infodepots

PHYSICIAN COMMUNICATIONS REPORT - 2024

ALIGNING WITH MODERN PREFERENCES







Analyzing Physicians' Media Habits, Information Access Choices, and Future Industry Trends

Introduction

As the healthcare landscape evolves, physicians are adapting their communication preferences and practices. Our recent primary and secondary research highlights the ongoing need for healthcare and pharmaceutical marketers to continually evaluate their engagement strategies to effectively connect with physicians.

In our study, we found that physicians still value in-person meetings and events. They also remain receptive to certain marketing communications, such as emails.

However, there has been a notable shift in their media consumption habits, with more time spent out-of-office focusing on medical information. Healthcare marketers should take note: your audience is more receptive than ever to tailored messaging about topics they prioritize.

Let's delve into physicians' interests, preferred communication methods, and their perspectives on the industry.

Our Research Methodology

Our research methodology combines comprehensive primary and secondary research to provide deep insights into physician communication preferences and practices. We conducted surveys and interviews with a diverse group of physicians to gather firsthand data on their media habits and engagement preferences.

Additionally, we analyzed industry reports, academic papers, and market trends to supplement our findings. This mixed-methods approach ensures a robust and well-rounded understanding of the evolving healthcare landscape. By integrating quantitative and qualitative data, we deliver actionable recommendations for healthcare and pharmaceutical marketers.

Key Takeaways

It is clear from our recent research that there has been a shift in how healthcare providers prefer to interact with their network and marketing partners on this side of the pandemic. Here are some key takeaways from our 2024 Research.

01

Face-to-face meetings are gaining popularity, whether with marketers, medical professionals, or providers. Even if the epidemic accelerated the transition to online meetings, people are beginning to see the advantages of in-person communication. Although virtual meetings and remote work are still common, more professionals are starting to use a hybrid strategy that incorporates both in-person and virtual contact.

02

In order to improve patient care, physicians value clinically relevant information regarding drugs and hospital rankings. This information helps them stay current on therapies, make evidence-based judgments, and evaluate the caliber of healthcare facilities.

03

Healthcare marketers can reach doctors through social media platforms and other identifiable media. Social media is playing a vital role in healthcare, medical education, and research by fostering collaboration and enabling research dissemination. Healthcare professionals use these platforms to improve public health literacy, but concerns about misinformation and content accuracy persist.



In 2024, platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, Twitter, and in-house apps are essential in healthcare, offering patient communication, professional development, and knowledge-sharing opportunities.

infodepots

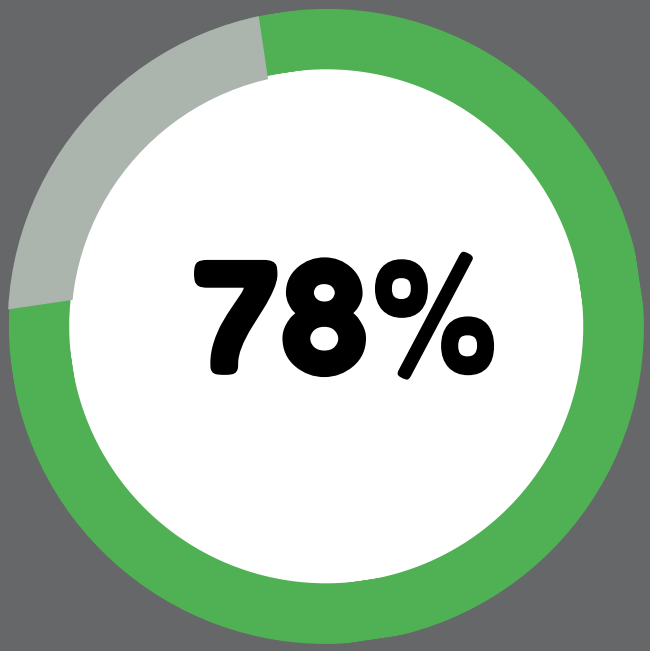
Most Doctors are Practicing in Hospitals

Even in 2023 and 2024, the trend of independent physicians declining over the past decade continued, reaching a new peak of 78% of doctors being employed by hospitals or other corporate entities as of the new year.

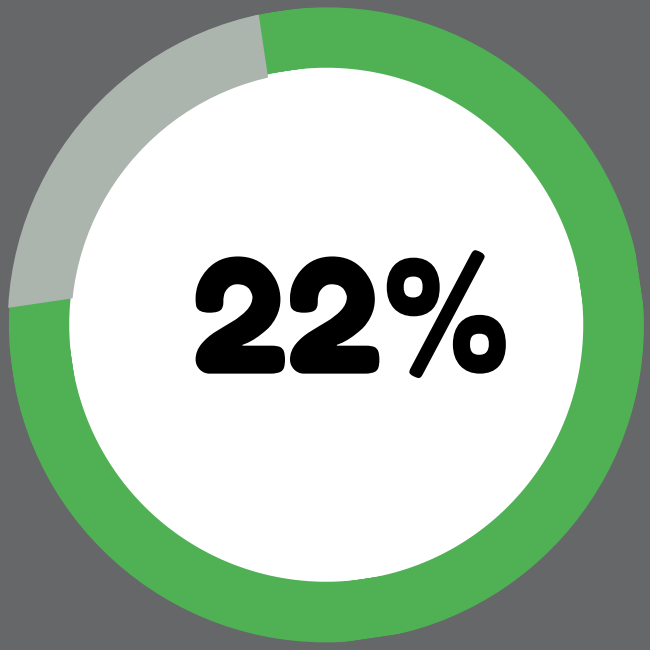
In the past two years, there has been a 5.1% increase in the share, according to a report commissioned by the Physicians Advocacy Institute and prepared by Avalere. The report also states that the total percentage was 73.9% in 2022 and 25.8% in 2012.

The recent growth of this share has been mainly driven by hospitals, rather than private equity, payers, and large pharmacy chains. All groups experienced a surge in employment and practice ownership during the early COVID-19 pandemic as physicians sought stable income due to revenue disruptions.

Resources: FIERCE Healthcare

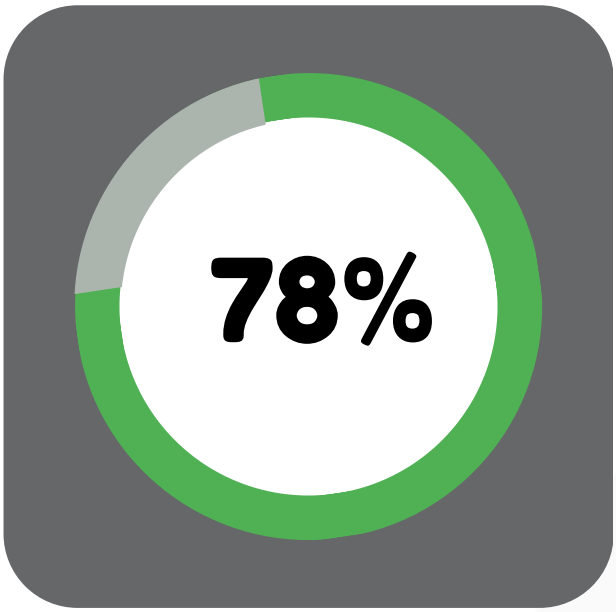


Nearly 78% of doctors employed by hospitals / corporate entities are continuing to shift away from independent practice.



Nearly 23% of doctors employed by Clinics are continuing to practice independently.

Healthcare Professionals Favor is Email Communication



78% of respondents identified email as their first or second preferred method for receiving information relevant to their roles as clinicians

We surveyed doctors to rank their communication preferences for comparative analysis of the options presented. Email remains the most preferred method, with 78% ranking it as their first or second choice.

Professional conferences came in second, with 60% of doctors selecting them as one of their top two preferences. In-office visits ranked third, with only 30% of doctors choosing this method as their first or second choice.



Email: 78%

Professional Conferences : 65%

In - Office Visits: 35%

Direct Mail : 20%

Phone Calls: 8%

Social Media : 10%

SMS/Text Message: 6%

Fax: 1%

infodepots

Resources: Primary & Secondary Research.

infodepots

Smartphones Are the Primary Devices Preferred by Doctors

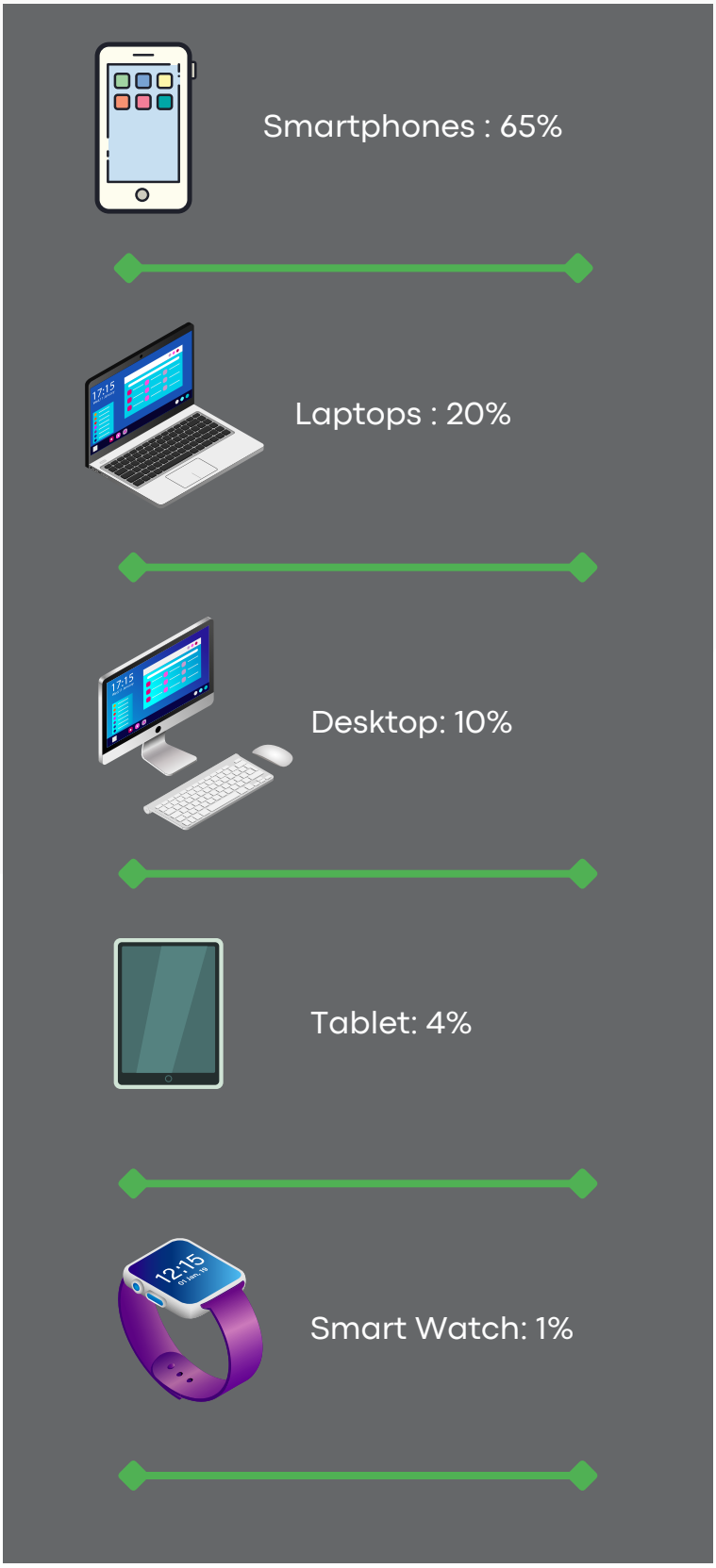
It's no surprise that 65% of respondents now prefer smartphones as their primary device, up from 54% last year.

Laptops and desktops also remain widely used, with 20% of respondents opting for laptops and 10% for desktops.

Interestingly, 1% of respondents have started reading emails on smartwatches,

With smartphones being the dominant choice, marketers should prioritize optimizing their email content for mobile screens.

Additionally, online advertising should be designed to perform effectively on mobile devices.



Resources: Primary & Secondary Research.

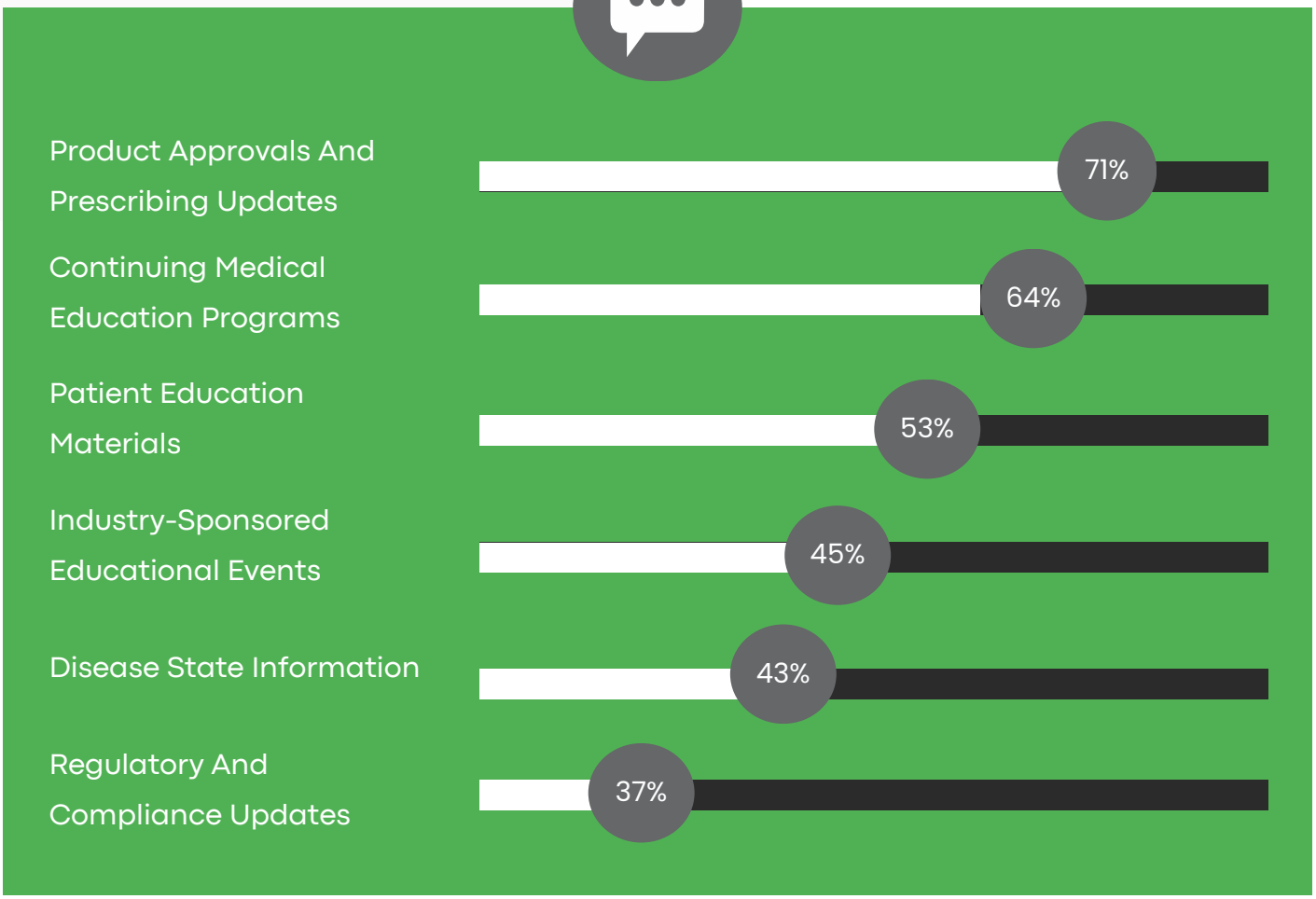
Content Preferences Shift

This year, we streamlined our options to provide more concise and actionable data to physicians regarding their preferred information from healthcare professionals and physicians.



When asked to select their preferred types of content, more doctors opted for product approvals and prescribing updates than any other category. Information on continuing medical education (CME) programs was the second most popular choice. This marks a reversal from last year's survey, where CMEs were the top preference.

Interest in patient education materials has also risen, with 53% of respondents selecting it as one of their preferred topics, up from 43% last year.



Resources: Primary & Secondary Research.

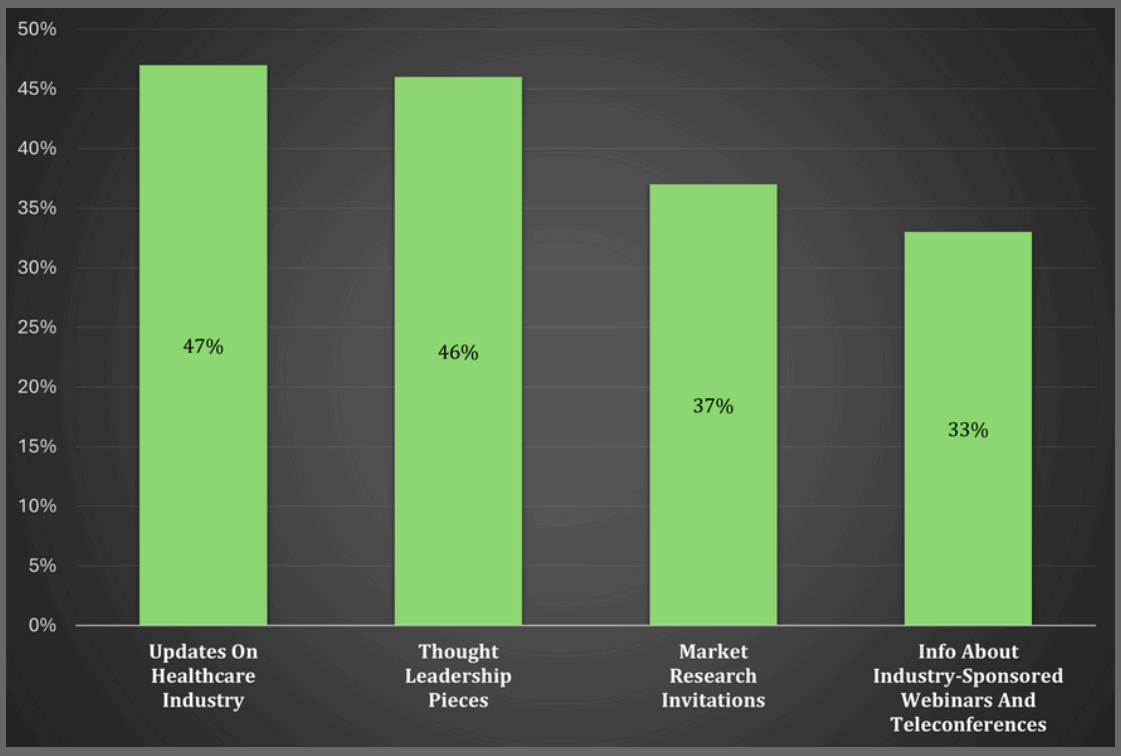
What Doctors Don't Like?



Physicians were asked to identify the most unhelpful or annoying information they received from pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturers. They commonly expressed a dislike for non-educational marketing materials. This includes invitations to participate in market research, which they find intrusive and irrelevant to their immediate needs.

Thought leadership articles, while potentially insightful, were often viewed as self-promotional rather than educational. Industry-sponsored webinars and teleconferences were also seen as less valuable, perceived more as sales pitches than genuine learning opportunities. Additionally, general updates on the healthcare industry were considered too broad and not directly applicable to their day-to-day practice.

What types of information do doctors find unhelpful from pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturers?



Resources: Primary & Secondary Research.

Reaching Out to Physicians? Utilize Multiple Invitation Methods for Event Success.

infodepots

As per our research, over 80% of physicians prefer email invitations for their convenience and direct access to registration links. Email's ability to deliver personalized content tailored to recipients' specific interests enhances its effectiveness.

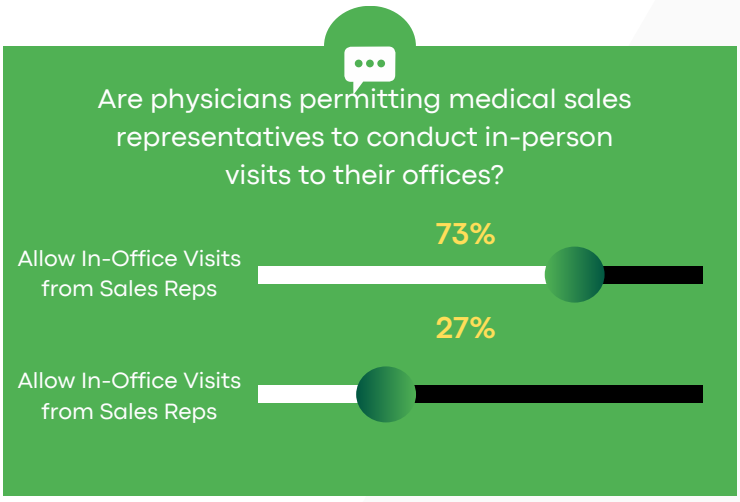
However, many physicians also appreciate the personal touch of hand-delivered invitations and the formality of traditional mail, which can stand out amid digital clutter and be easily revisited. This diversity in preferences underscores the need for healthcare marketers to adopt an integrated approach.

By combining email with personally delivered invites and traditional mail, marketers can broaden their reach and cater to individual preferences, ensuring no potential attendee is overlooked. Follow-up campaigns across all channels can reinforce the initial invitation and encourage registration.

Which format of invitation to webinars, conferences, or educational events are you most likely to read and respond to?

82%	54%	50%	14%
Email Invite With Website Link For Registration	Company Rep. Invite Delivered To The Office	Direct Mail Invite To The Office	Phone Call Solicitation To Participate

Increasing Number of Physicians Opt for In-Office Meetings?



73% of physicians have permitted in-office visits from sales representatives, a significant increase from last year's 55%. Conversely, only 27% of doctors are now refusing such visits, a notable decrease from 45% in the previous survey.

Our survey did not inquire about the reasons behind providers' preferences for or against in-office visits from medical representatives."

Resources: Primary & Secondary Research.

Rising Demand for Patient Support Materials

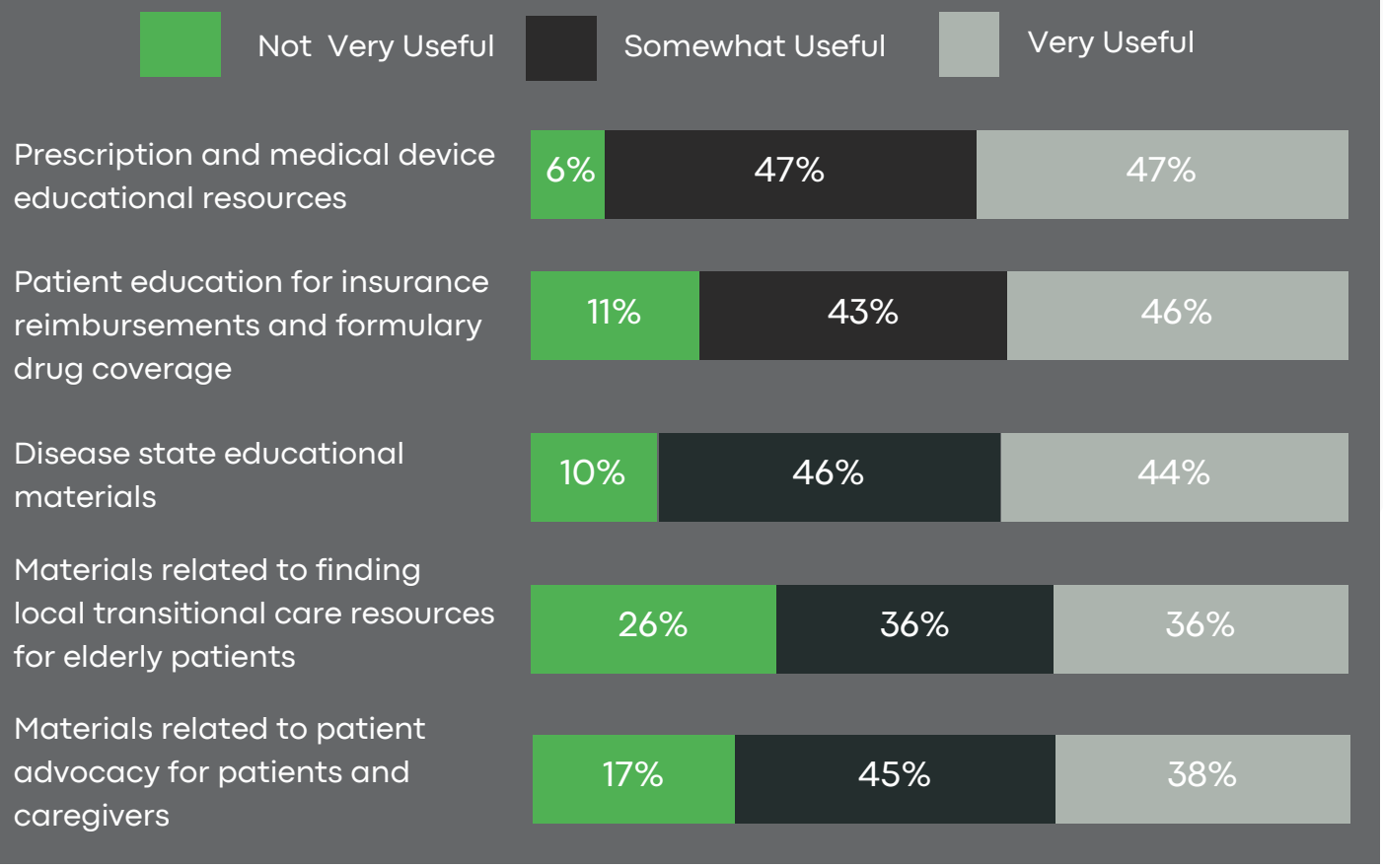
Healthcare providers have expressed increased interest in a variety of resources. This year, the most valued materials include educational resources for prescriptions and medical devices, as well as patient education related to insurance reimbursements and formulary drug coverage.

There is a notable resurgence in interest across different topics. For example, disease state educational materials, previously rated as'very useful' by only 26% of respondents last year, are now considered'very useful' by 44% of respondents.

Additionally, materials related to local transitional care resources for elderly patients and advocacy for patients and caregivers have been rated as more beneficial compared to the previous year.



Healthcare providers rated different patient support materials by their usefulness to their practice



infodepots

Changing Website Preferences

UpToDate has narrowly overtaken Medscape as the preferred online resource for physicians, with 53% of providers frequently visiting the site. Close behind, medical journal websites are accessed by 50% of physicians, marking a 9% increase from the previous year.

Medscape is used by 47% of providers. Notably, the use of the AMA as an information source has risen significantly, from 8% last year to 17% this year. With the top four options separated by only single digits, it is evident that physicians are diversifying their online information sources.

Doctors Use Social Media Like Everyone Else

Physicians utilize social media to stay connected with friends and family (31%) and for news, entertainment, and recipes (19%). On the professional front, 16% of doctors use social media to gather healthcare information for their practice, while 9% use it to communicate with fellow healthcare professionals. Additionally, 8% of doctors employ social media to interact with patients.

Social Media Usag, Which statement Applies to HP's

Connect With Family & Friends	31%
Source to know more	19%
I Never use it	17%
Source for Health related Information	16%
To communicate with othe rhealthcare professionals	9%
To communicate with parents	8%

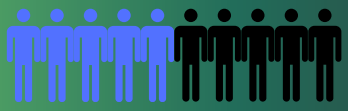
What websites do physicians primarily use to research healthcare products, medical devices, and disease states?



Up to date: 53%



A Medical journal website : 50%



Medscape: 47%



MedsAn association website hosted within my specialty: 44%



PubMed: 34%



The manufacturer's product website: 33%



PDR: 17%



Epocrates: 17%



AMA Website: 17%



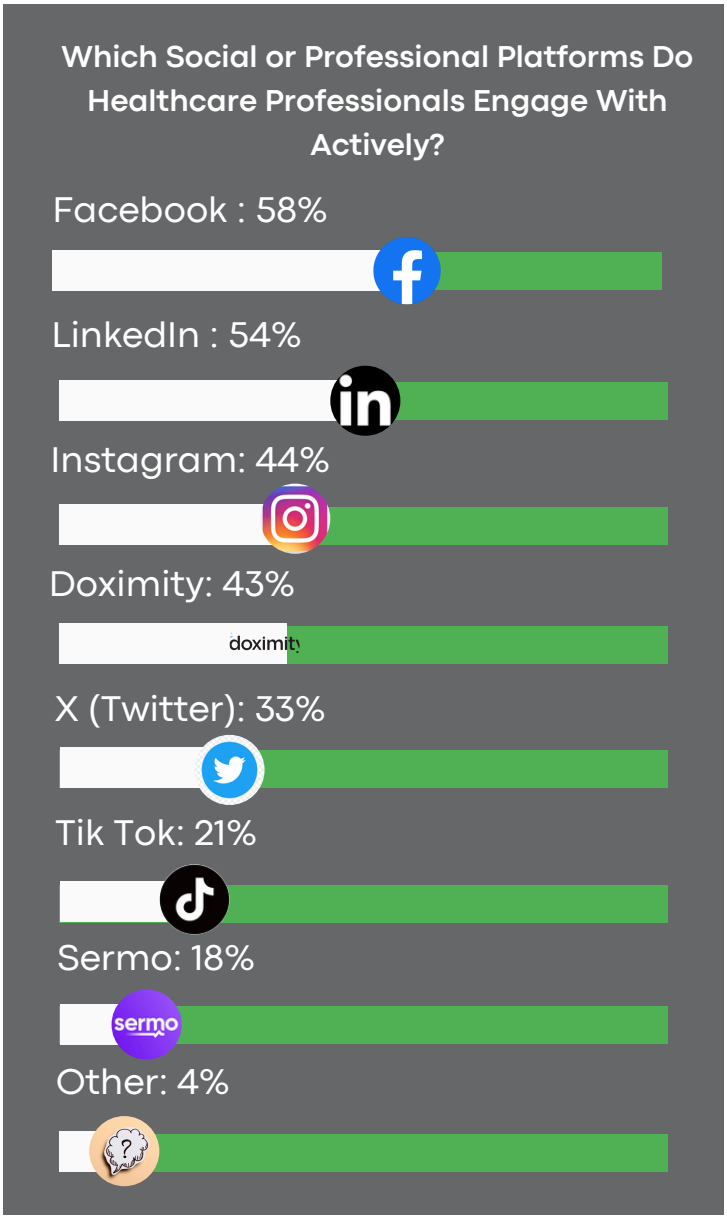
Other: 3%

Doctors' Preferred Social Media Platforms: Facebook and LinkedIn

Last year, we noted the rapid rise of Doximity, a social network specifically for medical professionals, which had surpassed all other social and professional networks except Facebook. This year, the trend has shifted, with LinkedIn now leading Doximity at 54%.

Other social and professional networks also saw significant growth. Instagram usage increased to 44% from 24% last year, while X (formerly Twitter) usage grew from 19% to 33%. TikTok now attracts 21% of respondents, up from 12% last year, and Sermo usage rose from 10% to 18%.

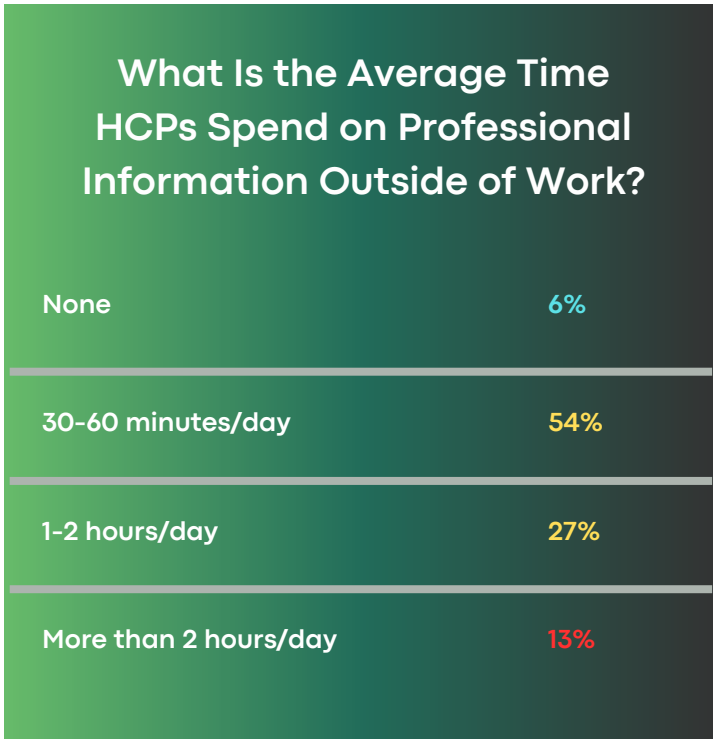
This year's survey allowed physicians to select all social media platforms they use, even occasionally, a detail not included in last year's survey.



More Time Spent on Work While Out of the Office

Physicians, like many professionals, are under increasing pressure to stay current, resulting in a notable trend of consuming professional information outside of work hours. This year, 54% of doctors reported spending 30 to 60 minutes daily on professional information when not in the office, while 27% spent one to two hours each day.

Notably, 13% of respondents reported consuming more than two hours of professional information daily, a significant rise from 0% last year. This trend suggests that doctors may be engaging with more professional content at home due to increased workloads or changes in work-life balance.



infodepots

When it comes to participating in Continuing Medical Education (CME) activities, which format does HCP's prefer?

- Webinar and online courses: 39%
- In-Persons programs : 28%
- Blended learning : 16%
- Printed education materials : 9%
- Podcasts and audio content: 6%
- Others : 2%



One Size Does Not Fit All for Continuing Medical Education Formats

Respondents showed diverse preferences for the format of Continuing Medical Education (CME) programs. A significant portion, 39%, expressed interest in both webinars and online courses, highlighting a demand for flexibility and the convenience of remote learning. In contrast, 28% of respondents preferred traditional in-person programs, underscoring the value of face-to-face interaction and hands-on learning experiences.

Blended learning, which combines online and in-person education, was favored by 16% of respondents, indicating a desire for a balanced approach that leverages the strengths of both formats. Additionally, 6% chose podcasts as their preferred format, reflecting a niche yet growing interest in audio-based learning for its accessibility and ease of integration into busy schedules.

Growing Acceptance of Digital Advertising

This year, nearly 80% of physicians reported being open to receiving digital advertising communications from pharmaceutical, medical device, or other healthcare organizations, with 30% being very receptive. This is a significant increase compared to last year's mere 5%.

This shift is encouraging for marketers. With the notable rise in interest, it's crucial to thoughtfully design digital advertising campaigns that provide genuine value to doctors, while also acknowledging their selective engagement habits.

How receptive are physicians to professional content delivered through digital advertising by pharmaceutical, medical device, or other healthcare organizations?

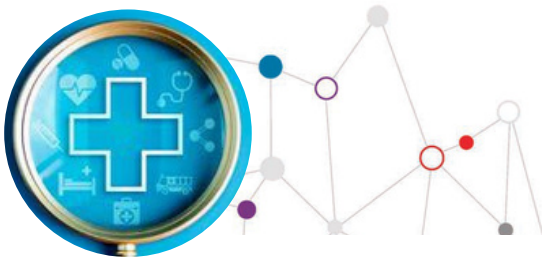


Very Receptive	Somewhat Receptive	Not At All Receptive
30%	48%	23%



Doctor's Concerns

Physician Burnout	30%
Artificial Intelligence	23%
Payment Model Transitions	16%
Care Authorization	16%
Regulations	7%
Nursing Shortages	5%
Pricing	2%
Age Of Their Patients	1%



Addressing Physicians' Concerns Amid High Burnout Rates

With physician burnout remaining high, it is crucial to address doctors' concerns. Our recent survey highlighted various challenges, with percentages reflecting the proportion of respondents who ranked each issue as their top concern. Key concerns included physician burnout (30%), artificial intelligence (23%), payment model transitions (16%), care authorization (16%), regulations (7%), nursing shortages (5%), pricing (2%), and the age of their patients (1%).

This data underscores the diverse and significant challenges physicians face, emphasizing the need for targeted support and solutions. Recruiters and marketers must prioritize these issues to stay ahead and provide effective assistance.

infodepots

Providers Maintain Openness to Change

While the majority, 61%, reported they are not actively seeking a job, 38% of doctors indicated they are open to new roles, actively job hunting, or feeling disenchanted with medicine.

For physician recruiters and those involved in practice acquisition, these findings highlight that a significant portion of doctors are open to change. This underscores the importance of maintaining accurate records to effectively reach these potential physician candidates.

61%

Are not actively looking for a job.

38%

Are open to a new role, actively looking for a job, or even feeling disenchanted with medicine.



Which statement best describes your current attitude toward your career status?

61%	I am generally content with my current circumstances, and I have no intention of changing jobs, selling my practice, etc.
31%	I am receptive to new job or new ownership arrangement for my practice, but I am not actively looking.
5%	I am eager to find a new job, sell my practice, etc., and I am actively looking.
2%	I am disenchanted with medicine, and I would like to find a different career path

About the 2024 Physician Communications Preferences Primary & Secondary Research

For over a decade, Infodepots' annual Physician Communications Report has been highly regarded for its valuable insights into doctors' communication and information-gathering preferences.

Healthcare marketers from agencies, hospitals, health systems, and pharmaceutical companies view our report as essential reading and eagerly anticipate its release each year.

This year's survey gathered input from 270+ physicians across a broad range of medical specialties, including Allergy & Immunology, Anesthesiology, Behavioral Medicine, Dermatology, Emergency Medicine, Endocrinology, Family Medicine, Gynecology, Intensive Care, Psychiatry, Nuclear Medicine, Oncology, Radiology, Surgery, and Urology.

About Infodepots'

In today's digital world, data serves as the lifeline of businesses. At Infodepots, we understand the pivotal role data plays in driving decisions, strategies, and, ultimately, success. Our cutting-edge data management solutions are designed to empower your business by enhancing the quality, accessibility, and security of your data

Our Mission

At Infodepots, our mission is to empower businesses by unlocking the full potential of their data. We are committed to delivering innovative data solutions that drive efficiency, enhance decision-making, and fuel growth.

Through our state-of-the-art technology and expert insights, we aim to transform complex data into actionable intelligence, enabling our clients to achieve their strategic objectives and maintain a competitive edge in their respective industries.

Infodepots is dedicated to integrity, excellence, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement to meet the evolving needs of our clients in the dynamic world of data.

50k+
Partnerships

100+
Employees

20+
Years of Experience

100+
Countries Covered

5k+
Clienteles

95%
Client Retained

12.8M
Physicians Data

65.1M
Healthcare Professionals Data

Why Choose US

- **Expertise:** Our team of experts boasts years of experience in data management, guaranteeing solutions that are not only effective but also customized to meet your specific needs.
- **Innovation:** At Infodepots, we are committed to staying at the forefront of technology, constantly evolving our solutions to meet the challenges of an ever-changing data landscape.
- **Customer-Centric Approach:** Your success is our success. We take pride in our collaborative approach, working closely with you at every step to ensure that our solutions deliver the results you need.
- **Security and Compliance:** With a deep understanding of global data protection laws, we design our solutions to not only safeguard your data but to also ensure that your business remains compliant.

Additional Services

- Email Marketing
- Telemarketing
- Direct Mail Marketing
- Social Media Data
- Social Media Marketing
- SEO
- Data Management Services
- Market Research
- Data Analytics & Much More



infodepots

Contact Us

+1-833-936-4636

info@infodepots.com

www.infodepots.com/

228 Park Ave S 60111
New York, NY – 10003

