



An Interview with Social Media Healthcare Expert, Daniel Ghinn, Founder & CEO of Creation Healthcare; Editor of Healthcare Engagement Strategy eJournal

Social Media in the Pharmaceutical Industry returns to London in January 2016 for its 8th annual show and is proud to be chaired by Creation Healthcare's CEO, Daniel Ghinn.

Daniel Ghinn has been leading and tracking digital health innovation since the late 1990's when he co-founded Creation Healthcare. Since then he has advised many of the world's largest pharmaceutical and health organisations on healthcare engagement in the digital age, including health providers, policy makers, and the World Health Organization.



In 2013, Daniel invented Creation Pinpoint, a service for learning from healthcare professionals in public social media. Built on a proprietary technology platform, Creation Pinpoint analyses to public social media conversations among more than 175,000 doctors, nurses and pharmacists worldwide and is now used by most of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies.

Strengthen your social media platform and hear more from Daniel Ghinn in his opening keynote presentation that will evaluate engagement strategies and global interaction, as well as discuss the perception of social media in a conservative pharma industry. Follow the conversation at #pharmasocialmedia

Q. Please provide a brief outline of your expertise and current role. Any highlights and developments?

Founder and CEO of Creation Healthcare. Way back in the mid-1990's I built software for a specialist research consultancy to the pharmaceutical industry, developing insights from hospital pharmacy data for pharmaceutical brand teams. Ever since then I have been fascinated by the power of behavioural data to support decision-making in healthcare – from empowering patients to enabling healthcare companies and organisations to make the right decisions.

I founded Creation Healthcare in 1998 because I saw that the Internet was about to change everything, and I wanted to play a role in that. Our early work in the late 1990's included helping doctors to get online for the first time, and ever since then I have been studying how new digital channels are transforming healthcare engagement.

Over the past 18 years it has been a privilege to work with many of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies and enable them to learn from their customers' digital behaviours. Most recently, my work on Creation Pinpoint – a unique platform we developed at Creation Healthcare that listens to doctors in social media – has included some of our most fascinating projects ever, as we have been able to bring our pharmaceutical clients closer to their customers through focused analysis of healthcare professionals' public online conversations.

It's an exciting time to be in social media for the pharmaceutical industry!

Q. It seems there is still a dichotomy between consumers and social media, and pharma: How do you perceive the industry changing in the myriad of technology we're living in now?

I see incredible innovation at work in the pharmaceutical industry, often driven by the constraints within which it works. It can be difficult for a company which is not allowed to market to consumers in most of the world to embrace the idea of consumer engagement. But right across the industry, especially in Europe, companies are finding ways to connect with consumers in a way that really adds value to patients and healthcare systems.

For me, that's where I see great opportunity for the pharmaceutical industry and where the most rewarding activity is taking place.

Q: How does patient-engagement fit into your role, and what integrative tools have you found most beneficial?

Much of my work consulting for pharmaceutical clients on engagement strategy involves connecting different kinds of stakeholders: doctors with nurses or pharmacists; doctors with patients; patients with healthcare systems; pharma with patients. It goes without saying that the patient is at the heart of healthcare; so whether my work involves analysing conversations among healthcare professionals in social media, advising on tactics for policy advocacy, or helping a client to collaborate with a patient group, there is always a direct or indirect component of patient engagement.

Q: Speaking the right language is very much an art, as it is about transparency and business growth: What creative approaches are driving healthcare marketing?

Please see my LinkedIn post "[Why I'm proud to work with the pharmaceutical industry, despite its controversies](#)"

Q: What are some of the winning factors in keeping consumers engaged? What other initiatives would you like to see to help foster more consumers and HCP's interacting online?

Keeping consumers, healthcare professionals or other stakeholders engaged comes down to value: for a pharmaceutical company to successfully engage its customers, it must first have a very clear picture of what those customers want or need, how and where they currently interact, and what their unmet needs are. I see too many online initiatives launched by pharmaceutical companies without a proper understanding of the digital behaviours and needs of the targeted stakeholders such as healthcare professionals or patients. However, where pharmaceutical companies are listening to customers online, they are learning how to engage them in a relevant way that adds significant value for all parties.

Q: SMI: Why is regulation still a struggle for going digital?

I do not see regulation as a particular struggle for digital engagement in the pharmaceutical industry. Regulation is a reasonable challenge that affects all forms of pharmaceutical communications and engagement, regardless of channel – whether online or offline. In the digital age it is easy to look at examples of online engagement among FMCG brands' and ask why pharmaceutical brands are not engaging consumers in the same way, and then to conclude that the industry has a problem with digital. But that misses the point.

Digital media can be challenging to the unprepared because the nature of digital engagement is often very fast and very public. But I believe regulation does not make 'going digital' a struggle for the pharmaceutical industry; the same diligence must be applied to digital initiatives as has always been applied to all pharmaceutical communications.

Q: What aspects of the conference are you most looking forward to?

I love SMI's Social Media in the Pharmaceutical Industry because its clear focus allows participants to really take the time to explore innovation and best practice in the industry. I'm looking forward to connecting with and learning from old and new friends who are working to continually improve pharmaceutical companies' online engagement, to discovering new ideas. I'm excited to be Chairman for the 2016 conference and I'm looking forward to what is set to be an incredible few days of interaction, learning and conversation.

Q: What new developments do you envision for 2016?

As an industry, we've come a long way but we have a long way to go too! Some of the most exciting developments I hope to see – and play a part in – during 2016 include:

- Using geo-located social media to learn about disease patterns and connect with patients more effectively.
- Facilitating collaboration among health stakeholders including the pharmaceutical industry, to achieve common goals.
- Learning about public health issues from social media conversations, and shaping health policy through informed insights.

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Social Media in the Pharmaceutical Industry

20-21 January 2016

Holiday Inn Kensington Forum, London, UK

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