

**VIRALITY OF MEDICAL CONTENT IN RUSSIAN SOCIAL MEDIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

The article presents the results of the original sociological study aimed at determining an optimal maintenance of special medical content for social media, provides an assessment of the virality of different types of content.

**Keywords:** content marketing, inbound marketing, virality, medical organizations.

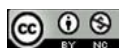
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**1. INTRODUCTION.**

Content marketing, being one of the tools for inbound marketing, based on drawing the target audience by their messages, has become widespread in promoting various goods and services. Creating and disseminating information to be useful for consumers during the period of reaching to informational saturation point turned out to be effective tools towards winning the confidence and attracting would be buyers. The variety of types of content from text materials to produce videos allow to design a content plan which best fills the needs of the target population and the specificity of the products (services) sold [1].

Due to the fact that the first and main ranges of application of content marketing have become consumer goods, suggesting the possibility of describing or visualizing products (services) in the form available to the customer, its theoretical and empirical bases are more adapted to the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG). For goods of a specialized selection methods and methodological approaches of content marketing are just assuming a definite form.



One of the content characteristics is its virality, that is, probability of wide dissemination of the attractive content by the users via the Internet, including social networks. Traditionally, virality in the FMCG is possessed by a fun, provocative, unusual, useful content that is consistent with the target social attitudes of human. However, in some branches and fields of business content with these characteristics may be incorrect, ineffective or have a converse effect.

Medical context advertising material on the Internet is reckoned among highly competitive. The average cost of a click is more than 1400 rubles. The fact is that the vast majority of the audience does not intend to seek for health information on the Internet to see a doctor, but, on the contrary, not to consult him and settle the problem independently. This explains a rather low number of inputs prompt related to the search for a doctor. Hence, a high level of competition among the participants of the context advertisement of such requests, and, consequently, a high cost per click. If one inserts an advertisement on the most common retrieval requests associated with the names of diseases, their symptoms and treatment, it will lead for this reason to improper conversion and useless costs [2]. Thus, to increase conversion and bring down the cost of a click, medical content is to be formed by the other rules being different from a conventional content.

## **2. The objective of the research**

The work objective is to conduct a sociological study aimed at assessing validity (appropriateness) of the traditional characteristics and formation of a pool of specialized characteristics of the viral content, used in the promotion of health services by means of social media marketing (SMM).

## **3. RESEARCH METHODS**

In the study there took part 328 people aged from 25 to 44, living in the regional center of the N, with a population of about 400000 people, with well-developed public and private medical infrastructure. The age range is determined on the basis of a conditional combination of three factors - active use of social networks, indication of interest in health and the potential solvency. The study was conducted during the period of July 2015 - January 2016 in the form of face-to-face survey on a specially designed questionnaire and interview. The selection of respondents was carried out at random, mainly in public health organizations.

#### **4. RESULTS**

The first block of questions contained the following tasks for the respondents - to evaluate the different types of content (freely available on the Internet), being placed by a conditional medical organization on a social group on the subject of: 1) probability of posting on the page in social media (repost); 2) likelihood of the desire to become more familiar with the medical organization's activities (go to the landing page, web page, etc.); 3) the degree of confidence in the content to be displayed; 4) a positive influence on the image of the medical organization; 5) the usefulness of such content; and then to range their priorities of using in social media.

On average, 15% of the respondents would not have done the repost of this content. Possible willingness to learn more about the clinic was expressed by 7% of the respondents, however, the influence of the internet memes on the image of the medical organization was thought to be positive by only 9% of respondents, at the same time, the confidence in content was evoked in 14%, and it was assessed to be useful by 18%. According to Word stat Yandex from 01.01.2014 to 01.31.2016, only 54 queries of the phrase "medical memes" were recorded, and similar Internet memes to be spread on the Internet are few [3-5].

About 17% of the respondents would post this content on their pages on social networks, 20% - expressed the willingness to make themselves familiar with the medical activities of the organization, it aroused trust in 91% of the respondents, 83% - considered the content influence on the image of the medical organization to be positive, however, the content was found to be useful by only 13% of the surveyed people.

Different results were obtained after averaging the respondents' assessments of the content in the form of photographs in the format of "before and after".

Only 5% of the respondents would make repost of the content, 22% - expressed willingness to learn more about the activities of medical organization, it aroused trust in 29% of the respondents, 37% - considered the content influence on the image of the medical organization to be positive, the content proved to be useful for 16% of the surveyed people [6].

On average, 33% of the respondents were unlikely to repost. Possible wish to familiarize themselves with the medical organization to post it was expressed by 27% of the respondents, the influence of infographic on the image of the organization was considered to be positive by 71% of the respondents, the content evoked trust in 63%, and it was appreciated as useful by 80% of the people who participated in the survey [7-8].

About 9% of the respondents would post the content on their pages on social networks, 17% - expressed willingness to learn the activity of the medical organizations, it evoked trust in 55% of the respondents, 79% - considered the content influence on the image of the medical organization to be positive, 62 % of the respondents noted its usefulness.

Approximately 24% of the respondents would repost the content, 46% - wished to familiarize themselves with the activities of the medical organization being involved in achieving a result, it evoked trust in 75% of the respondents, 77% - considered the content influence on the image of the medical organization to be positive, 24% of the interviewed people found the content to be useful.

Approximately 19% of the respondents would repost the content, 36% - expressed willingness to familiarize themselves with the activities of medical organization described in the blog, the content aroused trust in 49%, 70% - felt a positive impact of blogging on the image of the medical organization, the usefulness of such content was found by 22% of the people [9].

On average, 34% of the respondents would repost the content in the form of the article, 27% - expressed a desire to get to know about the activities of medical organization described in the article, the content evoked trust in 77% of the respondents, 81% - considered at the content influence on the image of the medical organization to be positive, such content to be useful is considered by 19% of the surveyed people[10].

Table 1

### 5. The Results of Criterion Score of the Types of Medical Content

**Table 1.** Shows a generalized material on types of the content discussed above.

Type of content	The Internet-memes	Photo-materials	"format inthe "beforeandafter	Photo-materials	Info-	Research	Real	Blogs	Articles
Data									
Repost probability, %	15	17	5	33	9	24	19	34	
Probability of conversion onto landingpage,	7	20	22	27	17	46	36	27	

webpage, etc, %								
Confidence factor in the exhibited content, %	14	91	29	63	55	75	49	77
Positive influence on the image of medical organization, %	9	83	37	71	79	77	70	81
Content utility, %	18	13	16	80	62	24	22	19
Priority ranging of using in social media	8	3	7	1	5	4	6	2

This part of the results obtained cannot be used in practice without further circumstantiation, since the respondents mainly estimated the concrete types of content, not related to any object, the influence of many other factors was not accounted.

In order to increase the practical value of the research results, the respondents were offered a second set of questions to assess the importance of some traditional characteristic properties that influence the virality of content being used in the promotion of medical services (Table 2).

## 6. The Degree of Influence of the Traditional Characteristics on the Virality of Medical Content

**Table 2.**

Characteristic feature	Influence, %
Perceptibility	69
Visual appearance	57
Originality	50
Quality	50
Humor	29
Emotionality	8
Scarcity	8
Provoking	3

In the third block of questions, the respondents expressed their opinions about what additional features should be comprised in the viral medical content (Table 3).

### 7. The Degree of Influence of Special Features on the Virality of Medical Content

**Table 3.**

Features	Influence, %
Treatment outcome description of positive manifestation of the therapeutic effect of the medical services (goods)	79
Actions of patients sequence of actions of patients in case of showing abnormalities	73
Alternative treatment comparison of different methods of treatment	65
Demonstration of professionalism indirect confirmation of the authority and successful experience of medical organization	54
Encouragement and support focus and orientation of the users on the favorable outcome of a disease	41
Obtainment of complementary information, reference to off-site professional resources containing more detailed information	32

### 8. CONCLUSION

Based on this study, we can conclude the following: in order to increase the virality of medical content it is appropriate to use info-graphics, articles and photo materials. In so doing, their meaning content should be appreciated by the users, demonstrate the results of treatment and professionalism of medical organizations, include the sequence of procedures for the patients to make a speedy recovery, orient them on the favorable outcome of the treatment, compare therapeutic alternatives, and not restrict access to additional information.

### 9. Conflict of interest

The authors acknowledge that the presented data do not contain any conflict of interest.

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