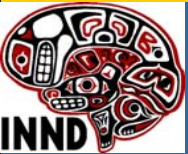


Tox Talks



Using social media to increase public awareness on environmental toxins



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Abstract:

The Institute of Neurotoxicity and Neurological Disorders is composed of three major programs, Healthy World Press, Toxipedia, and IPMopedia (Integrated Pest Management). The goal of these programs is to utilize up to date research on environmental toxins to help people make more conscientious decisions about toxic exposures. As the research and outreach intern my job is to utilize multiple communicative platforms, such as using Facebook to connect to similar organizations and create a following of interested individuals. Also creating a blogs to provide a user friendly news feed on up to date information concerning environmental toxins, and digitizing hard copy toxin related literature, uploading it on an easy to use website and making the information more interactive. By creating multiple options for people to access toxin related pertinent information, we aim to increase the amount of people who are interested in toxin related research, which will be monitored by the numbers of people who follow our facebook page, twitter account, Toxipedia blog, newsletter and visit the main website.

Introduction:

In our modern world, social media has become one of the most effective ways to transmit information. It allows us to communicate in a way that is inexpensive and relatively accessible for anyone to reach, collect and distribute information. According to facebook.com, facebook has more than 500 million active users who all together spend over 700 billion minutes per month using the site. And now with the addition of blogs, twitter, and LinkedIn more and more people are finding a reason to join a social network. Social networking has now grown into an amazing marketing tool where businesses can introduce their product or service to large groups of people.

As the research and outreach intern for the Institute of Neurotoxicity and Neurological disease (INND) my job is to not only research current breakthroughs in the world of toxicology, but to figure out how to make this information accessible to those who would be interested. Therefore we have decided to utilize social networking as a means to increase our community and gain additional support.



Methods:

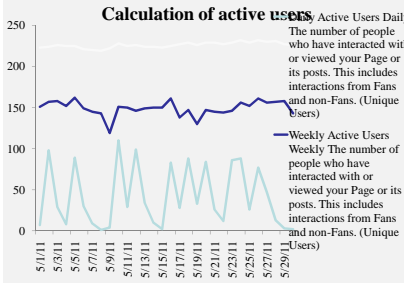
- Allows for us to collect interested followers and create a space for up and coming toxicology experts to share their ideas and opinions on current
- Began by contacting subscribers of our weekly newsletter to invite them to become one of our "friend or partners".
- As a friend or partner we agree to mention their product or service on our website, along with any upcoming events or announcements they may have.
- Creating a website that is more interactive and user friendly.
- This includes digitizing all literature so that research becomes easier and every page displays links to additional information
- Establishing a blog.

The benefits of social media marketing

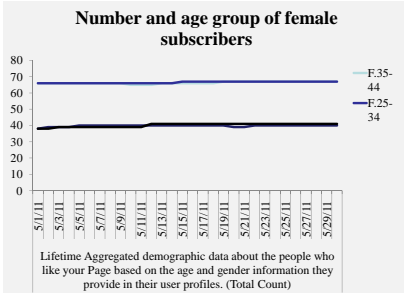
- generated exposure for my business
- increased my traffic/subscribers/sign up list
- resulted in new business partnerships
- helped us rise in the search rankings
- generated qualified leads
- reduced my overall marketing expenses
- helped me close business

YouTube, LinkedIn, twitter, facebook, flickr

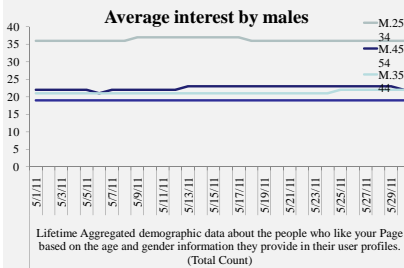
Results:



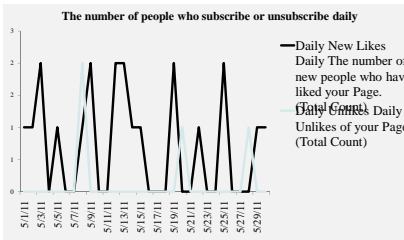
Graph illustrates the number of readers who regularly check the site, according to graph we have an average of 42 readers who check site daily, 149 readers who check the site weekly and 226 readers who check the site monthly.



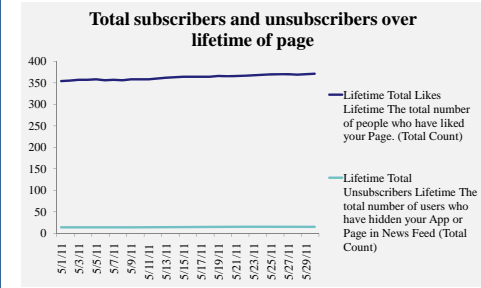
Graph shows the number of female subscribers between the ages of 25- 55+ based on the information they provided in their user profiles.



Graph shows the number of male subscribers between the ages of 25- 55+ based on the information they provided in their user profiles.



A graph illustrating the number of new subscribers/ unsubscriptions daily



Displays data on total number if subscribers over the lifetime of our facebook page and the total number of unsubscribers.



Effectiveness of different social media outlets, and the difference in actual results vs. expected results

Conclusions:

As a result of using social media to extend our support base we have already began to see progress. According to our data we gain an average of one new subscriber each day. Also we have more female subscribers versus male subscribers overall, and our most active age group is the 25-34 age bracket. According to the trends, our readership increases with every additional day that our pages are accessible via the web. Based on the information we can now consider additional marketing efforts to target those communities.

Similar studies have been done which reinforce the findings that social media allows for participants to join a worthy cause. Creating a social media platform such as a facebook page, helps to deepen relationships by allowing everyone who subscribes to the page to take part in discussions and share their personal experiences. As our community continues to grow, we intend to utilize the space to host more fund raising activities.

Acknowledgements:

Nick Thorp- useful outreach suggestions, and affiliate group recommendations
 Maria Williams – completing all necessary editing work, and overseeing all outreach projects