

# PLASTIC SURGERY PRACTICE

## Social Studies with Wendy Lewis: Navigating today's digital touch points

Published on February 24, 2015

By Wendy Lewis

If you still don't know what "insta" stands for, think Vine is where grapes grow, and/or break out in a cold sweat when someone comes near you with a selfie stick, stay calm and read on.

This article is meant for you.

There are so many social media outlets now, and new ones pop up regularly. Don't get overwhelmed. Keep it simple, and start with the mandatory platforms that make the most sense for your practice and target the right audience(s). Ask yourself if your target audience—patients you want to reach—are active on that platform prior to investing time and money on it.

Here are some of the key platforms, along with intel on how they work and who they cater to.

### **LinkedIn Logistics**

If you're not on LinkedIn, you should be there in two ways. First, as an individual Profile to connect with all the people you have met or worked with professionally. You can network, share professional advice, hire staff, and enlist consultants. Think of it like a contact database or a digital Rolodex. It makes it easier to keep up with people you know and find out where they are now. Second, create a Company page for your practice. The best ways to be active on LinkedIn are to join groups that are relevant to your practice and interests, and to comment on discussions.

To maintain visibility on this powerful platform, post periodic updates and comment on updates posted by others. However, unlike Facebook and Twitter, it is neither required nor requested that you post daily.

### **Are You Likeable?**

Facebook is the number one global social media network. It is a virtual meeting ground where friends, family, and colleagues come to read what you choose to share. There is a cap on how many "friends" you can collect—5,000 for a profile. Business pages are limitless, and that is where the information about your practice needs to be. Facebook is the ideal outlet to keep up with your most loyal patients.

There are two features on Facebook that resonate most with aesthetic practices: targeted ads, and the newest innovation from Team Zuck—Call-To-Action (CTA). If you want to be successful on Facebook, these are tailor-made to promote your practice. Boosting posts to the right audience and promoting your page through geotargeted ads can be money well spent and easily tracked through Facebook insights.

The new CTA feature allows you direct fans to go to pages that are important to your business. Choices include: Book Now, Contact Us, Use App, Play Game, Shop Now, Sign Up, and Watch Video. For the moment this feature is free, but it has not been launched across the platform yet, so stay tuned.

## **Twitter Your Thumbs**

Twitter has 284 million monthly active users worldwide and 100 million daily active users worldwide, producing 500 million tweets every day. Celebrities, politicians, media, and other influencers are entrenched in this real-time platform. Surprisingly, Twitter skews older. Young, hip millennials are not big on Twitter or Facebook right now; they are, however, obsessed with Instagram. Like everything about social media, these trends tend to be fluid and can change on a fairly regular basis.

Think of Twitter as a conduit for disseminating information to others who share similar interests. It allows you to have a voice and follow people who are relevant to you, such as organizations you belong to, the US Food and Drug Administration, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, media, colleagues, local businesses, etc. Twitter has beefed up its ad offerings, and is eager to help small businesses become more active. Without some form of active promotion, it is painfully slow and frustrating to get past the 2,000 cap on the followers-versus-following ratio.

## **Video Killed the Radio Star**

Owned by Google, YouTube is all about video. You can find everything on YouTube, from newscasts to commercials and instructional videos. It is no longer optional to use video to promote your practice; it is 100% required. Create a YouTube channel in your brand's name to add content for your customers. You can then feature this video content across all of your other platforms for marketing as well.

Vine is a popular short form video platform that was acquired by Twitter.

Humans are inherently lazy, and it would appear that we don't even have the bandwidth to read more than 140 characters anymore. Twitter recently added an option to include video, which further emphasizes the rise of video over plain text. Vine is a popular short form video platform that was acquired by Twitter. It allows users to record and edit 5- to 6-second-long looping video clips, and to "revine," or share, others' posts with followers.

If 6 seconds is too long for you, consider SnapChat, which is a photo messaging app for use on phones to take photos, record videos, add text and drawings, and send them to a list of recipients of your choice. Once the recipient sees it, the content vanishes.

## **Pretty on Pinterest**

If your practice can be captured in beautifully designed images, and you have someone on board with a flair for creating these images, consider Pinterest. For example, if you have products to sell, cosmetics, skin care, and makeup are all popular topics on Pinterest, which tends to skew largely young and female (18-35), but reaches Boomers, too. Be warned: These graphics take time to curate and manipulate, and may not be the best investment for an aesthetics practice unless you are actively selling products or have multiple locations.

## **Instasales**

Owned by Facebook, "Insta" (which is slang for Instagram) is now 200 million strong, and 50 million Instagrammers have joined within the past 6 months, confirming the growing popularity of this photo sharing

app. It has become the platform of choice for teens and twenty-somethings in the US and skews equally among women and men. The rise of Insta marks the decline of Facebook in this powerful demographic.

Getting started on Insta is challenging because it requires something to take pictures of (and I don't mean before-and-after pics of patients). Insta users are elitists when it comes to photos; only the best and most attractive will get liked and shared. So, if you have someone on board who is a master at photo manipulation with a good eye for what's trending, Insta is only getting bigger, more important, and influential. It is also being used to promote flash sales and events, and it can really amplify a brand in an über creative way.

Social media offers many fresh and exciting ways to communicate with people who know you and to attract new people who want to get to know you. It is better to use just a few of these platforms well and gain results, rather than dabbling in them all.



*Wendy Lewis is president of Wendy Lewis & Co Ltd, Global Aesthetics Consultancy, [www.wendylewisco.com](http://www.wendylewisco.com), founder/editor in chief of [beautyinthebag.com](http://beautyinthebag.com), and a contributing editor to *Plastic Surgery Practice*. She can be reached at [wl@wlbeauty.com](mailto:w1@wlbeauty.com).*

**All New!**

"Social Studies with Wendy Lewis" is Plastic Surgery Practice's newest column. It features actionable insights from Lewis, whose latest book, *Aesthetic Clinic Marketing in the Digital Age*, is slated to be published in June 2015.