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A guide to social media

What you don't say is as important as what you do say





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Rod Solar Why should ophthalmologists use social media? A more important question might be: why should ophthalmologists not use social media? Rod Solar, Client Services Director at LiveseySolar Practice Builders, says social media is the place to be to capture all corners of the market. "If you're not on social media you are definitely missing an opportunity to communicate with a large segment of the population," he told Kristine Morrill, Founding Partner at consultancy firm medeuronet, in a EuroTimes Eye Contact interview. From millennials on Twitter to Generation Xers and boomers on Facebook, a social media presence is vital for attracting potential patients. Many traditionalists (aged 73 and older) will ask their children for advice when contemplating

surgery, and these will be sure to check out a practice's social media profile. When it comes to the character of your profile, your desired market will determine your approach. Millennials love authenticity, but older patients might prefer a more straightforward approach. "They want that professional distance, they're used to that and they're comfortable with that," said Mr Solar. What you don't say is as important as what you do say, he adds. "Imagine that you're sitting in your waiting room, and you've got a whole bunch of patients, and you're answering some questions. Imagine that everything that's being discussed is being broadcast on every single radio station in the area. Not only that, but there are also cameras, and they're broadcasting everything that's happening on television as well." That gives a hint of the potential reach of your social media platform. "We've all seen things that we laugh at, and sometimes groan and grimace at; this is not something that we want if it's something we don't want representing our practice properly. With that rule in mind, they really can't go wrong," Mr Solar explains. Finally, once you've got your head around all the current options, what's next? Social messaging, live video and virtual reality. It may seem far off, but don't be surprised if patients start asking for advice over WhatsApp in the not-toodistant future. After that, you may be guiding patients through your practice while they remain in the comfort of their own home. "Inviting someone into your practice and having them walk around it, goes well beyond a virtual tour. This creates a virtual reality kind of experience, which might lead to more adoption," Mr Solar concluded. This article is based on an EuroTimes Eye Contact interview. See here for more: http://bit.ly/eurotimes-pm-rs

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