

Embrace Social Media to Build Online Recognition and Brand Authority



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Introduction

We live in a very social, interconnected world. Twitter has become the quill of our time, and Facebook connects individuals and supports communities. There is evidence everywhere of how channels such as these have encouraged new conversations that might not have occurred otherwise. Within health care, such exchanges have been prompted by social advocates like Dr. Perry Mayer, medical director of The Mayer Institute, a centre for the treatment of diabetic foot, and Dr. Doris Grinspun, CEO of the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO).

As a result, more and more organizations and individuals are recognizing the importance of

raising their online presence. Wound care practitioners in Canada are no exception, yet some may not be sure how to embrace these new communication media.

Through images, quick facts and quotations, this article explores how social media channels have had an impact on wound care, how Wounds Canada has engaged with them and how you can apply them yourself.

What Wounds Canada Is Accomplishing with Social Media

For an organization or individual using social media, the most important goal is to post often,

Quick Facts about Social Media Channels

- Social media channels are increasingly being used as search engines.
- YouTube is the second largest search engine in the world next to Google.
- Facebook remains the most widely used social media platform.
- Among users, there is high reciprocity between social channels: those using LinkedIn are more likely to be using Twitter, and 90% of those using Instagram or LinkedIn are likely to be most active on Facebook.

providing information of interest to followers. If successful, the result will be one of continued growth in reach over time. A social media presence generally won't grow if it is not fed with frequent, meaningful posts. The presence of Wounds Canada on social media channels has grown in recent years, with spikes of activity that coincide

"Social media channels like Twitter have become powerful vehicles to connect communities of people, source real-time, categorized information and resources, as well as offer a global avenue to express and share knowledge, opinions and conversations. Twitter is about following, not friending," says Catherine Finlayson, medical communication manager, IDB, at Takeda Canada Inc. and a pioneer in social media marketing in health care in Canada (@Catherinefin).

with the conferences. Building the authority of a brand online takes an investment of time and patience.

Figure 1 demonstrates Wounds Canada's steady growth in activity over seven years. Note both the general increase in the past two years and the spikes during major events.

Figure 2 demonstrates the reach, based on impressions, of the top-performing tweet at the Wounds Canada Fall Conference in London, Ontario, on November 9, 2018.

Figure 3 shows Wounds Canada's reach via Twitter, based

Useful Social Media Definitions

Online presence:

This is how and where you can be found on the Internet, across your website(s) and social media channels. Increasing your online presence makes you easier to find and might increase your online authority.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO):

The principal search engine, Google, ranks your online presence based on algorithms. The art and science of increasing your online authority is called Search Engine Optimization (SEO). Although the exact algorithms are not widely known, the principles that apply and can improve SEO are well understood. They help people to find you online.

Impressions:

The number of people who saw your tweet.

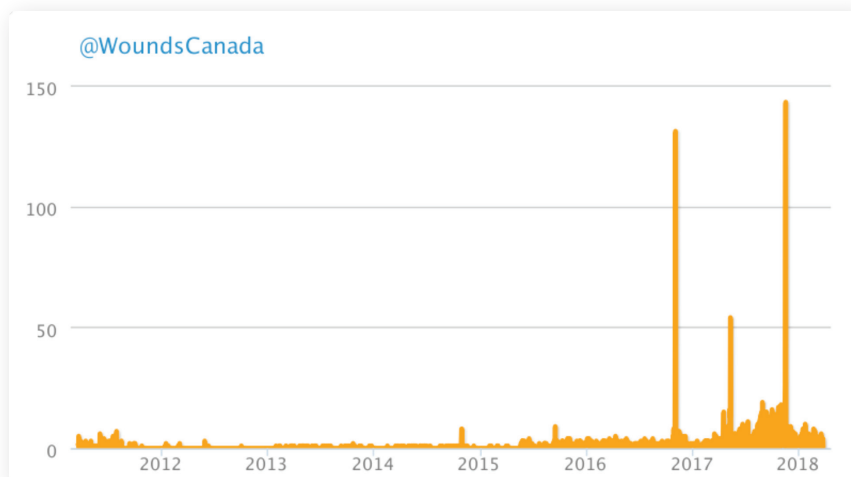
Total engagements:

The number of interactions (e.g., commenting and sharing) with your post(s).

on impressions, over the period of the 2018 Fall Conference.

Wounds Canada's increased use of social media has established improved connections with physicians, researchers and policy-makers, groups

Figure 1: Growth of the Wounds Canada Twitter Account: 2012 to 2018



that traditionally have lower rates of interaction with the organization through conferences or email. By using multiple methods of communication, including social media, Wounds Canada is extending its sphere of influence and reinforcing its online authority.

Figure 2: Wounds Canada Fall Conference 2018 Top Tweet, Welcoming Speaker Doris Grinspun, CEO of RNAO



Catherine Finlayson notes that “Wounds Canada is successfully utilizing this effective communication and marketing platform to gain followers who seek to connect with a reliable and trusted community dedicated to providing sound and

Wounds Canada’s Community on Social Media

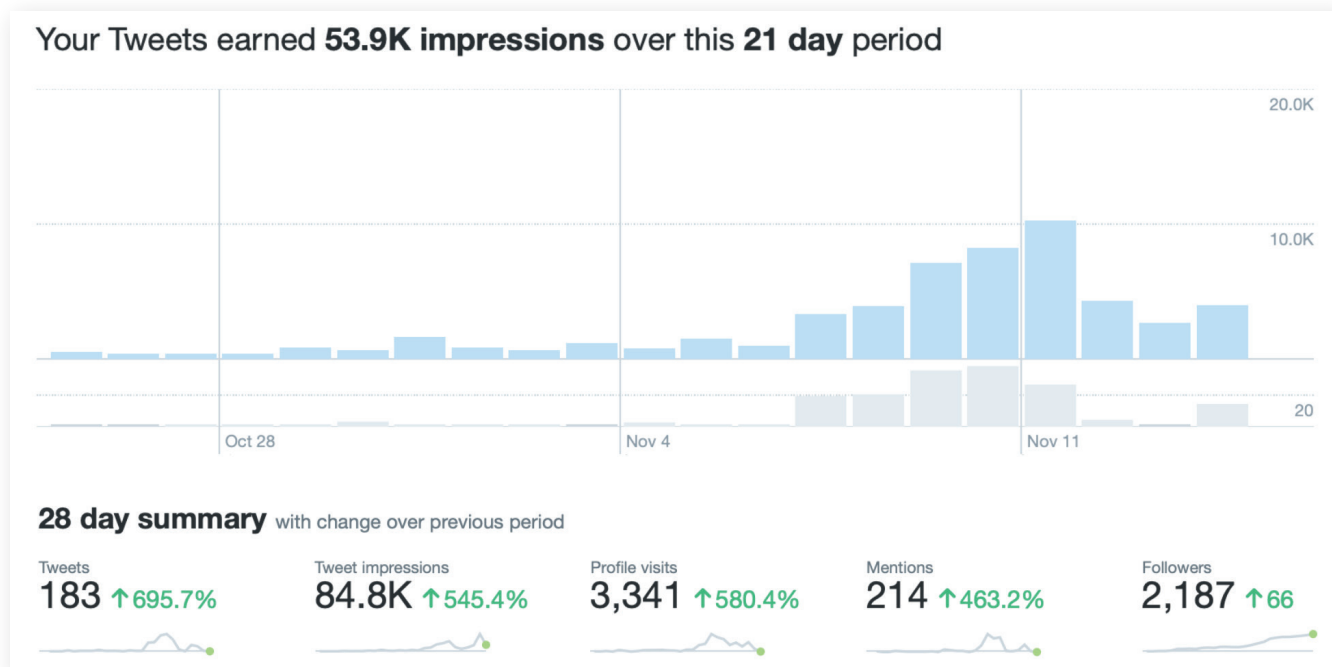
Social Channel	Wounds Canada	Diabetic Foot Canada
Facebook followers	3351	3704
Twitter followers	2187	2007
YouTube subscribers	61	
LinkedIn followers	188	

Physicians and Social Media

Dr. Perry Mayer represents a growing number of wound care physicians who have recognized the power of social media. He co-led the social media hands-on workshop at the Wounds Canada 2018 Fall Conference and had this to say: “Diabetic foot wounds are the most prevalent complication of diabetes, and yet it is the least recognized and [most] poorly treated complication, frequently leading to unnecessary lower limb amputation. Part of our problem in changing this narrative involves awareness amongst those with diabetes and the medical community itself. Organizations such as Diabetes Canada, Diabetic Foot Canada and Wounds Canada have attempted to disseminate messages through their forums, but, unfortunately, that message is only heard by the few, and we need it to be heard by many. The only way that this can be done in a scalable way is to use social media. Social media is geared towards scalability when delivering messages of importance and allows us to reach a huge population base, with relative ease. It is only when we can have the public think about a diabetic foot wound in the same way that they think about being on dialysis because of kidney failure or blindness as a result of diabetic end-organ damage that we will have uptake and action to tackle this prevalent and debilitating diabetic complication effectively.”



Figure 3: Number of Impressions on Twitter during Wounds Canada's 2018 Fall Conference



relevant medical education opportunities, clinical resources and evidence-based research. The followers of @WoundsCanada on Twitter receive not only valuable information but also a connection into a strong and growing network of cohorts, professionals, health institutes, support groups and stakeholders driven to disseminate credible information, collaborate on sound projects, share

events and conferences and elevate the importance of wound care knowledge and practice."

Twitter allows Wounds Canada to amplify its message when those with a large sphere of influence share their stories. Doris Grinspun has more than 8,700 followers on Twitter (see example, Figure 4).

The value of social media for individual professionals is well described by Marlene Varga, Pressure Injury Prevention lead at Covenant Health Canada, in Edmonton, who commented to *Wound Care Canada*, "Social media is important to help communicate messages about wound care. It keeps me updated as to what is currently going on with others. A snippet of information here and there from Twitter, for example, is a source of information that I could follow up on if that is of interest to me. It's all about sharing, connections, learning from others, getting inspired and motivated. This is important for my work well-being to have those connections with others."

Social media allows you to listen and interact in a very human-to-human way. "There is no more B2B or B2C. There is only Human-to-Human (H2H)," writes author Bryan Kramer in his book of the same name.

Figure 4: Tweet by Doris Grinspun during Wounds Canada's 2018 Fall Conference



Case Study: Stop Pressure Injury Day

The Stop Pressure Injury Day annual event is an example of an international movement built by social media. In 2012, working with the European Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel (EPUAP), co-author John Gregory helped establish the Twitter accounts and the #STOPPressureInjuries hashtags. Social media has helped build this annual November event to eliminate avoidable pressure injuries. Figure 5 is an example of a tweet containing event hashtags.

Figure 5: Example of a Stop Pressure Injury Day tweet



How to Use Social Media Successfully for Your Wound Care Initiatives

Health-care professionals can use social media channels to seek answers to questions and help guide other health-care practitioners as well as patients to credible sources. Both the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) and College of Nurses of Ontario offer guidance to their members on how to use social media effectively. Indeed, they advocate the use of social media in

influencing government. As an example, check out the RNAO guidance on social media at <https://rnao.ca/news/socialmediaguideline>.

By following a few simple tips, you too can successfully incorporate social media into your overall communication strategy to enhance your reach with patients, connect to colleagues and support virtual communities.

- Create a profile on each of the major social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube and Instagram) so that those searching

Wounds Canada's Most Influential Supporters on Twitter

Consider following these individuals and groups:

1. David Armstrong @dgarmstrong – Diabetic foot physician from California
2. Rob Fraser @rdjfraser – Nurse and writer from Toronto
3. Doris Grinspun @DorisGrinspun – CEO of RNAO and speaker at Wounds Canada's 2018 fall conference
4. James Hinchcliffe @Hinchtown – Keynote speaker from Wounds Canada's 2017 fall conference
5. Health Quality Ontario @HQOntario
6. Ahmed Kayssi @ahmedkayssi – Vascular surgeon and wound care physician at the University of Toronto
7. RNAO @RNAO

- for you can find you.
- Ensure your profile is complete, with a legible profile icon and header image, and that it is clear and professional-looking on mobile devices.
- In your profile header or description, include links back to your website.
- Specify and communicate a hashtag for your

Figure 6: A tweet from the Wounds Canada 2017 Fall Conference tagging keynote speaker @Hinchtown



- wound care events or facility initiatives.
- Get creative! Social media posts that contain videos, images, quotes or links are more likely to be shared than those without. Be sure to tag others, to ensure that they're notified about and see the tweet or post. See Figure 6, an example from the Wounds Canada 2017 fall conference that tags keynote speaker James Hinchcliffe (@Hinchtown).
- When retweeting or sharing a post, always state your motivation.

Further Resources

To make optimal use of social media channels, refer to the following:

- Free Social Media Certification Course (HubSpot Academy): <https://academy.hubspot.com/courses/social-media>

- “How to Write the Most Effective Social Media Posts” [Infographic] by Laura Forer (MarketingProfs): www.marketingprofs.com/chirp/2017/33189/how-to-write-the-most-effective-social-media-posts-infographic
- Ultimate Cheat Sheet Guide to Social Media Image Dimensions (HubSpot): <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/ultimate-guide-social-media-image-dimensions-infographic>
- Social Media Video Marketing: The Insider's Guide (Wave.video): <https://assets.animatron.com/blog/insiders-guide-to-social-video-marketing/insiders-guide-to-social-media-video-marketing.pdf>

“Congratulations to Wounds Canada for not only being a leader online but also a valuable medical community connection to confidently follow.”

—Catherine Finlayson

Your Call to Action

You can connect with Wounds Canada online from your workplace or home.

- Follow @WoundsCanada and @diabeticfootcanada on Twitter and retweet one of their recent posts.
- Join the Wounds Canada community across various social channels. Even if you are not on Twitter, you can find us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube. 📺

John Gregory edits the syllabus for the Wounds Canada conference. You can find him online at @gregiej and @opencityinc. **Mariam Botros** is the CEO of Wounds Canada.



Become a member of Wounds Canada

As the leading wound care organization in Canada we provide you, our member, with the information and tools to help advance your career, your practice and your team. Your membership provides you with:

- Exclusive access to members-only sections (coming soon) and quarterly newsletters
- Discounts on our **professional educational programs**; for example, save \$40 on this year's fall conference registration fee
- Access to our organizational updates that outline how your membership supports our mission
- The opportunity to become involved as a regional representative and/or board member
- Networking opportunities with other regional, national and international health professionals
- Discounts on wound care tools and resources sold in our **eBoutique**
- Complimentary subscription to *Wound Care Canada*

Find out more about us at www.woundscanada.ca.

