

# Crafting stories for digital opinion leaders

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## INTRODUCTION

- Digital mediums allow for diverse storytelling opportunities, and healthcare experts ingest this content differently than traditional or print content
- Digital opinion leaders (DOLs) are experts who thrive in digital spaces
- Digital scientific content commonly utilized in the Medical Affairs and education space includes infographics, videos, data visualization tools, and social media posts
  - Despite this wealth of enhanced digital content available for development, certain formats may be preferable for digital storytelling
- To maximize the impact of storytelling in this medium, medical communications professionals should understand how DOLs and other healthcare experts prefer to consume and interact with digital scientific content

## OBJECTIVE

- To present findings from an advisory board in which DOLs evaluated industry-sponsored digital content, including videos, interactive infographics, and social media content

## METHODS

- A virtual advisory board was held on March 31, 2023, to acquire DOL insights on industry-sponsored digital content, key information channels, and storytelling methods
- Nine DOLs across dermatology, gastroenterology, and rheumatology were invited as panelists, inclusive of a diverse span of race, sex, and age to ensure representation of different perspectives
- Advisor insights regarding digital content, social media, and the future of peer-to-peer interaction were captured during the advisory board
- Further, in an extensive prework activity disseminated via MedThink Connect™ (a customized, secure, online collaboration portal), DOL advisors rated their preferences for a variety of digital content, listed below:
  - Interactive infographics:** topics included mechanism of action and disease state education
  - Static infographics:** topics included clinical study findings and disease state education
  - Data visualization tool:** topic was mechanism of action
  - Videos:** topics included disease state education and mechanism of action
- Advisor insights were not unanimous, and captured insights in this presentation were expressed by at least 1 advisor

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**DISCLAIMER:** Information presented reflects the personal knowledge and opinions of the faculty and does not necessarily represent the position of their current or past employers.

**DISCLOSURES:** DR, LR, KM, and BG are employees of MedThink SciCom. SB and MLCD are employees of Pfizer, Inc.

## RESULTS

### Overall Advisory Board Findings: Preferences for Scientific Stories

#### Advisors preferred

- Short articles and videos
- Static infographics
- Visual and graphical abstracts
- Plain language summaries
- Disease state awareness content
- Late-breaking research content
- Short ~15-minute podcasts to enable multitasking (preferred more than videos)
- Podcasts available on a podcast app
- Industry content if through a third-party podcast (eg, *Dialogues in Dermatology, Healio*)

#### Advisors did not prefer

- Data visualization tools
- Interactive infographics
- Resources requiring click-through access or logging in

### Findings From Prework Activity: DOL Opinions on Scientific Story Format

In the prework activity, DOLs highlighted characteristics of “very engaging” digital storytelling mediums, including streamlined content, simplified interfaces, and brevity (Figure 1)

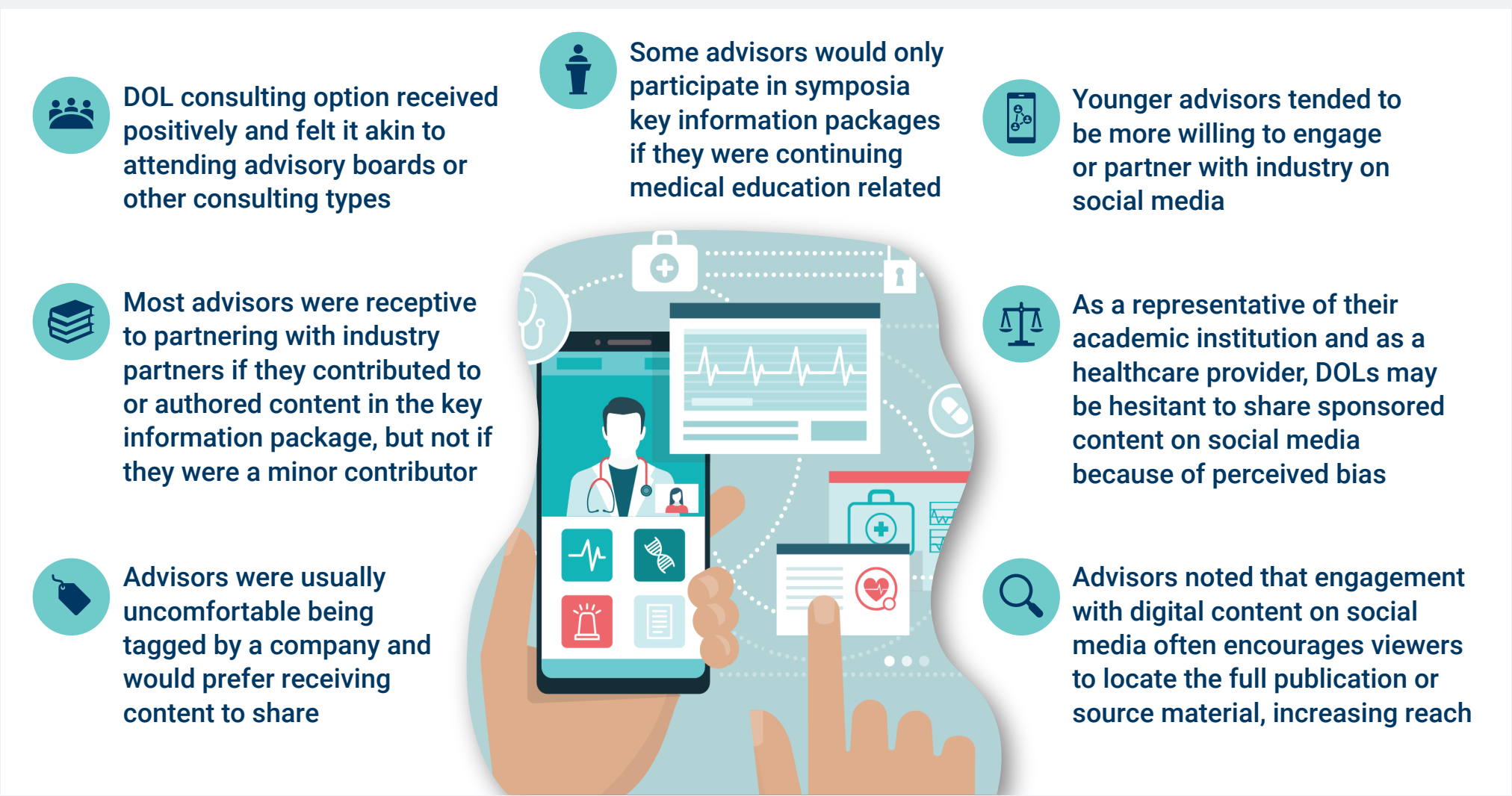
Figure 1. DOL feedback regarding level of engagement in scientific digital content.

|                         | Very Engaging                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Somewhat Engaging                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Not Very Engaging                                                                                                                                                                                    | Key Takeaways                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Interactive Infographic | Allows the user to navigate to specific aspects of mechanism of action or disease, such as key cytokines                                                                                                                                                                                   | • Small text and dense information limits engagement<br>• Engagement may decrease if target audience is unclear or not relevant for patients<br>• “Difficult to navigate if you don’t know what you’re looking for”                                                                  | • Too much information, “esoteric”<br>• Interactivity should be made clearer; interface is too busy<br>• “Something simple with a clinical tie-in would be more engaging”                            | Interactive infographics should feature <b>clear navigation directions, simple interfaces, and streamlined, easy-to-understand</b> content           |
| Static Infographic      | “Great for an HCP to click for more details when they are ready to consume it”                                                                                                                                                                                                             | • “Very busy slides”<br>• “I liked sifting through the information, but there was a lot there for one infographic”                                                                                                                                                                   | • Too much information on the page and excessive scrolling<br>• “I think this looks too much like a poster at a conference. This could be presented much more simply”                                | Static infographics should feature <b>streamlined content and simplified interfaces</b>                                                              |
| Video                   | • Ideal video length was <1-3 minutes<br>• “The video was very visually engaging, so it was easy to pay attention”<br>• “The information is not too detailed but provides enough easy-to-digest material that people may find worthwhile”<br>• “Kept moving without getting too technical” | • Long video length, wordiness, few graphics, fast-moving parts, and robotic vocal delivery limit engagement<br>• Mechanism of action was rated as less important, especially for patients<br>• Target audience must be decided prior to development of deliverable                  | • Mechanism of action pieces were too complicated<br>• Too much information moving too fast; not enough time for users to read and comprehend<br>• Unclear about setting to be shared in             | Videos should feature <b>short length, engaging visuals, slower pacing, simplified content, and an understanding of key topics for each audience</b> |
| Data Visualization      | “A great format to present these data; it’s nice to be able to pick and choose what you want to review next”                                                                                                                                                                               | • Rated as a useful way to present information, but too many click-throughs limits the user experience<br>• Target audience must be considered, especially if a “wealth of data” is presented<br>• “[The reader] may prefer to read the paper themselves instead of finding it here” | • Navigability must be streamlined to return to previous areas<br>• “Too much information without explanation”<br>• If patients are not interested in this type of information, the value is limited | Data visualization tools should feature <b>simplified navigation, fewer click-throughs, and an understanding of key topics for each audience</b>     |

### Partnering With Industry on Social Media

During the advisory board, advisors shared their insights on partnering with pharmaceutical companies on social media platforms (Figure 2)

Figure 2. DOL insights on partnering with industry for social media posts.



### Utilization of X (formerly known as Twitter)

- Advisors were potentially more comfortable engaging with pharmaceutical-sponsored tweets if they were a primary author on a journal article, lead trial investigator, or a consultant, but not solely as a promoter of sponsored activities
  - Advisors noted that negativity spreads easily on X and sharing pharmaceutical content could be considered a risk to personal brand
  - Sharing of content is more likely to happen if DOLs are passionate about the content and if it aligns with their personal brand
- As of the date of this analysis (March 2023), advisors thought that X was still the best social media platform for sharing ideas, although there was dispersed opinion on whether the younger generation will continue to use X

POSTER 37 (Rotz et al) reports **current behaviors of healthcare providers on social media**, with a focus on X

### The Future of Peer-to-Peer Education

- Monitoring ChatGPT and other versions of artificial intelligence is of high interest
- The new generation of healthcare providers wants to multitask and is comfortable consuming many types of media, especially while commuting (eg, podcasts), at lunch, or during downtimes (eg, short videos) as long as content is easily accessible, short, and impactful

## CONCLUSIONS

- DOLs are more likely to engage with digital content if it is new, engaging, useful, high yield, and has a storyline “hook”
- These findings merit special consideration for industry partners to determine which elements of digital storytelling are most prudent to pursue
  - For instance, return on investment for data visualization tools may be lower than that for infographics or short videos
  - Building digital infrastructure may be a better use of resources compared with creating one-off pieces
- Actionable outcomes include prioritization of short, high-yield content with streamlined interactivity (ie, fewer clicks), enhanced partnerships with DOLs to create content, and further data analytics to determine ideal story content