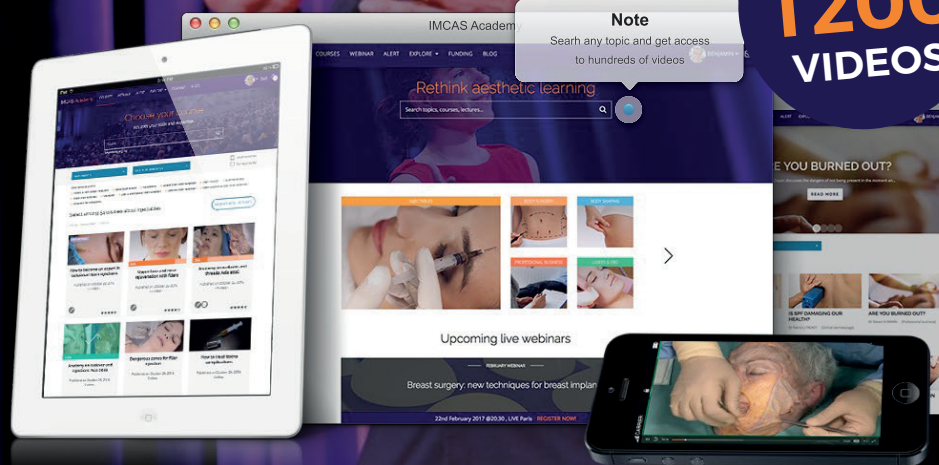
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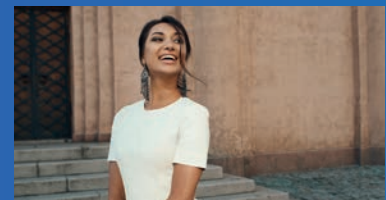
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