

Social media and how we use it

A voluntary sector UK perspective

Together we will beat cancer

Aims

- Give a snap shot of some of the ways CIS have used social media in the UK
- Focus on what we at Cancer Research UK have been doing but also mention excellent work by Macmillan, Breast Cancer Care and others
- Outline a case study demonstrating “joined up working” in social media

Overview

- Social media is a new field for all of us
- How do we use it most effectively and most appropriately?
- In our experience it is better to use different channels for different purposes
- But, it is important to take an integrated approach across your organisation

Social media and how

we use it
Some examples from Across the
sector in the UK

Together we will beat cancer

Online Community

Our online forum has over 17,000 registered users; we have over 80 new registrations per week, 2,000 posts a week and around 13,000 unique visitors to our pages every week.

The main purpose of the forum is to provide a space for peer support for those affected by breast cancer. With categories ranging from “worried” about breast cancer and treatment, to living with secondary breast cancer and support for family and friends, the forum offers a space for people to discuss all aspects of their experience with other people in similar situations.

The forum is moderated. We have a team of remote moderating staff that monitor content on the forum on a shift basis. They make sure newly diagnosed members get the support they need and are aware of the services we offer (free Helpline and Ask the Nurse email service, as well as our free downloadable publications) while they also make sure the forum is a safe place, free of advertising and spam.

The community manager communicates between Breast Cancer Care staff and the forum members should we need to input from a clinical or policy perspective.

Livechat is facilitated twice a week (Tuesday specifically for people with a secondary breast cancer diagnosis, and on Thursday for anyone with a diagnosis). Each session last one hour and is hosted by a moderator and a nurse. This is real time peer support on a weekday evening.

Social Media

We have 26,300 followers on Twitter and use to promote, engage and retain support. On Facebook we have 13,300 ‘Likes’ and use this platform to promote our services and fundraising opportunities, while providing a space for fundraisers to share their events.

We engage with supporters on a daily basis on social media: commenting on posts and personally replying to tweets.



Macmillan Cancer Support

Macmillan's Online Community



Macmillan's Online Community

The Community has been online since 2006

It's a space where anyone affected by cancer can share their experiences, meet people in similar situations and offer and receive support.

- 56,000 members
- 48,729 unique visitors (May 2012)
- 519,549 pageviews (May 2012)

Macmillan's Online Community

Tools and features...

Macmillan's community offers a number of features to help members express their stories and find support:

- Blogs
- Live chat room
- Groups for each cancer type as well as groups dealing with practical and emotional issues
- Forums
- Status updates
- Profile pages
- Search

Macmillan's online community

- Posts are moderated if a user reports a problem. Well established, committed users ensure this happens
- 10 Community Champions cascade guidelines, welcome new members and tests new functionality
- Monthly/bimonthly webchats with experts are very popular
- These tie in with awareness months, topical issues etc and cover all aspects of the cancer experience (medical, practical, fundraising and policy based)
- Recent experts have included, nurse specialists, politicians, fitness experts and hair stylists

Social media and how

we use it
Cancer Research UK's experience,
taking a coordinated approach

Together we will beat cancer

Cancer Research UK a coordinated approach to Social Media

- Face book
- Twitter
- Our blog
- Cancer Chat

Facebook

- Our facebook site is used primarily as an engagement tool with the public and supporters
- We tend not to have lengthy conversations with the public through it
- Our friends tell us about their experiences and fundraising activities
- Publicising and recruiting for lobbying and campaigns
- Publicising fundraising activities and research breakthroughs
- Publicising our other services, like patient information
- We will respond to any question that comes through our facebook page, but most of these are questions about our work. Patient information requests are usually replied to by suggesting they contact the CIS staff

Twitter

- Also used as an engagement tool
- Great for keeping followers up to date in real time with an event
- Also for driving people to support lobbying campaigns
- And for publicising any other information or service we produce

Blog

- A useful platform for giving an in-depth explanation of scientific or medical developments
- Good for dispelling misinformation or giving a science based perspective
- Allows people to leave comments which we can address should we need to
- Can be used to support other campaigns and services

Forum Cancer Chat

- Supportive conversations between people affected by cancer
- Moderators provide a safe environment for our members
- Our moderators are proactive and encourage conversations to take place as well as sign posting to useful information
- CIS nurses have their own topic area for members to ask medical questions

A coordinated approach; a case study.

“The Burzinski Clinic; Hope or false hope”

- November 2011 a reputable British newspaper covered a story on the Burzinski Clinic
- Cancer Research UK use our blog to discuss the therapy promoted through this clinic and the controversies surrounding it
<http://scienceblog.cancerresearchuk.org/2011/11/25/hope-or-false-hope/>
- The blog post is Facebooked and tweeted
- A thread about it is started by our moderators in the Cancer Chat forum
<http://cancerchat.cancerresearchuk.org/thread/6075>

Impact

- 13,212 views and 30 comments added to the blog
- 109 Retweets reaching a potential audience of 88,100 with more than 2,200 clicking on the link to the blog
- Other notable commentators including Ben Goldacre also tweeted links to our blog
- Reached more than 22,000 through our facebook page with 18 comments, 12 shares and 94 likes
- 3,167 views of the Hot topic thread on the forum and 24 comments added to the thread
- Over all we were able to open up the debate about this issue and direct people towards reliable evidence based information about it

Other examples

- “The answer is plain” promoting plain packaging and petition signatures through an online campaign, videos, tweets, blog posts, facebook activity, forum hot topic and ask the expert session
- A day of Tweets from the CIS phone room
- Tweeting and facebooking our live, “ask a nurse” sessions on the Cancer Chat forum