

Journal of Neurotherapy: Investigations in Neuromodulation, Neurofeedback and Applied Neuroscience

Editorial

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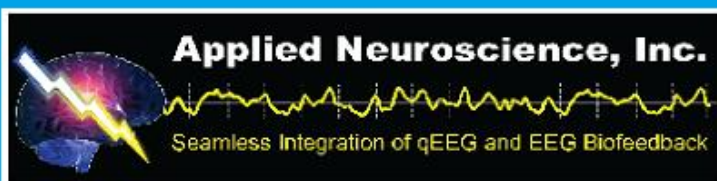
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EDITORIAL

During my 3-year tenure on the ISNR Board of Directors, the topic of marketing came up fairly regularly. It was generally in response to members of the organization expressing their concerns that the Board was not doing an effective job of promoting the field or had somehow failed to take advantage of an opportunity to respond to some event or incident in the press or in a related field. The fact of the matter was that the Board almost always had tried to do something and had spent a considerable amount of time and some money in seeking ways to better promote the field. It just seemed that our efforts were usually such tiny chimes in a blaring cacophony of trumpets funded by endless torrents of money for advertising. It is my belief that every issue of this journal has something in it that is worth shouting from the rooftops but that more often is simply drowned out by the slick and semidishonest big bucks advertising campaigns.

So I was fascinated by the results of a research report published on consumerelectronicsnet.com examining consumer's general attitudes and behaviors toward brands in social media.

This qualitative social media study used a purpose-built private social network to conduct in-depth discussions with hundreds of people aged 18–50 in nine countries: Australia, Brazil, China, Colombia, Czech Republic, India, South Africa, United Kingdom and the United States. Respondents were segmented into two groups: “Moderates” (lighter users of social media) and “Mavens” (heavier, savvier users of social media). . . . “Consumers want a dialogue where brands listen to what they have to say rather than just push their messages out without taking into account what consumers think, feel and want,” comments Rob Hernandez,

global brand director, Firefly Millward Brown. “They dislike gimmicks and want companies to be honest about their products and services, warts and all. Consumers’ biggest fear is that marketers will turn social media from a community into a marketplace.”

The reason for my fascination with this subject for the field of neurofeedback and applied neuroscience is that we as a field are struggling with a lack of branding as well as a lack of funding. And social media is potentially the great leveler. Developing a distinct presence and “brand” in social media does not require huge amounts of money. In fact, this research study highlights that the folks with all the money are not succeeding in the world of social media. They are seeking to enter into that world with the same tactics of brute force that have worked so effectively for them in the world of mass media.

This study suggests that smaller groups providing products and services that grasp the idea of community and can find ways to invite people into conversation and exploration will end up being the winners in this battle for consumer loyalty.

The research provided “10 Rules for Engaging with Social Media”:

1. Don't recreate your homepage in social media.
2. Listen first, then talk: create a dialogue.
3. Build trust by being open and honest.
4. Give your brand a face.
5. Offer something of value.
6. Be relevant.
7. Talk like a friend not a *corporate* entity.
8. Give consumers some control.
9. Let consumers find you/come to you.
10. Let consumers talk for you.

“And the young shall lead them.” Many of us in the field are very comfortable with computers, though they arrived late on the scene for some of us. Not many of us “more mature” types are all that comfortable in the social media world. Little by little I see more of my neurofeedback friends and colleagues appearing on Facebook, but their numbers pale in comparison to my students. However, one of the heartening things I noticed at our annual conference in Denver was the number of young faces in the audience and among the presenters. You young people understand and thrive in the world of social media. You can lead the way. You can help the field become a presence in social media in the way this research indicates will be most effective. It is just possible that we in fact have the upper hand in this contest, and if we pursue it with passion and dedication we will finally establish the field as the truly wonderful healing presence that we all know it is.

As you read this issue, think about how you might share some of the tremendous research presented to the world of social media so as to encompass the ten rules just listed. Then share those ideas and help us to institute them in such a way as to invite the dialogue and create the community that will brand us as healers.

Randall R. Lyle
Senior Editor

REFERENCE

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