

## The Evolving Rules for Social in 2019

By Wendy Lewis

At least part of the global popularity of social media stems from the capability to share our stories and daily life experiences with friends, families, and colleagues. We are able to express ourselves in this medium through written posts, photos, images, GIFs, and videos to offer a snapshot of our lives through our feeds and more recently, through stories.

Snapchat changed the way we consume social media content with their stories, which gave way for Instagram to embrace this trend and quickly dominate it. Its parent Facebook shortly followed suit and together this integrated dual platform has emerged as the world leader. As of 2018, according to TechCrunch! 2.5 billion people used at least one of its apps: Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp or Messenger. In 2018, Instagram hit the milestone of having 1 billion users worldwide. Two important social channels are often overlooked by plastic surgeons and deserve consideration. YouTube owned by Google is a hub for reaching millennials through original video content, is the world's second largest search engine and third most visited site after Google and Facebook; so you need to have a presence on it. Pinterest, a photo sharing app which skews heavily female, has grown in popularity and is currently eyeing an IPO valued at \$12 billion<sup>1</sup> with a 'B'.

Social media is ever changing which underscores the importance of staying on top of the trends, according to Course Director Dr.



Tony Youn in Michigan. "Yesterday's darling platform can be in tomorrow's digital dustbin (MySpace or Google Plus, anyone?). Surveys are showing that more and more people are seeking their plastic surgeon via social media. In the 90s it was the Yellow Pages, in the 2000s it was a good website, and today it's all about social media. I have at least a patient every day tell me that he or she follows me on Instagram. It seems that most plastic surgeons have navigated towards Instagram as their platform of choice. So, is Facebook dead? I will share how to maximize the impact on Facebook. I will share tips on engaging with your Instagram audience and actionable tips for how to monetize all of that."

Once considered taboo, social media has come into its own in the world of aesthetic plastic surgery, says Dr. Matthew Schulman in New York City. "Just a few years ago, we were discussing why plastic surgeons should be incorporating social media into their practices. Only a few short years later, plastic surgeons have begun to accept that social media plays a key role in marketing, branding, patient satisfaction, and overall revenue. Now, in 2019, we are no longer trying to convince people that social media is the wave of the future. It is now the present. Instead, we are discussing ways to optimize the use of social

media in the plastic surgery practice. In this course, we will discuss how to create effective posts that build engagement and how to efficiently use resources to maximize your return on your social media strategy."

Dr. Chris Khorsandi in Las Vegas, NV says, "Social media has undergone an evolution over the last five years and continues to be an important factor in modern society. The questions remain; can legitimate plastic surgery practices exist without a social media presence? What are the pitfalls and the potential gains for engaging in this form of marketing? This interactive course is an opportunity to learn from surgeons who have pushed the limits of plastic surgery marketing on social media, and determine where your place in the world of social media can be or should be."

The challenge for plastic surgeons is how to get more eyes on their content, and best ways to convert their followers to consults to actual patients. As Dr. Jennifer Walden in Austin, TX points out, "Today, consumers' attention is spread out across multiple social platforms and apps, as well as other distractions online, which makes it harder to hold their interest. Thus, we need to follow what platforms our patients are active on, how they are utilizing

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And, what types of content they respond to most. It is important to connect with your audience on a meaningful level to develop a relationship that is based on trust. No one wants to be misled with ads and promotions to their level. One of the real challenges for plastic surgeons is to learn how to create a brand story that is appealing to patients, and that stands out among the clutter of social media content."

As trends evolve on social media, so must the way plastic surgeons market their practices online. Think quality over quantity and try to be creative. Prospective patients may react by unfollowing you or overlooking lackluster content or unadmitted messaging that does not engage them. To have an impact, be purposeful and targeted to reach your intended audience. For example, if you are targeted millennials, create content that is visually engaging and use language they can relate to. Similarly, if you are trying to attract more men for reconstructive, the tone, look and feel of your posts should be quite different from what you may use to get interest from the primary makeover category of patients. Using too frequent posts with stronger content that is well thought out may be more likely to have greater impact than a stream of unengaging content that turns your audience away.

Storyboarding can inspire audiences to get excited about your brand and your practice. It can feel more real, to the viewers, and personal. However, it also demands more creativity, video, images and graphics, that can be time-intensive and expensive for busy plastic surgeons. In the current climate, plastic

surgeons may need to step up their game when it comes to social media advertising. Almost every platform now offers tools to filter your audience when you opt for paid advertising by geography, age, gender, income, etc. To get your content seen and seen by the right audience, an ad budget has become an essential component of practice marketing. All too often, plastic surgeons get incomparably frustrated when they don't see their Instagram followers growing fast enough. To put it in perspective, Facebook, for example, is the #2 ad platform, second only to Google.

The selfie culture continues to thrive on social media and shows no signs of slowing down. Selfie photos and videos are eliciting interest among users, and this trend has clearly had an impact on how patients see themselves. Beware of rising incidents of dysmorphia and distorted expectations as patients are using filters to edit their selfies and may come into your practice wanting to look like the altered image they see on their phones.

Plastic surgeons also need to take care to choose how much of their personal lives and lifestyle they want to share in a public forum, which is a very individual decision.

As Dr. Walden says, "The human element in social media is critical. Putting a real, human face to your brand is a key strategy to make your practice seem more reliable and to build loyalty among patients. Be careful not to reveal more details than you are comfortable with. Remember that once you put it online, it is almost impossible to take down."

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Meet Wendy Lewis at  
The Aesthetic Meeting  
Sunday, May 19th,  
4:30-6:30pm  
4 Socially Savvy Plastic  
Surgeons

Featuring Drs. Anthony Youn,  
Christopher Khorsandi,  
Matthew Schulman, Jennifer  
Walden with Wendy Lewis  
<https://bit.ly/2C8hnse>