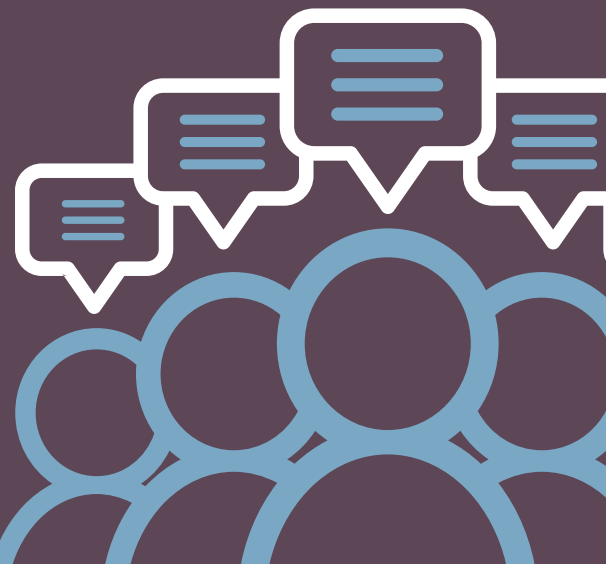




Social Media Social Change

Is the social media revolution changing business and society or is it allowing us just to be ourselves with a worldwide audience? People have an eternal desire to connect, and in our relationships we support one another, exchange information, talk about ideas, and discuss products and services. When our collective thoughts move in a direction, that represents a societal shift and the direction of our profession. Social media is about *relationships* and not the technology that makes them possible. Technologies change and each improved mousetrap better enables the movement. As with the professional group experience, networking and relationships are paramount.

by | *Timothy L. Bauman, DHCFA, CDM, CFPP*



What is Social Networking?

We want to make professional friends and share ideas, so where do we start? The Internet revolution has created a mindset that information should not only be available to all, but modifiable by all. Professional groups have always invited co-creation with committees, taskforces, and so forth. Social networking tools make it easier and add greater reach to sharing profession-related material. Getting involved can mean sharing thoughts with another person who has tackled the project you are seeking information about. This social trend is where people use technologies to get the things they need from each other. DMA is now on three social networking sites—LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter—and also offers networking communities on the national website at www.DMAonline.org. These resources help members build better departments, do business, job hunt, and connect with the entire food industry.

It's important to understand the social media technologies, but the technologies are the detail. So many words have been written about the blogosphere, social networks, and user-generated content that a person may think mastering those technologies will equip you for the new world. The technologies are not the point. The forces at work are. Concentrate on the relationships and not the mechanics.

Distance used to make sharing ideas and information difficult, but now the tools are cheap and designed for easy use by a wide range of people. There are ample ways to show off your work so that other people can find and consume it. Our industry colleagues learn by doing and participating, so join a social networking site or two to experience the variety. There's a social network for everyone and every topic because you can find what you want or start the discussion yourself. LinkedIn, for example, is for professionals and tends to be more job related. Facebook was started in colleges and has become a place where people catalog their personal life. Twitter enables users to send and read short messages known as "tweets" and was developed for the cell phone, which most of us have by our sides all the time. You can "tweet" your friends at meetings about lunching together, the speakers, and the sessions.

Which social networking site is right for you? The tool that enables new relationships in new ways will hold your attention more than one that doesn't. It's about making connections, and the best tool for you makes them more interesting, more varied, or more frequent. Is it effortless to sign up? Does it focus on the people, and does the community generate enough content to sustain itself? We are in this profession together, and the partnerships we form are invaluable to success and satisfaction. You are

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Join DMA Professional Networking Today

Your professional network of CDMs expanded recently with DMA's launch of four new online communities. DMA members from around the world can share information and engage in conversations about our industry with these free networking tools.

Participate in as many of the following Communities and Forums as you wish that relate to your interest areas.

Member Community

DMA's new and improved Member Community supports online Shared Interest Groups called Forums. Forums have been set up by Work Setting, Management Responsibilities, and Culinary Arts. The General Forum within the Member Community is a great place to go if you have questions or concerns not related to the other Forum discussion groups. To communicate, offer suggestions, or ask questions of DMA headquarters staff, use the Ask DMA Staff Forum.

Chapter Leadership Community

Current DMA chapter presidents are urged to be a part of this forum, which addresses issues relating to chapter leadership.

Student Community

Current students and graduates of dietary manager training programs can discuss coursework or career ambitions in this forum.

DMA Meeting Attendees Community

This forum will connect you with other members who plan to attend upcoming DMA meetings, or stay in touch with attendees you met at recent DMA events.

Visit the new DMA communities today by following these simple instructions:

1. Go to www.DMAonline.org
2. Log into the Member Login area
3. Click the orange Communities tab

If you don't already have an account set up in member login, you can search for your record by using your email address and set one up for immediate access. If you are a DMA member and do not find your record by e-mail address, call DMA at (800) 323-1908 so staff can provide you with access to the community.

DMA on Social Networking Sites

DMA also uses three public professional networking sites that are not restricted to DMA members. Check us out on LinkedIn, Facebook or follow us on Twitter.



moving into a virtual world building relationships in a two-way environment that is very democratic.

Professional groups thrive in the role as the centerpiece of industry-specific knowledge and networking. We are knowledge workers in a knowledge-intensive industry. This means increasing use of the “read write web.” We are as employed professionals and in our spare time as association members’ part of networked companies that enable collaboration on ideas and innovation via online tools. Professional group life, just like our work life, is linking outward to vendors, customers, and fellow members. The knowledge of our business is increasingly a “co-creation,” resulting in the management of innovation being delegated to outside sources. The development of our industry knowledge happens among peers and is thrown open for public collaboration. The old society where information was pushed at us through TV, news, and radio is now a less vertical back and forth exchange. The expansion of the volunteer infrastructure to the entire industry acknowledges that there are a lot of smart and helpful people out there working in the far reaches of the world.

All the sharing of food industry information has created an explosion of news agents and sounded the demise of deadlines. Participating in social media with each other makes us news agents by default, whether we intended to take on the role or not. With Twitter there is no evening newscast making deadlines a moving target. You don’t even have to add and respond, but can

learn things from logging on to read what everyone else is saying. If you participate, you can become influential because the communication may be read by thousands. The messages passing through the system come from many and are not centrally controlled, which is genuine conversation. They are conversation starters with better opportunities to talk *with* and not *at*. And what you can hear can be more helpful to your employer and career than what you say—by orders of magnitude.

Participation in social media and what people get from it is personal, but the common threads for all are information, learning, and news needs. How people participate in social media can be thought about as a ladder reflecting the level of involvement. This ladder starts with the most involved, ending with the least involved, and the categories are as follows: Creators, Critics, Collectors, Joiners, Spectators, and Inactives. (Source: Groundswell, Winning in a World Transformed by Social Technologies; Charlene Li and Josh Bernoff, ISBN-13: 978-1-4221-2500-7)

- **Creators**, at the top of the ladder, are industry folks who at least once a month publish a blog or social media article online, maintain a web page (maybe you are the chapter webmaster), and upload videos or audio to sites like YouTube.
- **Critics** react to other people’s content online, posting comments on blogs, forums, posting ratings or reviews, and editing wikis. Since it’s easier to react than create, it’s no surprise that there are more critics than creators.

WEBINAR



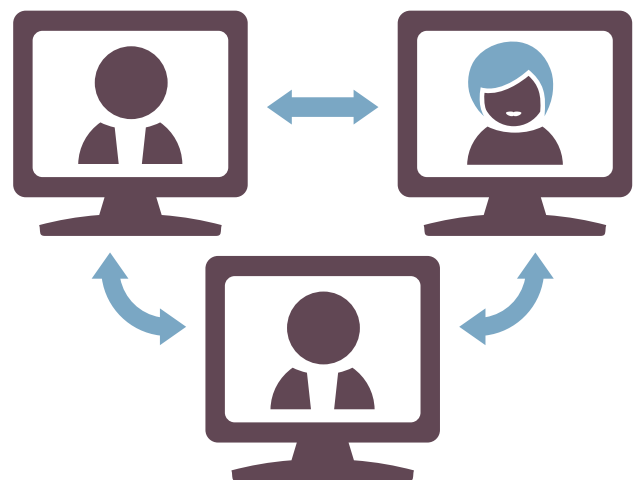
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Get a head start on training the new information for MDS 3.0, Section K, set to launch October 1, 2010. Find out what it means to be part of the IDT, Inter-Disciplinary Team, assessing each resident’s nutritional needs and helping to coordinate your resident’s personalized nutritional care plan. The 3.0 version gives the resident more of a voice in their care, and helps guide staff towards meeting these care needs. Care Area Assessments and Care Area Triggers are some of the new MDS terms, and these will provide a standardized format/checklist for planning the specific areas for each resident’s nutritional needs. So come on board, join in, and prepare for the new world of 3.0!

To register, visit www.DMAonline.org
and follow the link to the webinar



Social media is about person-to-person relationships. You need to be able to talk and also be a good listener.

- *Collectors* save web addresses and information produced by creators and critics because the information may be useful in some way.
- *Joiners* participate in or maintain profiles on social networking sites, such as LinkedIn or Facebook.
- *Spectators* consume what the rest produce and this requires much less effort than the other social media activities. Not surprisingly this is the largest group.
- *Inactives* are non participants, and of course offline people can't participate at all.

Classifications help us understand how social technologies are being adapted and used by any group of people. As part of the virtual world you can see what your patients, customers, professional group members, and fellow industry people are saying about a lot of things. Imagine listening to what people say about your last meeting, your food, or your facility. What do other managers think about all the various products we sift through to write our menus? Participation gives you a hand on the pulse of the industry in endless ways. Companies can jump in to see what end-users are saying about their products and services and use the information to improve. People have many differing motiva-

tions to participate, which can vary even with the same person depending on what day it is, the person's mood, or objectives. Successful participation isn't whether you master the technology, but rather that you are accomplishing a useful personal or business goal.

Summing it Up

Social media is about person-to-person relationships. You need to be able to talk and also be a good listener. Success is about listening to patients, customers, and others in our profession. We are all learning here and the best listeners will end up the smartest. Be patient, opportunistic, and flexible because one thing about social media is that what you get out of it can exceed what you put into it. People connecting together are a very powerful force! ^{DM}

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