

THE UNIQUE NATURE OF PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL MEDIA

A Microlearning Module from the Association of Medical Media

(VIDEO TRANSCRIPT)

When we first came into the world of professional medical media, we learned right away that we had to toss most everything we ever knew about media in general, including consumer and business-to-business media, right out the window.

If you're still rather new to our exciting but unique industry, here are some of the things you'll be discovering on your journey.



In this media space, we're providing clinical information to health care professionals so that they can provide their patients with the best treatments. This is very important information—sometimes *life-saving* information—that requires their concentration to fully absorb.

Whether it's an article, white paper, or advertisement, they need to encounter this material when they're in a professional learning frame of mind—not while they're distracted by the latest sports scores, or celebrity news, or politics, or cute pet videos.

That's one of the reasons why professional medical information appears in professional medical outlets. Medical journals, professional portals, medical conference communications, direct mail, and emails are all appropriate places for the kind of information that's

intended for doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and other health care professionals.



Broad programmatic exchanges that utilize consumer media outlets aren't much help in this space—especially when you also factor in the extremely targeted nature of the professional audience.



Did you know that there are fewer than 9,000 endocrinologists practicing in the entire United States? Only about 34,000 cardiologists? Not quite 23,000 oncologists?

When we are working in the consumer media space, we naturally expect some pretty big numbers in our performance metrics. But in medical media, when we consider the odds that any one of those 10,000

endocrinologists will stumble across our message at a specific moment in time, we know we have to adjust our strategies—and our expectations—accordingly.



Medical media professionals know that significant investments across multiple professional channels—including, yes, impossible-to-miss print ads in the top medical journals—is the path for success with such small, targeted professional audiences.

And when measuring digital performance, we know that even a handful of engagements—from just the right audience—can be a big win.



Next, let's talk about regulations. Don't be surprised that many of the core strategies we may have learned from consumer or B-to-B media are simply not available to us when we're working in professional medical media.

Odds are, there's an FDA regulation dictating what you can and can't do. If it's not an FDA regulation, it may be a medical journalism rule. Or a policy of a professional medical society or association. Or a mandatory directive from a client company.

There are rules about what you must say—or can't say. And there are rules about where your messages can and can't appear.

For example, most medical journals will not place an advertisement within or directly next to a clinical article on the same topic. This may come as a shock to those of us who come from consumer media, where contextual advertising is a tried-and-true strategy.

Acute Gastroenteritis: A Qualitative Study

Reant, F.G. Laertis, Prensard Rouait, Joward van der Holten
The Journal of Neuro-Virology September 2023, 31 (3) and evo3 0011
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10401401.2023.2244444>

Abstract

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INTRODUCTION

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But when you think about it, it does make sense. After all, your doctor may be trusting that very journal article to decide on a life-saving course of treatment for you or your family member. She needs to be able to trust that advertising revenue didn't impact the article in any way.

So, to summarize, professional medical media presents a very steep learning curve.

But take heart; it all starts to feel rather intuitive once we understand that the information we're conveying could mean life or death to ourselves and to our loved ones.

After all, nobody wants their doctor, or nurse, or pharmacist being misled or confused by what they see. But when we do communicate properly, and follow all the rules, we know we are saving lives.

And this is what makes our careers in professional medical media so incredibly gratifying.

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