



**USING SOCIAL MEDIA
TO DRIVE TRADE SHOW
SUCCESS**

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While a 2016 survey of B2B marketing executives found social media was the preferred channel for raising brand awareness and strengthening thought leadership, it was also recognized for helping develop brand position and deepen customer relationshipsⁱ. This should encourage marketers of products and services to the pharmaceutical industry to incorporate social media into their trade show marketing efforts.

Creating awareness, being recognized as a thought leader, strengthening relationships, and securing brand position are all goals of trade show attendance. Why not use social media to help lift all these measures?

Having lagged behind B2C in use of social media – not without reason, B2B is leveraging Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs, podcasts, YouTube, and the like to reach and engage customers and prospects at myriad points as their target audience researches and explores products and services. Social media is a great channel for sharing thought-leading articles or promoting videos that explain complex products. It provides that light yet repetitive touch to remind people of your trade show schedule and why they should visit your booth.

In fact, a recent survey of B2B marketers showed the value of social

media at trade show goes deepⁱⁱ. The survey found that:

- 78 percent of marketers believe social provides a way to track spontaneous trade show moments
- 78 percent said it's a channel in which people can experience show activities
- 50 percent said it brings more people to their booths
- 36 percent said it creates more “stickiness”
- 29 percent said it helps generate new contacts and with recruiting

The same survey found that Twitter and LinkedIn are “most useful” for B2B promotion at trade shows.

GOING TACTICAL

To use social media successfully in trade show promotion, it's important to plan your approach, prepare your content, and build a schedule. Spontaneity can be great, but without a plan, content, and calendar, you're likely to miss an opportunity, or create a mess.

Start several weeks in advance of the trade show to let your followers know where you'll be and what you'll be showcasing. Be sure to use the event's hashtag, as organizers will retweet and share your content with their audience



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– which includes your targets and introduces you to the people you want to meet. For CPhI NA, use the hashtag #CPhINA to gain visibility with the entire show community.

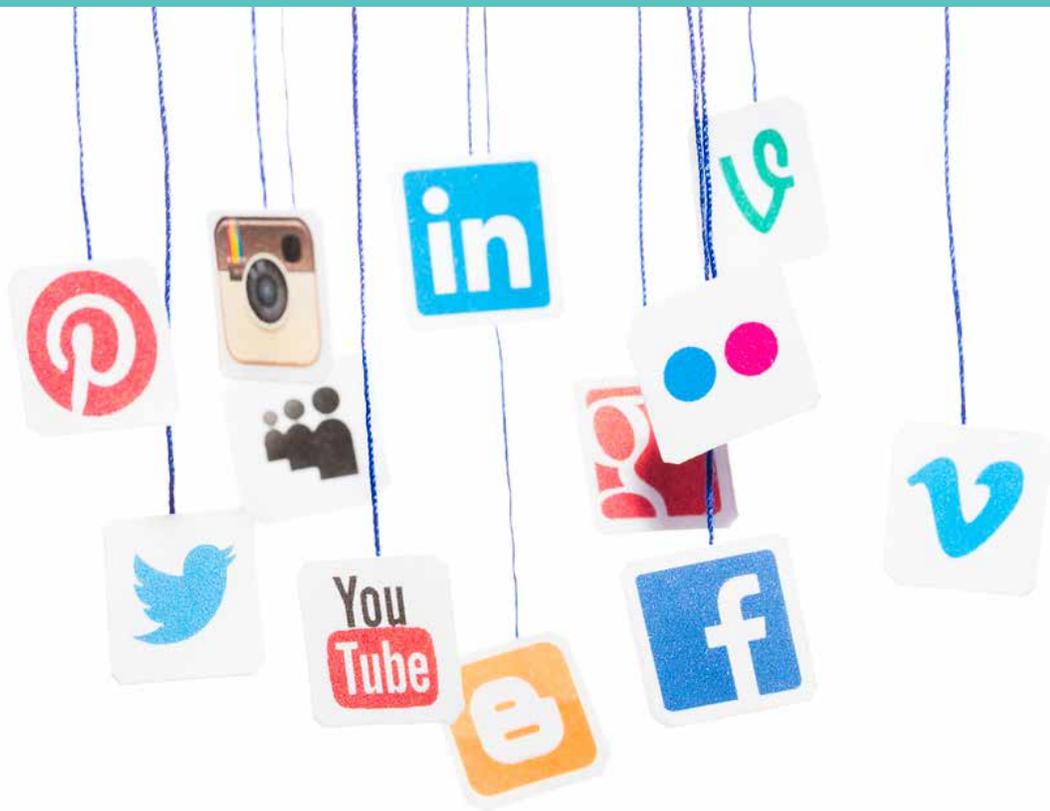
ⁱ <https://www.smartinsights.com/b2b-digital-marketing/b2b-social-media-marketing/b2bsocialmediamarketing/>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.adweek.com/digital/how-to-win-at-trade-shows-hint-social-media/>

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WHEN WELL PLANNED AND WELL ORCHESTRATED, SOCIAL CAN BE THE FINISHING TOUCH THAT MAKES YOUR ENTIRE SHOW MARKETING PLAN REALLY SUCCEED.

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ADVANCE WORK

Prior to the show, promote any poster presentations or speaking engagements your company or organization will be involved in. Use photos or videos to tease new products or services you'll be introducing. If you're hosting an open event, plug that on social media; Facebook hosts event pages where you can invite specific friends of your company.

Don't forget that your blog or podcast is a social channel that should be leveraged for trade show promotion. Write or record about interesting speakers you'll be checking out at the trade show, and encourage your prospects to meet you there.

These pre-show creative devices can capture attention and drive people to your booth.

FROM THE SHOW FLOOR

At the show, experts suggest using social media management platforms like HootSuite to organize your trade show social media plan. This way, you can

launch Twitter, LinkedIn, and other social posts from a single location. Start with a promotion of a new-product press release, or announce a show-specific special if you're offering one. You can script social posts from key talking points you've developed for your booth staff and schedule them throughout the show.

Social media savvy marketers aren't afraid to video tape customer reactions to on-booth demos – with customer approval, of course. Quick testimonials from the trade show floor, filmed even with just a smartphone, can encourage other conferees to stop by your booth, or make those not at the show feel like they were there.

Park all your content on a show-designated landing page, using social to drive people there, for the added benefit of measurable web statistics.

BACK IN THE OFFICE

After the show, use your social channels to share any conclusions, to thank your customers and prospects for their time, and offer a new asset – perhaps a

white paper on a show-related topic, or video summary of your experiences at the show.

Trade shows are face-to-face marketing events that bring people together. Social media can heighten enthusiasm for an event, bring people to your booth, and introduce you to prospects who aren't even at the show. When well planned and well orchestrated, social can be the finishing touch that makes your entire show marketing plan really succeed.

CPhI North America brings pharmaceutical and chemical industry leaders from across the complete pharma supply chain together for three days of networking, learning and doing business better.

Contact the Sales Team at sales@cphinorthamerica.com for more information about exhibiting!