

# Integrating Social Media into Health-Care Marketing: An Abstract

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**Abstract** Social media are becoming an important tool for building and sustaining relationships among people and groups (Kanter & Fine, 2010). Compared to traditional websites used for one-way sharing of web content, social media allow users to create, update, and exchange web content in an interactive way (Chun, Shulman, Sandoval, & Hovy, 2010). Research on social media marketing has grown rapidly in the business literature.

Meanwhile, more and more nonprofit organizations (NPOs) started using social media for marketing purposes. NPOs provide services that are not economical in either the for-profit market or the government services industry (Hill & Lynn, 2009; Rosenbloom, Kravchuk, & Clerkin, 2009). They bring people together to collaborate and achieve the common good and to advocate and influence policy makers through mobilizing constituencies (Guo & Musso, 2007; Guo & Saxton, 2014; Lipsky & Smith, 1990). In order to fulfill these missions, NPOs need to use advanced social media strategies to help raise money, mobilize volunteers, raise awareness, persuade decision makers, and encourage positive behavior changes (Miller, 2010). However, a comprehensive literature review indicates that the effectiveness of social media use by NPOs lacks systematic investigations and most studies have focused on human services NPOs. The proposed study intends to fill this gap and explore the integration of social media into the marketing efforts of health-care nonprofit organizations (HCNPOs).

We conduct a survey of 1950 HCNPOs in the state of California. The list of HCNPOs is collected from the Urban Institute National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS). The sample includes HCNPOs with different revenue sizes ranging from below \$25,000 to above \$10 million. We conduct an e-survey through SurveyMonkey® Pro. An IRB approval is obtained before distributing the survey.

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Since this study is largely an exploratory research that tackles a new problem, we expect to discover a range of specific social media marketing strategies used in the NPOs and estimate their impact on organizational effectiveness. The findings of this study not only contribute to the literature but also provide valuable resources for nonprofit practitioners to successfully implement social media initiatives and help them improve the effectiveness of their organizational performances.

References Available Upon Request