ASDS Social Media 101 Guide

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Social Media 101

Why is social media important?

Social media is now a top health care resource for your patients. It establishes a personal relationship between you and your existing patients, and it can build trust with potential patients. Studies show that people are two times as likely to use social media for health care information, and 40 percent say social media affects the way they deal with their health.[1] A strong social media presence with a high following and engagement can set you up to be a go-to resource for media and industry. This can lead to other advantages including great visibility to news reporters, magazine writers and television producers who are constantly looking for the top experts in any given field and for companies looking for qualified spokespersons for their products.

With social media, the return on investment depends on how much effort is put into creating quality content and engaging with others. Posting engaging content, including before and after photos and treatment videos, not only helps educate the public, it generates buzz about your services and directs traffic to your website. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat and Pinterest have become a major part of consumer culture as they allow businesses – including medical practices – to reach the public directly, build credibility, get news out quickly and advertise for little to no cost. With up to 2.23 billion daily active users, most between the ages of 18 and 35, social media is crucial to successful branding.

Types of Social Media Platforms

	Most Popular Age Demographic[2]	Text Posts	Photos / Videos	Live Video Broadcast	Direct (Private) Messages	Story
Facebook	30-49	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Twitter	18-29	✓	✓	-	✓	-
Instagram	18-29	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
YouTube	18-29	-	Video	✓	-	If >10k subscribers
Snapchat	18-29	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pinterest	30-49	-	✓	-	✓	-
LinkedIn	30-49	✓	✓	-	✓	-

Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn are primarily used for sharing text-based posts, oftentimes accompanied by a photo or video, and can include hyperlinks to other websites. Events can be created to promote practice happenings like free skin cancer screenings or in-office demonstrations of new treatments.

Instagram, Snapchat and Pinterest are image based and require a photo or video with every post. Snapchat posts expire after 24 hours; there is not a place for other users to go back and review previous posts.

In addition to a user's traditional chronological feed of past posts, a "Story" feature on Facebook and Instagram allows users to post a photo or video for 24 hours. YouTube creators with more than 10,000 subscribers can post stories.

Where to Start

Each social network provides important benefits for your practice's presence and growth. However, if you're just starting out on social media or you're promoting a brand new practice, Facebook and Instagram would be best as they have the largest daily users and are both visually engaging. This means that beauty and skin care content perform very well. Sign up for both platforms using the same email address, then use the Instagram app to connect the two and **simultaneously post to both platforms**.

General Tips and tricks

- Ensure all your social media accounts are set to public. A private account gives you more control over who follows you and can see your content, and it prevents people from "cyber stalking" without liking your posts. However, it may also restrict your digital following and engagement, especially when tagging another user, and is typically not ideal for a starting practice.
- Use a consistent branding message across all platforms by standardizing elements such as font style, color, logos and graphic use.
- Cover and profile images should have a professional look.
- Use hashtags – words preceded by # – to join the conversation on a common topic and show up in searches. Hashtags allow people to search for posts on a common topic (examples: #dermatology #BoardCertified #SkinCancer #SkinCare #beauty). You can also brand yourself or your practice with your own hashtag (ASDS uses #ASDSSkinMD on consumer-facing posts).
- Reply to other users and tag them in conversations by typing @ followed by their username to increase online interaction.

References

1. *Source: getreferralmd.com/2013/09/healthcare-social-media-statistics published Sept. 2013*
2. *Source: pewinternet.org/fact-sheet/social-media published June 12, 2019*

Social Account Set Up Guide

It is best practice to have the same username across all social media channels. Do some research on each platform before creating any accounts to see whether your desired username is available.

Create a Facebook Page

Facebook Pages are for businesses, brands, organizations and public figures to share their stories and connect with people. Like profiles, Pages can be customized with stories, events and more. People who like or follow a Page can get updates in their News Feed. To create a Page:

1. Go to *facebook.com/pages/creation*.
2. Click to choose a Page type, such as Local Business or Brand.
3. Fill out the required information including Page Name and Category, such as Health or Beauty.
4. Click Get Started to agree to Facebook's terms and follow the on-screen instructions.
5. Upload a profile picture, which accompanies your business name in search results and when you interact with users. It also appears on the top left of your Facebook Page. This could be your practice's logo or your professional headshot. Keep in mind that your Page's profile picture will be cropped to a circular shape in ads and posts, but will remain a square shape when people visit your Page.
6. Upload a cover photo, the most prominent image on your Facebook Business Page. This image should capture the essence of your practice and convey your brand personality.
7. Complete the About section with a detailed description of your business so people understand what you do, your street address, phone number, website URL, list your services, business hours and a call to action button such as "Learn More" or "Schedule an Appointment".
8. Explore "Settings" where you can create a username (also called a vanity URL; it should be short and easy to remember) and turn on messaging for your Page so users can send private messages to ask questions.
9. Create your first post! Make sure to share valuable content before inviting people to like the Page. You can create some of your own posts, or share relevant content from others, such as ASDS Skin MD.
10. Invite patients and people you know to like your new Page!

Questions? Visit Facebook's Help Center at *facebook.com/help*.

Facebook Tips

- Your address, phone number and website need to be clearly visible.
- Prominently feature the ability for followers to "Request an Appointment."
- Create photo and/or video albums to categorize your media. Albums could be procedure types, treatment areas, before/after photos or specific products.
- Create Facebook Events to promote your in-person or virtual events. This can increase your engagement rate and help you get more involved in the community.
- Quickly reply to direct messages in order for Facebook to show your typical response time to followers (they will be more likely to message you if they see that they should get a response within the day or hour).
- Target your posts to a specific audience by paying to promote or boost a post. Sponsored posts and Facebook ads offer a low cost-per-lead and get you in front of the right users.
- Explore special features of Facebook, such as the Videos and Services tabs, where you can list the services your practice offers complete with before and after photos and videos.
- Include links in the "About" section to your YouTube channel and Instagram account.

Content supported by Jennifer Kilkenny of Total Solutions, an internet marketing agency dedicated to aesthetic medical practices. Visit *TotalSocialSolutions.com* or email *info@totalsocialsolutions.com* for a free evaluation.

Create a Twitter Account

1. Visit *twitter.com/signup*.
2. Name your account. Your Twitter username is your unique identifier on Twitter and URL for *twitter.com*. It can contain up to 15 characters and is permanent once chosen. Provide either a phone number or email address and then follow the prompts to confirm your account.
3. Upload a profile picture, which is shown on your profile and next to every post.
4. Upload a header image, which is like your personal billboard and can be changed periodically to spotlight promotions or events.
5. Complete your bio using a maximum of 160 characters, including spaces and punctuation.
6. Send your first Tweet! Use no more than 280 characters (including spaces, punctuation and URLs).

Questions? Visit *help.twitter.com*.

> **Twitter Tips**
> - Posts can be 280 characters in length, including the URL text.
> - Use the website *bit.ly* to shorten and customize URLs (example: *bit.ly/AmazonSmileASDS*). This will also allow you to track hyperlink clicks.

Create an Instagram Business Account

Having a Business Account on Instagram allows you to get insights and real-time metrics about your stories, posts and followers. To post a photo or video to your feed:

1. Download and open the Instagram app on your smartphone.
2. Tap Sign up and enter your email address or login with an existing Facebook account.
3. Go to your profile, tap the settings (gear icon) and scroll to "Switch to Business Account." If desired, connect your account to an existing Facebook Page and / or Twitter account to post simultaneously from Instagram.
4. Add pertinent business information to your profile, like business address, email address and phone number.
5. Post a photo or video! Each post's description can include up to 2,200 characters and 30 hashtags (see general tips for details).
6. You can also begin a live broadcast by swiping right from the home screen of the app.

Instagram Stories provide a fun and creative way to build brand awareness, drive traffic to your website and increase your engagement rate. Stories live at the top of your followers' feeds (home page of app) for 24 hours, however you can permanently archive them in "highlights", which are albums located underneath the bio on your account's profile. Each highlight can have a customized, branded cover and be categorized Business accounts can:

- Access story insight data, including engagement rates and audience analytics, for the following 14 days.
- Share other users' stories in which they are tagged, such as patient testimonials. You will receive an automated direct message when a user tags you in his/her story.
- Customize highlight covers to their brand and categorize each highlight, for example by procedure type, treatment area or type of post (e.g., skin care tips or before/after photos).
- React or reply to other users' stories to start a direct message conversation.

- Attach a hyperlink to each story and encourage users to swipe up on their screen to access it directly in the Instagram app (must have at least 10,000 followers).

Questions? Visit *business.instagram.com*.

Instagram Tips
- Videos must be less than one minute and should not fade in from black.
- Landscape-oriented images can be cropped so they are not cut off in Instagram's square format.
- The only clickable URL you can share is housed in your bio. Many users indicate "Link in bio!" in their posts' description to provide easy access for more information. To avoid changing this URL frequently (and accommodate older posts referencing a link), it is recommended you use a landing page to host all your links. This could be hosted on your website (see *asds.net/skin-md-bio-links*) or through a third party service such as Link Tree, Linkin.bio, Lnk.Bio or Shorby.

Create a YouTube Channel

1. Visit *YouTube.com/create_channel*. You will need a Google Account to sign into YouTube. If you already have a Google Account, you can create a Brand Account for your new channel with a different name than your Google Account. Click "Create account" if you don't have a Google Account.
2. Click "Create a new channel" and fill out the details to name your new channel and verify your account. Note your channel name is not your URL; to claim a custom / vanity YouTube URL, you must have at least 100 subscribers, among other requirements.
3. Pick a photo for your profile picture and one for your "channel art," which is the header image on your YouTube webpage.
4. Click on the About tab to add a channel description and hyperlinks to your website and other social media accounts.
5. Click the gear icon to adjust your settings and customize your channel's layout.
6. Post your first video!

Questions? Visit *support.google.com/youtube*.

YouTube Tips
- Fill out the default video description so that every video automatically includes your practice bio, contact information and other social handles so they can follow you everywhere!
- Choose a catchy title and flattering thumbnail image, or upload your own custom image.
- Create public playlists to categorize your videos (example: patient demos and FAQ).
- Be concise, conversational and solicit feedback by asking viewers to "comment below."

Create a Snapchat Account

1. Visit *accounts.snapchat.com* and click Create Account.
2. Enter the required information including your name, username, password, cell phone number and follow the prompts to verify your account. Your username cannot be changed after you've created it.
3. Accept the terms and verify your account by installing and logging into the Snapchat app on a smartphone.
4. Start snapping!

Questions? Visit *support.snapchat.com*.

Snapchat Tips
- All posts will disappear after 24 hours; save them to your memories and camera roll to share on another social platform.
- Allow followers to chat with you if you want to interact with them or respond to their comments.
- In selfie mode, tap on your face to launch fun filters for a lighthearted post.
- Attach a URL to your post and encourage followers to "swipe up" for more details.

Create a Business Pinterest Page

1. Visit *pinterest.com/business/create* and follow the prompts.
2. Choose a Business Type (most likely "Local Business").
3. Add a contact name, email address and password.
4. Name your page, create a username, upload a profile picture, add a brief description and your website URL. Following the steps to verify your website is important because it allows you to have your URL in your Pinterest header so visitors can find you more easily.
5. You're ready to start pinning!

Pinterest Tips
- Categorize your posts into different boards (example: cosmetic and skin cancer).
- Create visually appealing photos as your pin's thumbnail to draw interest, versus the network automatically pulling an image from the website you are sharing.

Create a LinkedIn Company Page

1. You must first create a LinkedIn profile with your real first and last name before you can complete the below steps to create a Company Page. Visit *LinkedIn.com/start/join* to enter your email address and create a password for your personal account.
2. Click the Work icon at the top right corner of your LinkedIn home page and click the + to Create a Company Page.
3. Enter the required information, including company name and desired URL, and confirm you have the right to act on behalf of the company. Note the URL requirements, such as no double hyphens.
4. To publish your Company Page, you must include a company description (maximum 2,000 characters including spaces) and company website URL. You should also upload a logo and cover image.

Questions? Visit *LinkedIn.com/help*.

LinkedIn Tips
- This platform tends to be more professional, like a digital resume or CV, allowing you to connect with colleagues from your personal profile and with patients through a company page.
- Join groups to ask peers what digital marketing efforts worked best for them.

What Content to Post

Remember that your patients are primarily on social media to catch up with friends and family, not to shop for products or services. Resist the temptation to promote yourself and your practice all the time. Repeated promotional or self-serving posts can be a huge turn-off to your patients.

Post about subjects that you know your patients are interested in, such as skin care and general health and wellness information. Make sure your posts are professional, a bit personal and reflect your practice's "voice." If appropriate for your practice, share a personal side as this can make you feel more relatable to your current and prospective patients.

Here are some ideas for generating high-engagement posts on your social media channels:
- Answer frequently asked questions.
    - How much water should you drink each day to keep your skin clear and healthy?
    - What two areas of your body show signs of aging first?
    - What's the difference between neuromodulators and fillers?
    - Why is it important to see a board-certified dermatologist?
    - How much sunscreen do you really need?
- Post polls and surveys.
    - Which celebrity has the best skin?
    - Be honest, how often do YOU get a skin cancer screening?
    - What is your biggest skin care concern?
- Share web articles.
    - Educate followers on skin conditions and treatments from *asds.net* and ASDS Skin Experts Newsletters, available at *asds.net/branding*.
    - Articles on general health and wellness from reputable online sources such as *WebMD.com*.
    - Add your own commentary to news story links.
- Share blog articles.
    - Write and share all of your own blog articles and media interviews.
    - Post articles from a local beauty blogger for additional PR exposure in your local area…they might even reach out to you for their next blog!
    - Share your e-newsletter using the "View in browser" link.
- Link to videos.
    - Make your own YouTube videos discussing different treatment options, demonstrating after-care procedures or how to do a self-exam for skin cancer.
    - Share the Society's videos, such as the importance of board certification or various patient education topics.
- Add photos.
    - Upload before-and-after photos of your patients (first be sure you have signed consent forms for media use).
    - Post pictures of your office and staff.
    - Share personal photos, like medical school graduation.
- Share motivational images and quotes.
    - Create your own or share from other pages for engagement.

- Share stories of people who fought and beat skin cancer (they don't have to be your patients).
- Offer "flash" deals.
  - Have a last-minute cancellation? Post a discount promo code exclusive to your social media followers.
  - Is there a specific time of day usually left open? Create a discount offer for that time period.
- Schedule monthly promotions.
  - Tell your followers about monthly specials and membership programs.
  - Create social media exclusive promotions to incentivize your audience.
- Post your events.
  - Special educational sessions.
  - Free skin cancer screenings through Choose Skin Health.
  - Vendor-supported events.
  - Charitable events or fundraisers.
- Discuss local happenings.
  - Local community events.
  - Deals at partner businesses (have them do this for you in return).
- Brand your content.
  - Customize your content with your own branding, including use of your practice name, logo and style guide. Though name-dropping manufacturers and standard marketing materials from vendors will help your social media marketing, you should use as much of your own branding as possible.
  - The goal is for followers to associate your practice with the best treatment available. This is more effective and engaging than simply using vendor-created marketing resources.

Best Practices for Successful Posts

Should I use my personal social media profile for my practice?
No. If you have personal social media accounts, you should set up a separate social media accounts for your professional branding and / or your practice.

How much time does it take, and can I delegate or automate social media management?
You will have to put a lot more time in initially in setup and promotion. Eventually, you can maintain your success through daily posts, exclusive promotions and engagement with your audience.

Your practice manager or marketing team can run the account on your behalf, posting and responding to followers. Or you may find it more cost-effective and efficient to delegate this to a professional agency that knows dermatologic surgery and understands your target audience.

You can also automate your posts through scheduling services, such as Hootsuite, Tweet Deck and Sprout Social, which allow you to schedule posts in advance, view all streams from all networks in one place and engage with followers.

How often should I post?
Consider posting at the same time every week so your followers will know to expect and even look forward to your posts. Each social network is used differently, and the frequency of your posts will vary. ASDS recommends:
- Facebook, Instagram – Daily or every other day
- Twitter, Snapchat – Multiple times a day for maximum impact
- YouTube, Pinterest, LinkedIn – Weekly if possible.

Do I need to read every comment on my posts?
Social media goes beyond simply posting and broadcasting to your audience; it works best when you interact with them. To create that trustworthy bond, your followers need to see that there's a real person behind the screen. Engage with them by commenting or replying, sharing and liking their posts. Take five minutes a day to scan through your notifications and boost the interaction.

What reputation issues should I be concerned about on social media?
Your personal and practice's actions on social media (or any online forum) do carry the risk to negatively affect your reputation and may even create legal consequences. If you have any questions, you should consult with your attorney. You should err on the side of caution if you are ever unsure about what you're posting. Refer to the Society's Social Media Guidelines for more details.

What role does HIPAA play?
HIPAA does govern your social media activity. Your practice should maintain appropriate boundaries of the patient-physician relationship when interacting with patients online and ensure patient privacy and confidentiality are maintained. Do not post about specific cases or reveal any patient data. It is critical that you not offer medical advice or any remedy that would require a doctor visit first! Instead, encourage followers to come in for a consultation. Refer to the Society's Social Media Guidelines for more details.

ASDS Social Media Guidelines

Social media is a powerful communication tool that has changed the way the world shares information. It allows everyone to have a voice and share information instantly; however, there are potential risks. The ASDS Social Media Guidelines are designed to educate members on social media practices for promoting and responsibly sharing the Society's content and messaging that align with ASDS positions and values.

ASDS / ASDSA Social Media Guidelines:
asds.net/Portals/0/PDF/secure/Social-Media-Guidelines.pdf.

ASDS / ASDSA Social Media Ambassador Program

Be recognized as an expert.
ASDS / ASDSA Social Media Ambassadors increase the visibility of the specialty – with the public and other ASDS members – and simultaneously build their own personal brand by promoting their ASDS membership and sharing their skin knowledge with social media audiences. Ambassadors receive regular emails from ASDS with social media content to share and timely topics to support patient education or member-facing efforts.

Program Details and Requirements:
asds.net/Social-Media-Ambassador

Registration Form:
derm.formstack.com/forms/social_ambassador

Glossary

A

@ — The @ symbol is used to tag or reply to another social media user.

Algorithm — A rules-based procedure for making calculations or solving problems. In social media, algorithms are constantly updated by social networks to control which content its users do and do not see, as well as what topics and hashtags are trending.

B

Block — A privacy setting that eliminates all types of contact and interaction with another social media user. Once one user blocks another user, neither of them can follow, message, tag or search for one another while logged into that account. Generally, the blocked user will not receive a notification that he/she has been blocked. Blocking can be used to remove troublesome or harassing followers.

Blog — Blogs are written posts maintained by an individual or company who creates regular entries of commentary or descriptions of events and can include graphics, videos and/or hyperlinks to other webpages. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse chronological order. The word blog can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content (*e.g., I'm blogging about a recent ASDS event I attended*).

C

Caption — A brief description that appears beneath a photo on Facebook or Instagram. It can contain hashtags.

Comment — A comment is a response that is often provided as an answer or reaction to a blog post or message on a social network. Comments are a primary form of communication on the social web.

D

DM — A direct message (DM) is a private message sent from one social media user to another. DMs go directly to the recipient's inbox and don't appear in the either users' public feed/stream.

E

Emoji — Small images or icons used to convey a wide spectrum of emotions or activities. Emojis make posts unique and fun.

Engagement — Interacting with other social media users and can include commenting, replying, messaging or sharing. An engagement rate is a valuable metric that measures the level of engagement a piece of created content is receiving from an audience. It shows how much people interact with the content and can be used to gauge the success of a social media user's presence or digital campaign.

F

Feed or newsfeed —The social media data format that provides users with a steady stream of updates and information. A user's feed includes content from accounts he/she follows, related content using algorithms and/or sponsored content..

Filter — A photographic effect that can be applied to photos and videos prior to publishing. They can simple black-and-white or sepia color tones, or they can use face recognition to create fun effects like flower crowns and puppy ears or face distortion. Filter popularity has resulted in the hashtag #nofilter, a proud declaration that the post is raw and unedited.

Follower or fan — A social media user who is subscribed to an account. Followers are a social media account's audience that see posts in their news feed and can enable notifications for an account's posts.

Forum — Also known as a message board, a forum is an online discussion site. Forums originated as the modern equivalent of a traditional bulletin board, and evolved from the dial-up-based bulletin board system.

H
Handle — Username or profile name that signifies a user's online identity. Using a consistent handle across all social media accounts is best practice for branding and helps with discoverability among other users.

Hashtag — A hashtag uses the # symbol at the beginning of a word or phrase to mark a certain topic in a post so that people searching for it can easily find it. Hashtags are usually clickable, meaning clicking on or searching for #dermatology will provide a search result with all public posts that are tagged with #dermatology, including those from accounts you do not follow. Hashtags cannot include spaces or punctuation.

HootSuite — A scheduling and analytics tool for various social media platforms. HootSuite (and competing products) make it easy for someone to manage multiple social media accounts across numerous platforms through the advanced scheduling of posts and ability to view metrics.

I
Influencer — A social media user with a significant audience (large amount of followers) and is therefore influential in driving awareness to certain trend or topics.

K
KPI — Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are metrics that measure how a social media account is performing.

L
Like — A quick action that can be made by a user instead of writing a comment to show approval of another user's post. Facebook has implemented reactions that include like, love, sad, laughing, surprised and angry.

Notification — A message or update regarding a new social media activity. This can often be set up as a smartphone push notification or an email alert.

O
Organic Reach — The number of unique users who view your content without paid promotion.

P

Podcast — A regularly scheduled audio recording series that can be a news or talk show.

Post — A social media status update or blog entry.

Private — A setting on a social media account that protects content from the public. Users must request to follow private accounts in order to view the content.

Profile — The self-provided information about the social media user or account that is completed when registering to use a social media platform and can be updated at any time in the future. An account's profile includes a photo, short biography, contact information and/or a website URL, interests, and tags to help people search for like-minded people.

R

Retweet or RT — A Twitter post that is shared by another account to its followers.

Response Rate — The average length of time taken to reply to a message or comment. A fast response rate can signify an account's activity or engagement level.

S

Social Media — Content designed to be disseminated through social interaction, created using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques.

Sponsored — Promoted or paid content that is targeted to a specific audience. Many sponsored advertisements or posts are indicated as such and/or are marked in the caption (*e.g., #ad*).

Stories —A form of temporary content that disappears after 24 hours but can often be archived for future viewing. Stories are separate from a user's feed and provides near real-time sharing of text, photos or videos.

T

Tag — A is a relevant keyword or term associated with or assigned to a post, categorizing it among related content. A tag can also link a social media user to a post, associating that account with the content. Many networks allow the ability for users to remove unwanted tags from their profile.

Trending — A topic or hashtag that is popular on social media at any given moment. Trends encourage discussion and engagement among users. Some networks personalize the trends for each user through algorithms that consider a user's location, liked content and/or who the user follows.

Tweet — A post made on Twitter by a user.

U

Unfollow — Removing a subscription to another user's account, ending the connection between the accounts. Also known as de-friending.

V

Vanity URL — A webpage URL that is branded or customized. Vanity hyperlinks redirect to another webpage with a longer URLs *(e.g., asds.net/find)*. Vanity hyperlinks are easier to share on social networks, look much cleaner, are easier for followers to remember and won't take up as much space in a post's character count. There are many free services for URL shortening and/or customizing that also provide statistics like number of clicks (*e.g., bit.ly/ASDSExpertsGuide*).

Verified — An account whose owner has proven its identity with the social media network, generally reserved for brands or public figures as a way of preventing fraud and protecting the integrity of the person or organization/brand that owns the account.

Vlog — A social media user who creates video blogs.