

Review

An Online Community to Call Our Own

A Review of Pharma Marketing Network Forums (www.forums.pharma-mkting.com)

By John Mack

Many readers of Pharma Marketing News may also be members of the PHARMA-MKTING listserv®, which is an e-mail list software application that allows members to send e-mail messages to the entire list and for other members to respond. In this way, the listserv enables discussions in which any member can participate merely by replying to messages from other members.

The PHARMA-MKTING listserv was started in 1997 and currently includes about 2400 members worldwide!

A listserv is a great collaboration and communications tool. However, it has limits. The main problem is that it generates a lot of e-mail and

these days people get too much e-mail. You may like to participate in discussions with peers or simply “Lurk & Learn” from other discussions, but you may not be willing to accept all the e-mail going back and forth. Sometimes the discussion is not even of interest to you, but you get the e-mail anyway because you have little control over what discussions to get notified about and how much e-mail you receive.

These problems are eliminated when you switch to a Web-based bulletin board. The switch also emphasizes “pull” vs. “push” in terms of access to information. However, users of bulletin boards can also elect to have information pushed out to them by e-mail (see below).

“CafePharma” for Marketers—But No Potty-Mouth GossipFest!

Pharmaceutical sales representatives have long enjoyed the benefits of online collaboration at CafePharma. Now pharmaceutical marketers have their own Web-based community where they can stay in touch with each other, debate issues, and carry on discussions — [Pharma Marketing Network Forums](#) (PMN Forums; see Figure 1).

PMN Forums use the same forum software used by CafePharma, but that is where the similarity ends! Whereas CafePharma is notorious for its rude, crude, and vulgar posts and industry gossip, which is all good to an extent, Pharma Marketing Network Forums is a serious community of professionals wishing to collaborate and network to increase their knowledge and help to build their businesses. PMN Forums includes many neat social networking tools like

Pharma Marketing Network Forums
The Leading Online Community of Pharmaceutical Marketing Experts

| Newsletter | Conferences | Roundtable | Glossary | Surveys | Blog | Vendor Directory | Jobs | Advertising Information |

Pricing a Pharmaceutical
Leading national and international pricing models and solutions
www.inpharmation.co.uk

Pricing Consultants
Pharmaceutical Experts
Comprehensive and intuitive results
www.pricesspective.com

Clarity Consultants Ltd
Expert solutions to meet your needs
Pharma, Biotech, Life Sciences
clarityconsultantslimited.com

Sales Force Effectiveness
World leading provider of e-detailing solutions
www.agnitio.com

Ads by Google Advertise on this site

Pharma Marketing Network Forums

User Name Remember Me?
Password

Register FAQ Members List Calendar Today's Posts Search







Welcome to the Pharma Marketing Network Forums.

If this is your first visit, be sure to check out the [FAQ](#) by clicking the link above. You may have to [register](#) before you can post: click the register link above to proceed. To start viewing messages, select the forum that you want to visit from the selection below.

Forum	Last Post	Threads	Posts
Housekeeping These are forums related to discussion of rules of usage, who we are, how to use the features of forums, etc.			
News & Views Abstracts of pharmaceutical marketing news sources, blogs, conferences, etc.			
Open Discussion Forums Open to all registered members and guests, these forums are for the discussion of a range of pharmaceutical marketing topics.			
International Forums These are forums for non-US pharmaceutical marketing discussions			

[Mark Forums Read](#) [View Forum Leaders](#)

Figure 1: Pharma Marketing Network Forums Home Page. The forums are organized into several different categories shown here. Other categories will be added in the future depending upon user need. Users click on a category name to see the forums in that category (see Figure 2). See page 18 for a complete list of forums available.

Pharma Marketing Network Forums News & Views		Welcome, JohnMack. You last visited: 12th January 2007 at 04:03 PM Private Messages: Unread 0, Total 2.	
User CP	FAQ	Members List	Calendar
New Posts	Search	Quick Links	Log Out
News & Views Abstracts of pharmaceutical marketing news sources, blogs, conferences, etc.		Quick Links	
Sub-Forums : News & Views		Today's Posts	
Forum		Last Post	
 Industry News User contributed or generated sources of pharmaceutical news from newfeeds, press releases, news stories, etc.	 Pfizer Viagra sp by jlcoul 12th January	User Control Panel	
 Pharma Marketing Blog Forum This forum is where you find notices of posts made to Pharma Marketing Blog and discussions related to those posts.	 Lincoln Shot Dea by JohnMack 11th January	reads	Posts
 Pharma Marketing News Executives summaries of the monthly Pharma Marketing News e-newsletter	 Preview of Jana by JohnMack 14th January	7	8
		Miscellaneous	
		5	7
		Subscribed Threads	
		1	1
		My Profile	
		Who's Online	

Avatars: Avatars are small images which can be assigned to a members' profile. When a member selects or uploads an avatar the image will be displayed on every message the members' post on the bulletin board. Avatars are useful for anonymous members who wish to be associated with an image that

Smilies: Smilies (also called emoticons in some quarters) are small images used to convey some form of emotion in messages.

Private Messaging:

Members may send private messages to one another. Private messages work a little like email, but are limited to registered members of PMN Forums. Private messages may include smilies and images.

Options include:

- Pop-up notification when new PM received
- Private Message Tracking
- Private Message filing in custom folders

User Reputation: The User Reputation system allows PMN Forums members to leave comments about one another's posts, and thereby contribute to their overall 'reputation'. Users are given specific titles such as "A Respected Member" or "A Pharma Marketing Maven" when they reach certain reputation levels.

Report Posts: This feature is ONLY to be used to report spam, advertising messages, and problematic (harassment, fighting, or rude) posts.

Buddy Lists: This is a list of users PMN Forums members can identify their Buddies. Adding people to a buddy list also allows members to send private messages to multiple forum members at the same time.

Ignore Lists: Ignore lists are used for those people whose messages PMN Forums members wish not to read. By adding someone to an ignore

Figure 2: Forums in the "News & Views" Category. Here you find daily industry news abstracts or complete articles submitted by members as well as links to posts made on Pharma Marketing Blog. In addition, information about upcoming Pharma Marketing News issues and executive summaries of current issues can be found here. Previously, ALL this information was "pushed" out to PHARMA-MKTING members by e-mail. The drop down menu shows some options available to users.

buddy lists, member profiles, calendars, private messaging between members, user-generated content, polling, content rating, calendar submissions, etc. These are described in more detail below (see "Social Networking").

This NEW online community for pharmaceutical marketing professionals, which is part of Pharma Marketing Network, publisher of Pharma Marketing News, features discussion boards, announcements, a calendar, and social networking tools. The Forums will replace the PHARMA-MKTING listserv, which is scheduled to be shut down on February 1, 2007.

Social Networking

One of the more interesting features of Pharma Marketing Network Forums is the social networking that it enables. These features, some of which are listed below, are not possible with listservs. These features are only useful if enough members participate and become active members of the community.

User Profile: Registered members can enable a profile that includes information that other members can view. This information can include a custom user title, URL home page, date of birth, instant messaging medium, location, occupation, biography, interests, plus any other custom user fields that may be defined in the future.

Profile pictures: Allows members to upload pictures that can be viewed in the users' profile.

Continues...

The screenshot shows a forum interface for 'Disease Awareness Marketing'. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links like 'Pharma Marketing Network Forums', 'Open Discussion Forums', and 'Disease Awareness Marketing'. A user greeting for 'JohnMack' is visible, along with a 'Welcome' message and a 'Private Messages' count. Below this is a menu with options like 'User CP', 'FAQ', 'Members List', 'Calendar', 'New Posts', 'Search', 'Quick Links', and 'Log Out'. The main content area features a 'New Thread' button and a list of threads. The current thread is titled '"Disease Awareness" or Disease Mongering?' by JohnMack, with 3 replies and 45 views. A 'Moderation' section includes a 'Delete Threads' button and a 'Go (0)' button. A 'Display Options' section allows users to sort threads by 'Last Post Time' in 'Descending' order, starting from the 'Beginning'. A 'Posting Rules' box is open, showing rules such as 'You may post new threads', 'vB code is On', 'Smilies are On', '[IMG] code is On', and 'HTML code is Off'. A 'Forum Jump' section is also present, set to 'Disease Awareness Marketing'.

Figure 3: Forum Thread. This shows a thread—a collection of posts usually with a common subject matter—in the “Disease Awareness Marketing” forum in the Open Discussion Category. Users can start a new thread here or open one of the current threads (the only one available here is “Disease Awareness or Disease Mongering?”) to read it and/or reply to it (see Figure 4). In most forums, both unregistered users (guests) and registered users may read and reply to threads. Note that the posting rules, which differ depending on whether you are a guest or a registered user, are display on the bottom left.

list, those messages posted by these individuals will be hidden when the member reads a thread.

Rating Threads: Members are allowed to “rate” thread with a number between 1-5. Casting a vote for threads is entirely optional. Once enough votes have been cast for the thread rating, visitors may see a set of stars appear with the title of the thread in the thread listings. These stars reflect the average vote cast, and can allow visitors to quickly see which threads are worth reading.

Subscribing to Threads

Registered members of Pharma Marketing Network Forums can choose which, if any, threads they wish to subscribe to. That is, when members

post a new thread, or reply to an existing thread, they can choose to be notified by email when someone else replies to that thread. Members can also choose to receive email notifications of new posts in a thread without posting in that thread. Members have complete control over thread subscriptions, which can be cancelled at any time.

Threads in the “News & Views” forums are especially worth subscribing to. Each day new threads are added to “Industry News” and/or “Pharma Marketing Blog Forum.” From these threads users can view more detailed information by clicking on the links provided.

Continues...

Pharma Marketing Network Forums – Site Map

Housekeeping

These are forums related to discussion of rules of usage, who we are, how to use the features of forums, etc.

- Rules and Regulations
- Who We Are -- Tell us who you are and what you do.
- How Do I...? -- Ask questions and get answers about using the forums.
- Suggestions -- Give the Webmaster suggestions for improvement.

News & Views

Abstracts of pharmaceutical marketing news sources, blogs, conferences, etc.

- Industry News -- User contributed or generated sources of pharmaceutical news from newsfeeds, press releases, news stories, etc.
- Pharma Marketing Blog Forum -- Notices of posts made to Pharma Marketing Blog and discussions related to those posts.
- Pharma Marketing News -- Executives summaries of the monthly Pharma Marketing News e-newsletter.

Open Discussions

Open to all registered members and guests, these forums are for the discussion of a range of pharmaceutical marketing topics.

- Free for All -- Any topic at all! Useful for topics that don't fit other categories.
- eMarketing -- Internet-based pharmaceutical marketing topics.
- Physician Marketing -- Discussions related to physician marketing and advertising.
- Physician Education -- Discussions relating to CME and non-CME physician education issues as distinct from physician marketing. Includes discussions about MSLs, KOLS, etc.
- DTC Marketing -- Discussions related to direct-to-consumer marketing and advertising.
- Disease Awareness Marketing -- Discussions related to disease awareness or unbranded marketing and advertising.
- Product Manager Corner -- A place for pharmaceutical product managers, brand team leaders, etc.
- Market Research -- Discussions related to pharmaceutical market research.
- Pharmaceutical Sales -- This forum is for the discussion of pharmaceutical sales issues and practices, including sales force effectiveness, training, etc.
- Regulatory Issues -- This forum is for discussions related to marketing laws, regulations and guidelines.

International Forums

These are forums for non-US pharmaceutical marketing discussions

- Indian Market Forum -- This forum is for the discussion of issues specific to the Indian pharmaceutical market.
- European Market Forum -- This forum is for the discussion of issues specific to the European pharmaceutical market.

Available forums may change as some are removed and others added as necessary.

Post Reply

View First Unread Thread Tools Search this Thread Rate Thread Display Modes

11th January 2007, 07:35 AM #1

 **JohnMack**
Silver Member

Join Date: Jan 2007
Location: Newtown, PA
Posts: 25
Rep Power: 10

"Disease Awareness" or Disease Mongering?

I am going to moderate a panel discussion on disease mongering at the upcoming [Patient Education and Disease Awareness Summit](#) (see [Agenda for Day 2](#)) and I am interested in what issues you think should be discussed on this topic. For some background, you can listen to a recent podcast I did on the subject (see [Pharma Marketing Talk Page](#)).

For starters, I can think of these points of discussion:

- What is Disease Mongering?
- What are some examples often cited as disease mongering?
- What role do pharma companies, press, patient groups, medical associations, etc. play in this? What motivates them?
- Is this an troublesome issue? If so, what can and should the pharma industry do about it?

For more backgroun see [Pharma Marketing Blog](#).

Can you think of other issues to discuss? What's your viewpoint on this topic?

John Mack, Editor & Publisher
[Pharma Marketing News](#)
www.pharmamarketingnews.com
johnmack@virsci.com
215-504-4164 * 215-504-5739 (Fax)

Edit Quote

12th January 2007, 05:06 AM #2

Sunil S Chiplunkar
Freshman Member

Join Date: Jan 2007
Posts: 4
Rep Power: 0

Disease mongering versus social marketing

Disease awareness marketing per se is not a crooked marketing strategy. This approach can in fact be looked at as PART OF SOCIAL MARKETING initiatives of a pharma company. Social marketing is a big subject and a useful approach to society. So a point of discussion ought to be, what is it that makes a social marketing approach a disease mongering gimmick or controversial exercise? – Sunil S Chiplunkar
www.pharmaceuticalshealthcare.blogspot.com

Edit Quote

Figure 4: Posts Within the “Disease Awareness or Disease Mongering?” Thread. Here are shown the first two messages in the thread. The icons in the post header (containing the time and date of the post) provide registered Forum members, but not guests, with social networking tools (see text for more options).

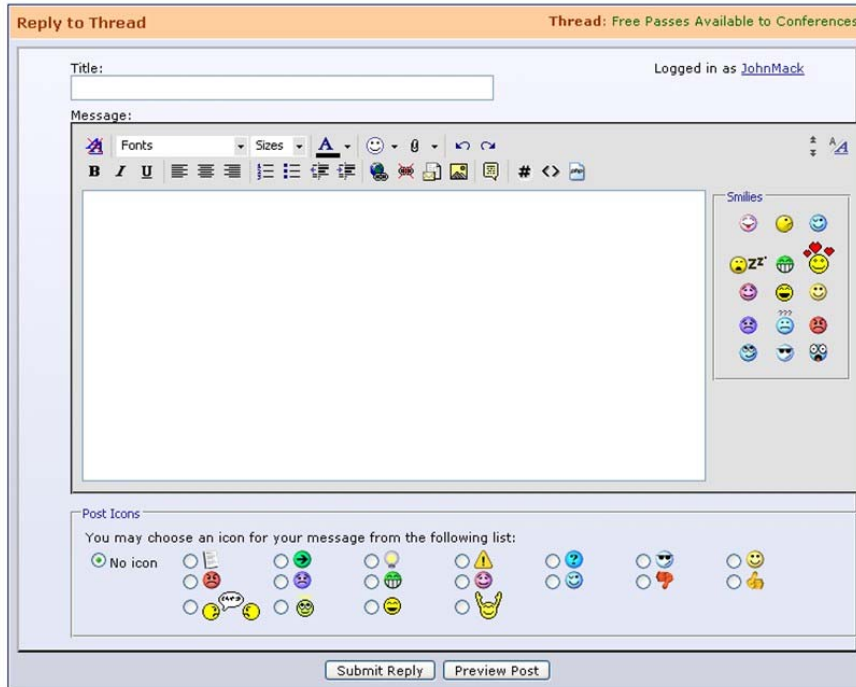


Figure 5: Posting a Reply to a Thread. This is the editor members use when posting messages or replying to threads. Note that messages can be formatted. Messages may also include active email and web links as well as images. Smilies can also be added inside the body of the message or next to the title of the message to communicate emotion. Smilies are seen here in boxes to the right and below the editing window.

Figure 6: Event Calendar. This shows the PMN Forums Event Calendar loaded with industry conferences posted by the Forum administrator or by registered members.

Event Calendar
Show Today
Monthly View ▼
Add New Event ▼

January 2007

>	Sun	31	Mon	1	Tue	2	Wed	3	Thu	4	Fri	5	Sat	6
>														
>	Sun	7	Mon	8	Tue	9	Wed	10	Thu	11	Fri	12	Sat	13
>														
>	Sun	14	Mon	15	Tue	16	Wed	17	Thu	18	Fri	19	Sat	20
>									eBroadcast: Patient Adherence Programs	Medical Science Liaison Skill Set Traini (...)				
>														
>	Sun	21	Mon	22	Tue	23	Wed	24	Thu	25	Fri	26	Sat	27
>			Patient Education and Disease Awareness (...)	Patient Education and Disease Awareness (...)										
>	Sun	28	Mon	29	Tue	30	Wed	31	Thu	1	Fri	2	Sat	3
>			Medical Convention Marketing & Compliance (...)	Medical Convention Marketing & Compliance (...)										
>			ePharma Summit	ePharma Summit										
>			6th Annual Forum on Pharmaceutical Conta (...)	6th Annual Forum on Pharmaceutical Conta (...)										

December 2006

S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
>	26	27	28	29	30	1	2
>	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
>	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
>	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
>	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
>	31	1	2	3	4	5	6

February 2007

S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
>	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
>	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
>	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
>	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
>	25	26	27	28	1	2	3

Add New Event

- [Single, All Day Event](#)
- [Ranged Event](#)
- [Recurring Event](#)

Jump to month
 January ▼ 2007 ▼ Go

Calendar Jump
 Calendar ▼ Go

© 2007 VirSci Corporation (www.virsci.com). All rights reserved.
 Pharma Marketing News

Calendars

The PMN Forums Calendar system is comparable to many stand alone calendar packages on the market today. There may be several calendars, each categorizes by subject matter. Real world examples would be:

- Birthday Calendar - A calendar that only displays your forum members' birthdays.
- Holiday Calendar - A calendar that only shows upcoming holidays, either those you define or the included holidays.
- Private Calendar - A calendar that allows members to keep track of their own private events.
- Event Calendar - A calendar that lists upcoming events (see Figure 6).

Currently, registered members—but not guests—may add events to the event calendar.

Why Register?

Many PMN Forums are open to guests or unregistered users, but in order to fully utilize the abilities of forums, users are required to register as a member. Registration is free, and allows you to do some things that guest cannot do (see Table 1).

Conclusion

Pharma Marketing Network Forums is growing rapidly as former members of the PHARMA-MKTING listserv are notified and encouraged to join. Pharma Marketing News readers and subscribers are also encouraged to register. Registration is free and you will not get additional email unless you choose to subscribe to threads.

Pharma Marketing News

Feature	Registered Member	Guest
Post new threads	YES	YES, but only in "Free For All" forum
Reply to other peoples' threads	YES	YES
Edit your posts	YES	NO
Receive email notification of replies to forums and threads you specify	YES	NO, except for "News & Views" Forums
Rate threads	YES	NO
Send private messages to other members	YES	NO
Post polls	YES	NO
Vote on polls	YES	YES
Set up a profile page	YES	NO
Enter events in the forum calendar	YES	NO
Set up a 'buddy-list' to quickly see which of your friends are currently online	YES	NO

Table 1: Selected Features Available to Registered Users vs. Guests. These privileges are subject to change.

Authors, Experts Consulted and/or Cited In Articles

The following experts were mentioned or consulted in the preparation of articles for this issue.

- **Andrew Brana**, Consultant, Sales Performance Improvement, TNS Healthcare, andrew.brana@tns-global.com
- **Jeffrey Zornitsky**, Senior Vice President and Practice Leader, Sales Performance Improvement, TNS Healthcare, jeffrey.zornitsky@tns-global.com

Resources

The following resources were used in the preparation of articles for this issue.

- Free Webinar: **How Can You Create the Right Balance of Selling and Service to Optimize Physician Relationships and Drive Prescribing?** Re-Inventing the Sales Model: Transitioning to a Physician-Focused Selling Strategy. Access the archives at <http://medconference.net/sales>

Pharma Marketing News

Pharma Marketing News is an independent, free monthly electronic newsletter focused on issues of importance to pharmaceutical marketing executives. It is a service of the **Pharma Marketing Network** – The First Forum for Pharmaceutical Marketing Experts – which brings together pharmaceutical marketing professionals from manufacturers, communications companies, and marketing service providers for wide ranging discussions and education on a multitude of current topics.

Pharma Marketing Network & *Pharma Marketing News* provide executive-level content, professional networking & business development with permission-based emarketing opportunities.

Publisher & Executive Editor

John Mack
VirSci Corporation
www.virsci.com
PO Box 760
Newtown, PA 18940
215-504-4164, 215-504-5739 FAX
<mailto:editor@pharmamarketingnews.com>

Advisory Board

Harry Sweeney
Chairman, CEO, Dorland Global Health
Communications

Richard Vanderveer, PhD
Chairman & CEO, V2 GfK

[Subscribe Online](#) • [Download Media Kit](#) • [Request a Rate Card](#)