

Physician Insights Report

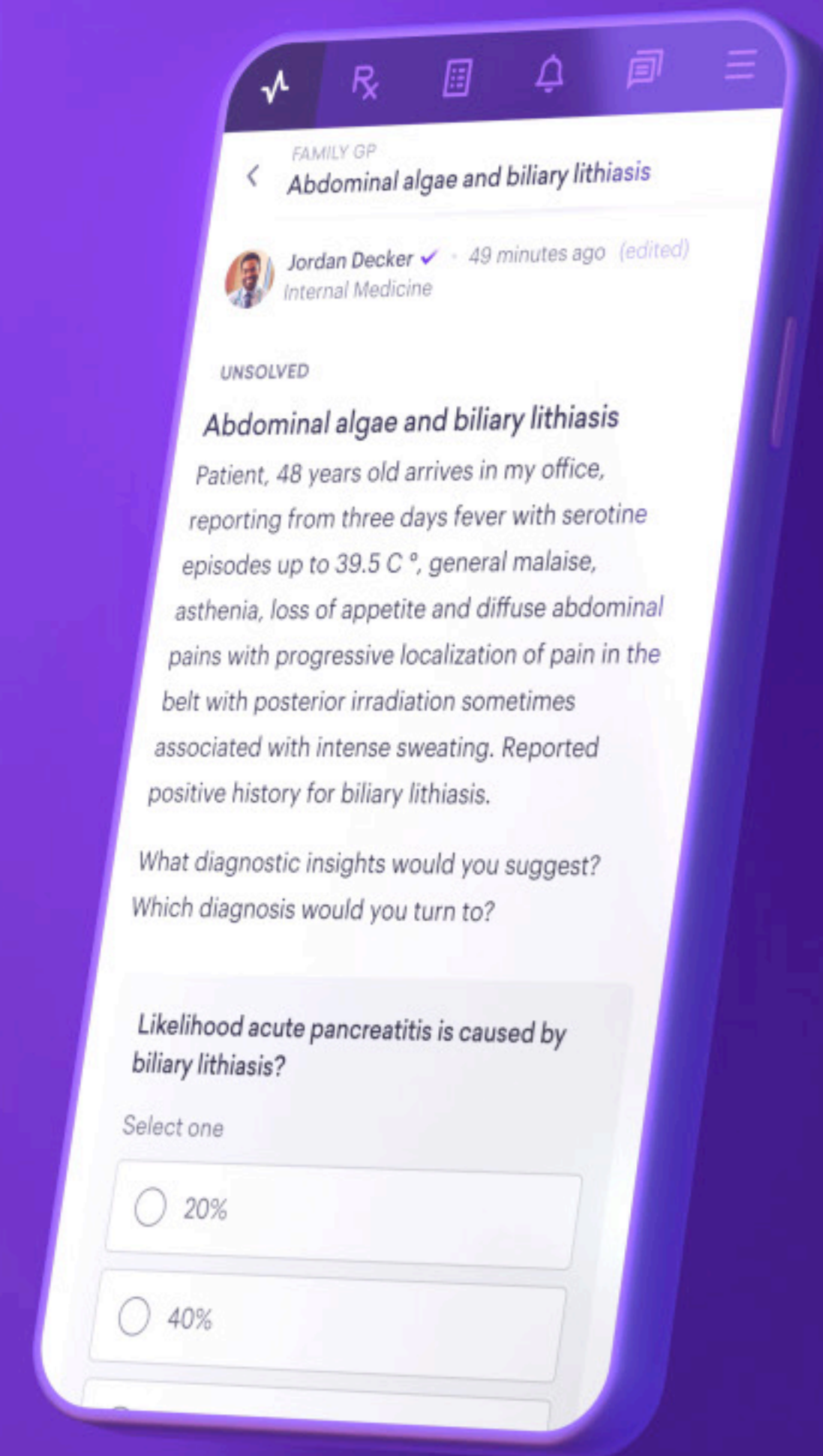
Meet the social savvy physician & learn how to better engage them

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Today's physician is online and social... are you?

For years, physician social media engagement was slowly but steadily climbing. But then in 2019, the American Society of Clinical Oncology reported a dramatic increase in oncologists participating in social conversations.¹

COVID-19 completely changed the way the world communicated, including another substantial rise in the number of physicians engaging through social media. **In 2021, Sermo's platform grew 15% in unique logins and users spent an additional 28% of time on the platform.**²

But who is the social physician and what is the best way to reach and engage them? Take a deep dive into how physicians are using social media personally and professionally—and how to optimize your digital strategy.

¹ <https://www.symplur.com/blog/doctors-up-patient-advocates-down-diverging-asco-twitter-engagement/>

² Sermo Analytics



Reach your audience where HCPs already consume and engage content

3 myths about HCP social media behavior

1. Doctors do not use social media for business

Actually

75% of physicians use social media +1 hour/week to advance professional goals

37% follow pharmaceutical companies or branded treatment accounts

2. Social media is not a credible source for healthcare information

Actually

89% consider physician-only social media credible

86% of HCPs value the information they see on physician-only social platforms

3. US physicians use social media the most

Actually

Over **1 million** physicians across **150+** countries use Sermo

63% of physicians in emerging markets check social media more than three times a day



Doctors use social media too!

HCP social media usage & behaviors



In the age of social media, engaging with HCPs online is more important than ever

Healthcare professionals are using social media more than ever to easily find information. On average, **HCPs check social platforms at least three times a day, spending up to 2 hours throughout the day**. HCPs in Emerging Markets tend to be the most active on social platforms.

Time spent on social media per day

	Overall	EU5	APAC	US	EM
<1 hour	42%	44%	42%	40%	22%
<1-2 hours	38%	37%	44%	43%	39%
>2 hours	20%	19%	14%	17%	39%

46% of physicians check social media for personal reasons more than 3 times a day

Only 1% of physicians say they never check social media for personal reasons

HCPs in Emerging Markets are the most active social media users, 63% check social media more than 3 times a day



Note: EM stands for Emerging Markets and includes Brazil, Turkey, Russia, China & India.

The top motivator driving HCPs to use social platforms is the ability to effortlessly find information

Top 3 features or functionalities that would drive HCPs to use social platforms more

	Total	EU5	APAC	US	Emerging markets
1	Easy to find information (37%)	Easy to find information (39%)	Easy to find information (34%)	Easy to find information (29%)	Easy to find information (29%)
2	Greater user experience (20%)	Easy to use on multiple device formats (18%)	Greater user experience (25%)	Greater user experience (26%)	Greater user experience (27%)
3	Easy to use on multiple device formats (17%)	Greater user experience (17%*)	Easy to use on multiple device formats (11%*)	Newsfeed with fresh content (14%)	Easy to use on multiple device formats (22%)

* Significantly different from Total at 95% confidence level

Q7. In your opinion, what is the top feature or functionality that would make you use a social platform more?

	EU5	APAC	USA	EM
n	422	133	92	49



HCP social media users are bucking the 90-9-1 rule

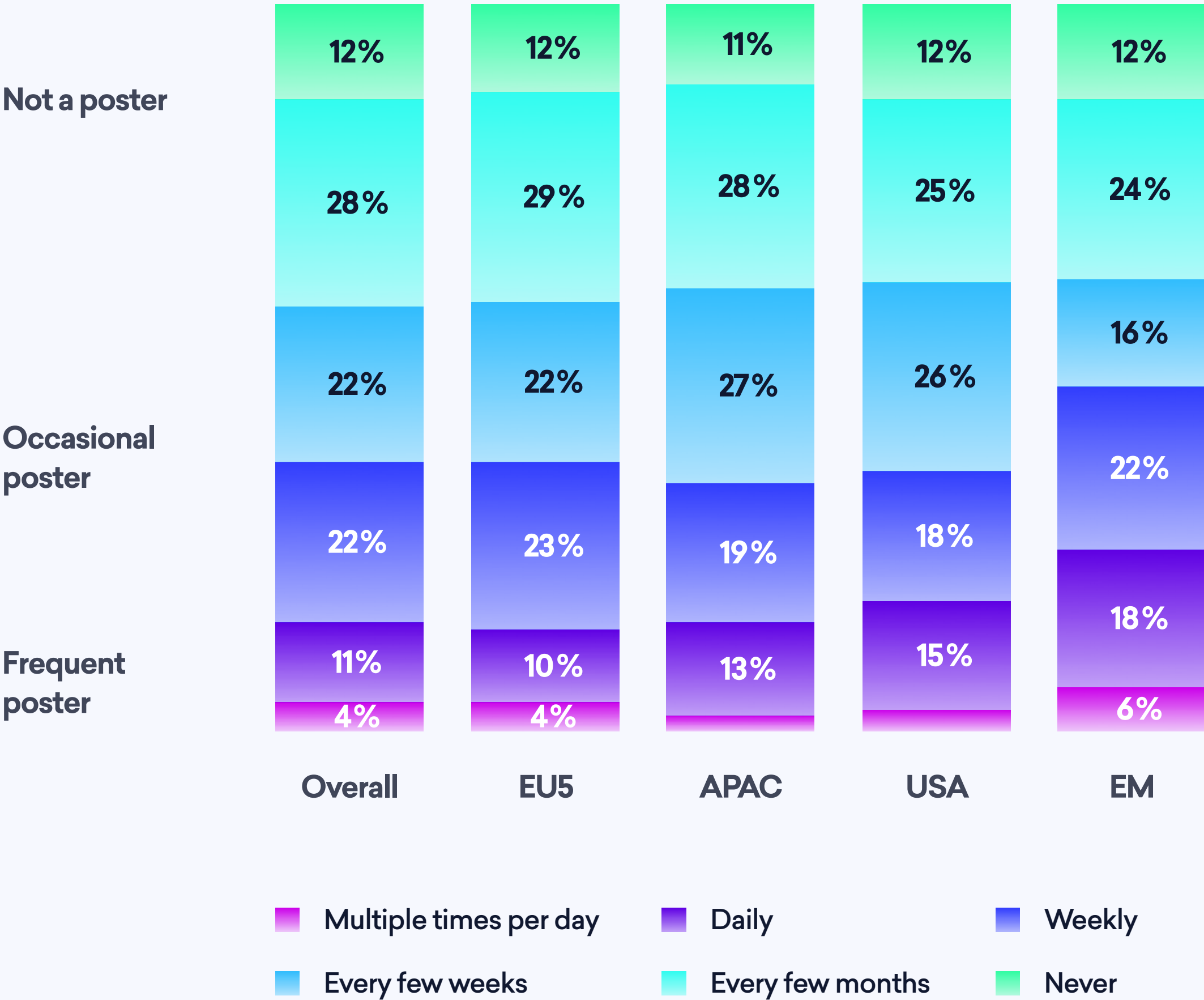
Unlike the traditional 90-9-1 rule of general social media content contribution—where 1% of users are content creators, 9% engage and 90% simply consume the content—physicians are creating, posting and engaging with content at a much higher rate.



Half of physicians post or share content on social media frequently / occasionally.



24% of physicians in Emerging Markets are frequent posters.



Q9. Do you participate in private specialty groups on social media?

	EU5	APAC	USA	EM
n	422	133	92	49



WhatsApp, Facebook, Sermo and YouTube are the most frequently used social media platforms among HCPs for personal reasons

Social media platforms used for personal reasons by market

	Overall	EU5	APAC	US	EM
1	 WhatsApp	 WhatsApp*	facebook	facebook	 WhatsApp*
2	facebook	 sermo	 sermo	 sermo	 sermo
3	 sermo	facebook	 YouTube	 YouTube	 YouTube*
4	 YouTube	 YouTube	Other*	 doximity*	Instagram*
5	Instagram	LinkedIn*	Instagram*	Other*	facebook
6	LinkedIn	Instagram	 WhatsApp*	Instagram	
7			LinkedIn*	LinkedIn	LinkedIn
8	 doximity	Other*	 doximity	 WhatsApp*	Other

Q9. Do you participate in private specialty groups on social media?

* Significantly different from Total at 95% confidence level

Other: Snapchat, TikTok, Pinterest, Reddit, Clubhouse, Skipta, Figure1



Physician-only social platforms score better on credibility, data security and value of information

“Sermo is the future of doctors’ interactions. And it’s getting better and better.



Massimo Lanzaro
Psychiatry, Italy

Platform type that enables benefits and / or features more

	Physician-only social platforms (i.e. Sermo, Doximity, etc.)	General Social Media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
Credibility	89%	22%
Ease of use	52%	70%
Convenience	55%	59%
Data security	83%	28%
Value of information	86%	26%
Connectivity with peers	69%	49%
Privacy	86%	26%

Q8. When comparing the following platform types, please select which platform type enables the following benefits and/or features more:

	EU5	APAC	USA	EM
n	422	133	92	49



Sharing & caring on social media

HCPs' social habits for professional advancement

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Physicians are using social media more than an hour a week to advance professional goals

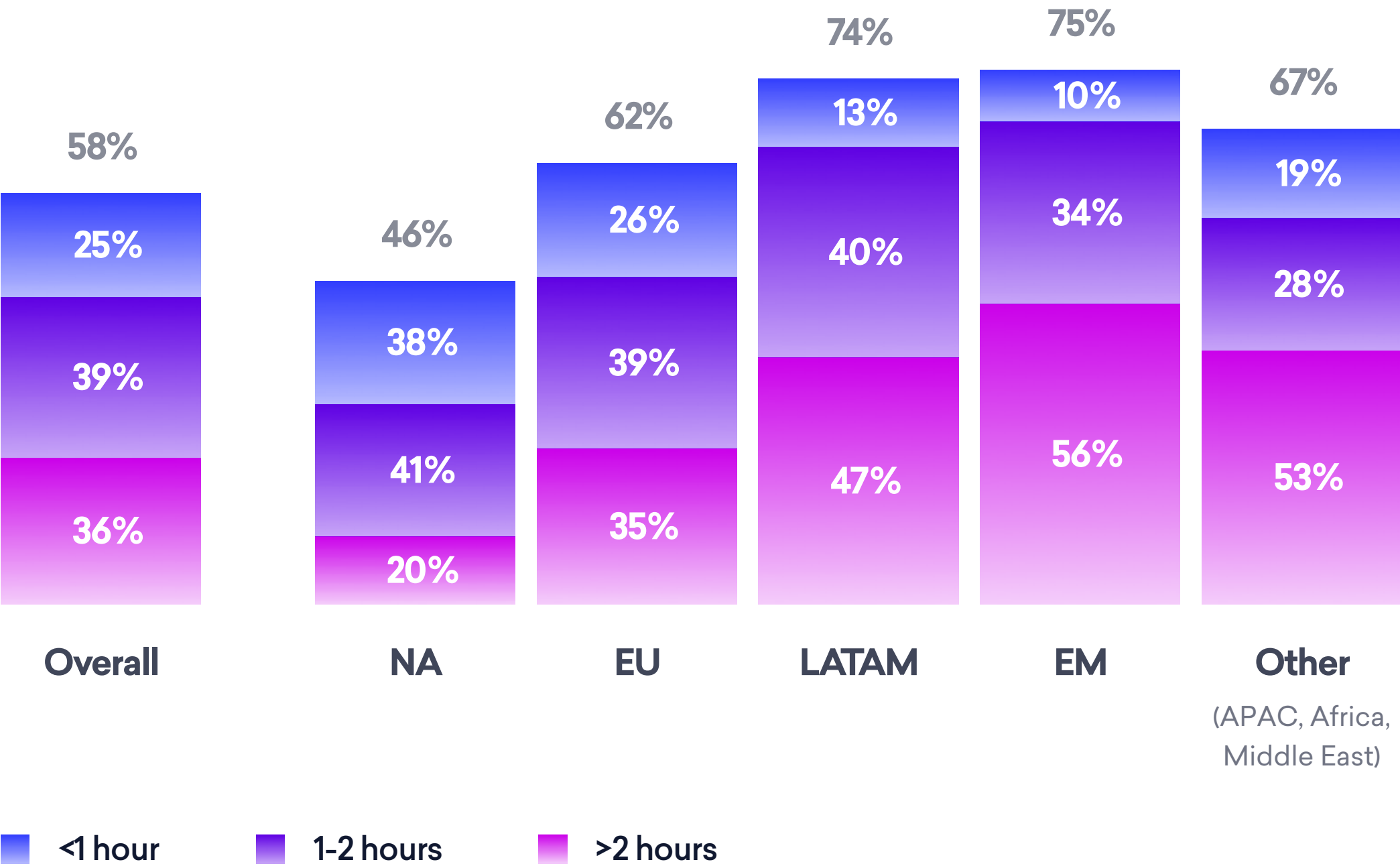
More than half of HCPs use social media for professional reasons, with those in Emerging Markets and LATAM being the most active for this purpose.

Poll Q1. Do you use social media professionally?

Poll Q2. How frequently do you use social media for professional purposes?

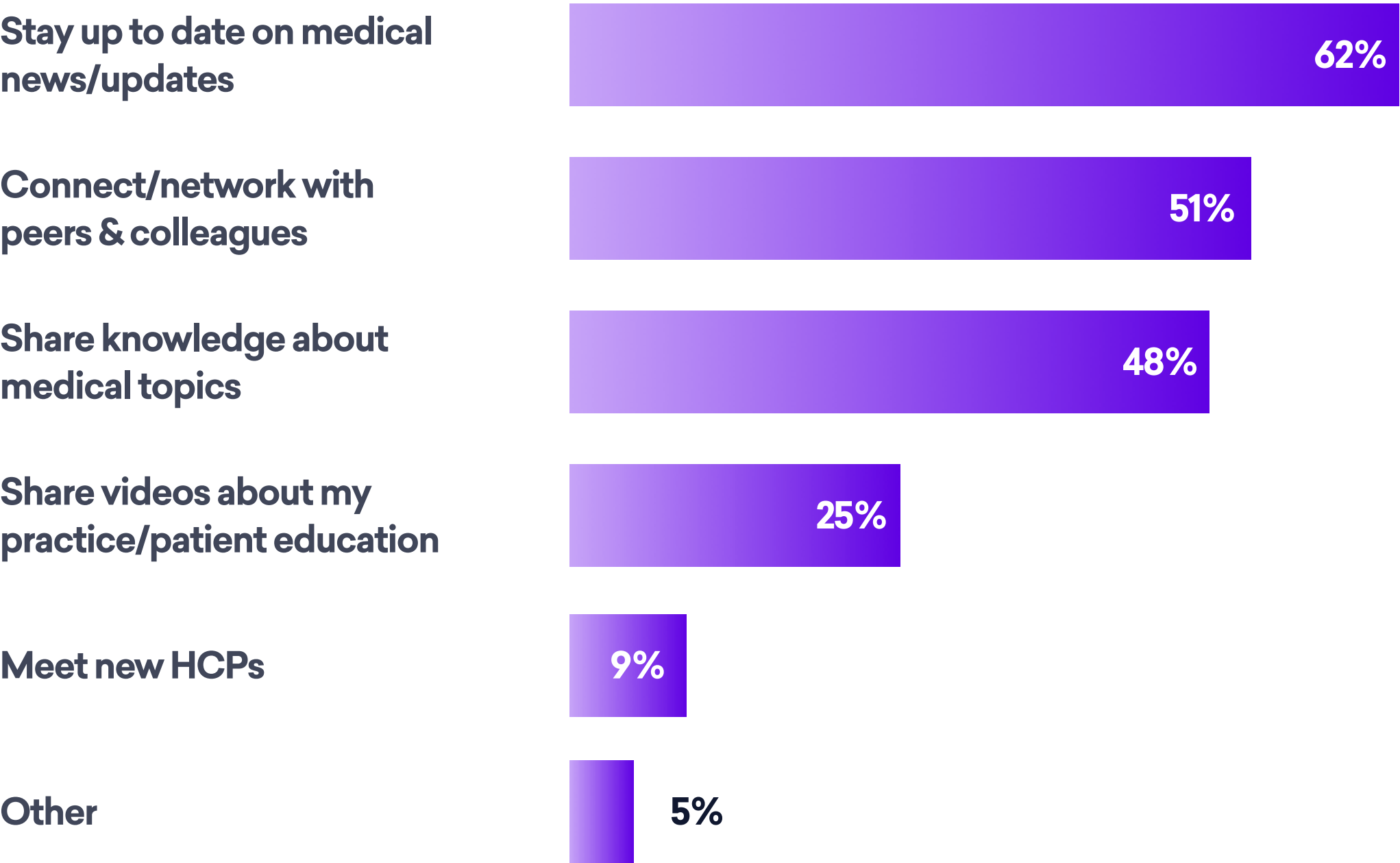
	NA	EU	LATAM	EM	Other
n	606	325	199	160	49

Time spent on social professionally



Reasons HCPs use social media professionally (among users)

Ways of using social media professionally (among users)



“*[Sermo is] An excellent tool that allows us to connect with colleagues around the world.*”



Sermo member
Internal Medicine, Argentina



Poll Q1. Professionally, how do you use social media?

	N. Amer	EU	LATAM	EM	Other
n	606	325	199	160	49

Across all regions, general social media is the best online tool for managing and promoting physicians' services

Top 3 social media & online platforms to manage & promote HCPs' services

	Total	NA	EU	LATAM	EM	Other (APAC, Africa, Middle East)
1	General social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)	General social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)	General social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)	General social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)	General social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)	General social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)
2	Health System Practice Websites	Health System Practice Websites	Health System Practice Websites	Online business services (Google)	Online business services (Google)	Health System Practice Websites
3	Online business services (google)	Doctor Review (Healthgrades, CareDash, Yelp, etc.)	Online business services (google)	Health System Practice Websites	Health System Practice Websites	Online business services (google)

Poll Q0. What social media & online platforms do you leverage most to manage & promote your services?

	NA	EU	LATAM	EM	Other
n	616	332	207	162	49



HCPs look for a variety of content to help manage their online presence, the most popular being practice management best practices

Poll Q1. Professionally, how do you use social media?

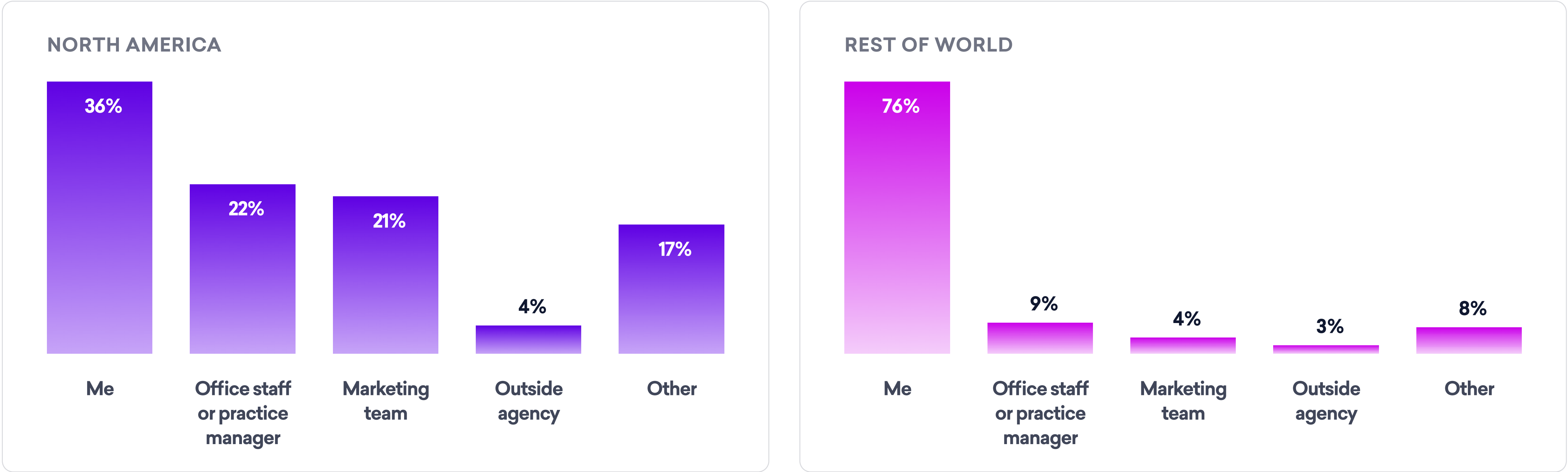
	N. Amer	EU	LATAM	EM	Other
n	606	325	199	160	49

Content or resources needed to help manage professional online presence



There are considerable differences between who manages physicians' online presence depending on where they practice

Management of practice's online presence



Poll Q3. Who manages your practice's online presence?

	NA	EU	LATAM	EM	Other
<i>n</i>	598	318	196	159	48

**It's time to get social
with your customers**

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What does the social physician look like?

Physicians, just like us, are increasingly using social media both personally and professionally.

Healthcare companies have a clear opportunity to meet physicians on the social platforms where they are already consuming and engaging with relevant content.

“*Sermo became my ‘2nd Medical Home’! Thanks for being always here when I get up in the mornings and obviously, thank you to the colleagues on Sermo.*”

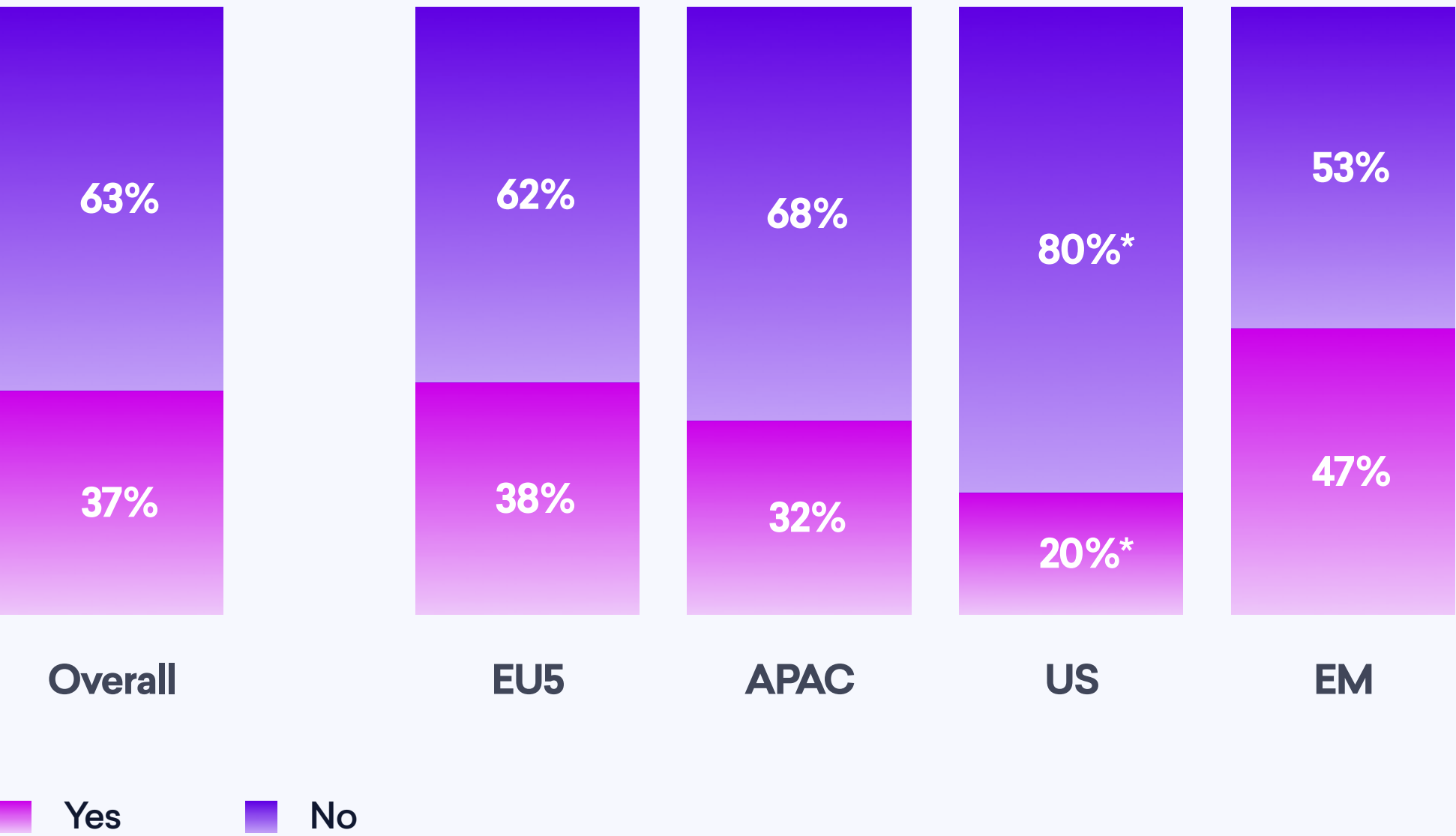


Sermo Member
Oncology, Argentina



One-third of HCPs follow pharmaceutical companies or branded treatment accounts

Following pharmaceutical companies or branded treatment accounts on social media



* Significantly different from Total at 95% confidence level

Reasons for following (among those who follow)



Q10. Do you follow pharmaceutical companies or branded treatment accounts on social media?

Q11. Why do you follow a pharma company or brand on their social channels?

	EU5	APAC	US	EM
n	422	133	92	49



Physicians want more clinical trial data and treatment information in their social feeds

Top 5 types of content considered valuable from pharma on social platforms

	Total	EU5	APAC	US	EM
Clinical trial data	61%	64%*	48%*	47%*	69%
CME / CE	47%	47%	43%	47%	53%
Treatment information	46%	47%	36%*	32%*	61%*
Patient cases	37%	36%	34%	32%	53%*
Dosing information	32%	31%	28%	29%	51%*

Content that physicians value most from pharma includes clinical trial data, CME / CE credits, and treatment information. Patient cases and dosing information are also considered valuable, but to a lesser degree.



* Significantly different from Total at 95% confidence level

Q12. What content do you find valuable from pharma on social platforms?

	EU5	APAC	USA	EM
n	422	133	92	49

Turning learnings into actions

How to reach physicians in the social media age

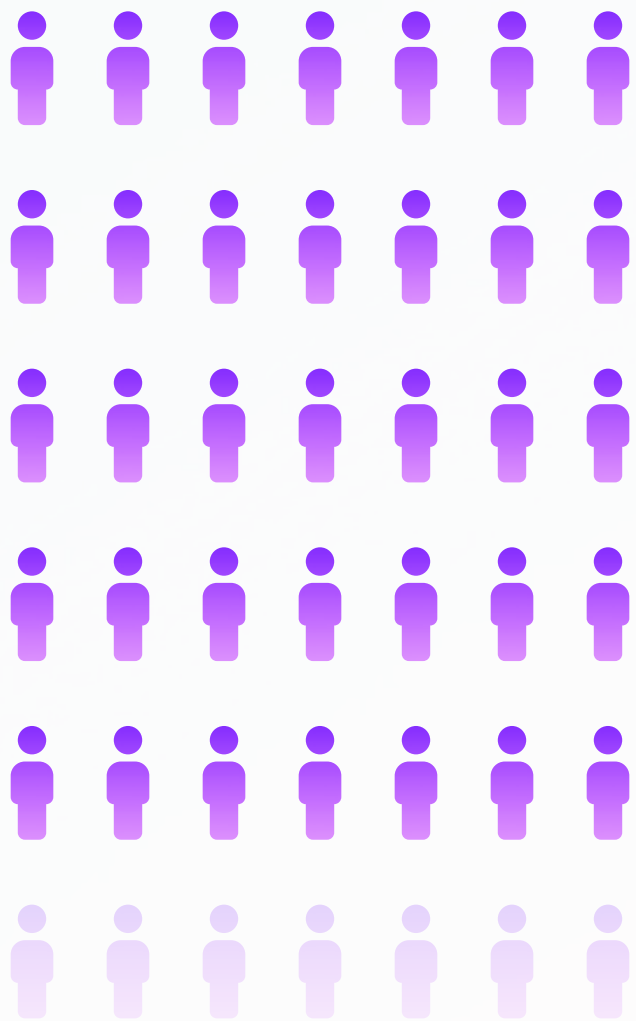
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New rules of engagement: pharma execs & HCPs agree on the new digital-first approach

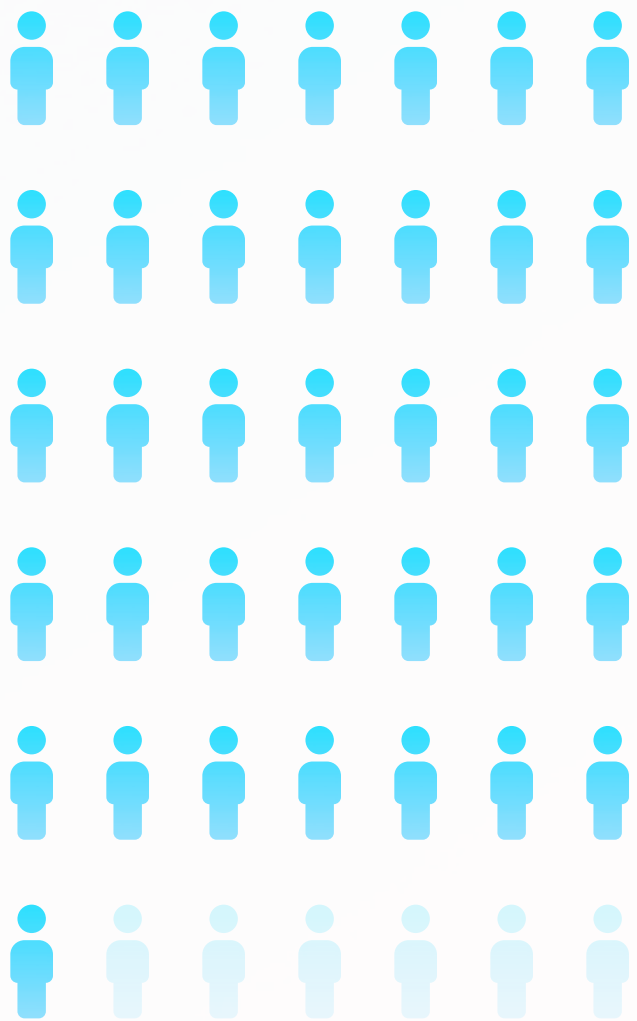
The further past the initial COVID lockdown we move, the more it becomes apparent virtual engagement and digital content is here to stay.

82%



Pharma execs who agree
digitalization will likely
continue post-COVID

84%



HCPs who believe the content
they are receiving is more
relevant than before COVID



Recommendations

Half of physicians share or post content either occasionally or frequently

Recommendation

When engaging with physicians on social, mirror how they engage 1:1 by delivering content in the voice of a physician peer or KOL

Physician-only platforms are more credible, secure and have more valuable information

Recommendation

Prioritize content and HCP engagement on the platforms they use and trust

Top 3 types of content they want to see

1. Clinical trial data
2. CME / CE credits
3. Treatment information

Recommendation

Deliver personalized content your audience values for maximum engagement



How Sermo can help: optimize your content for our highly engaged physician audience

Feed-based opportunities

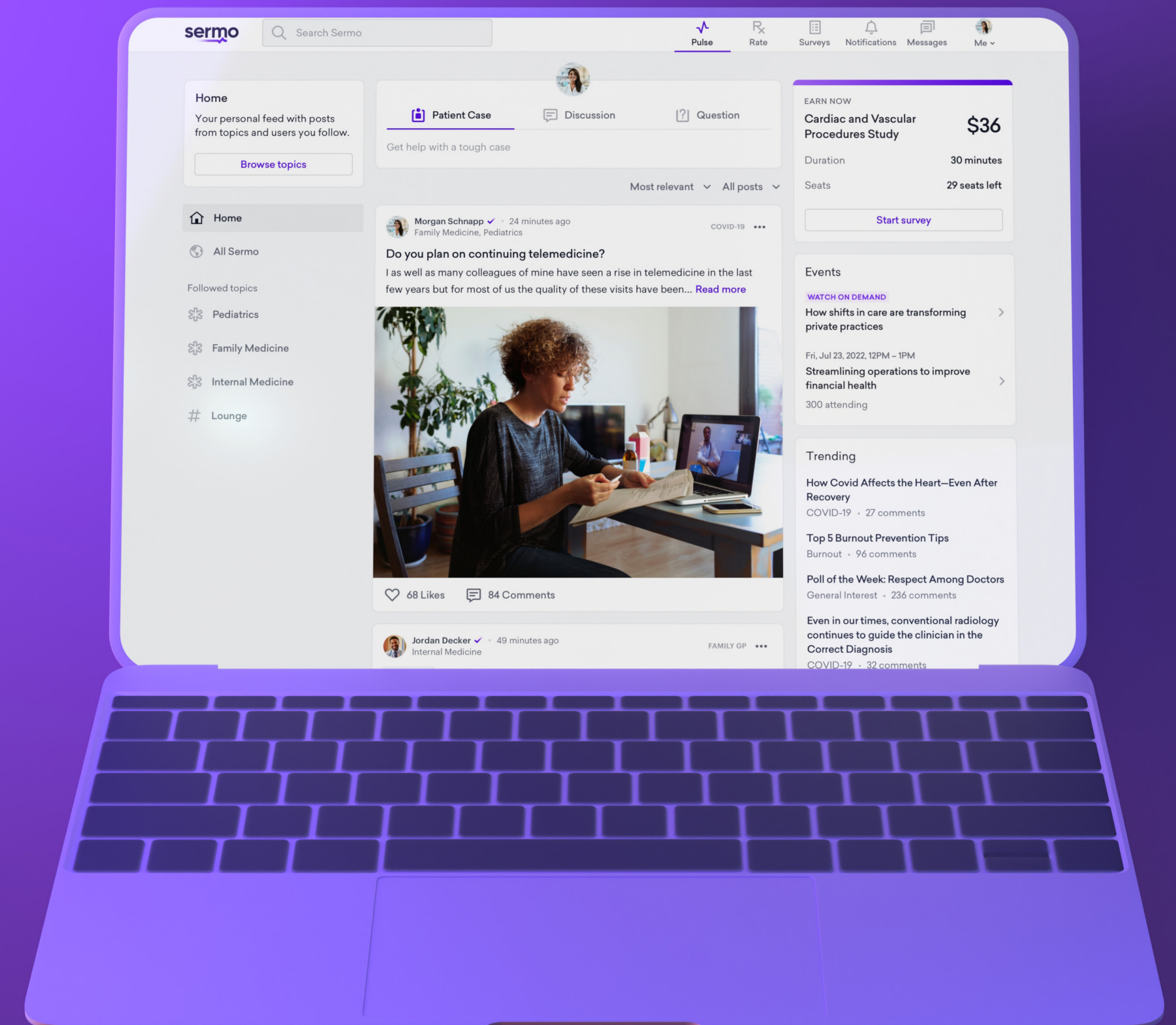
Influence peer-to-peer physician discussions, visually promote your brand & drive awareness through a suite of solutions

Message-based opportunities

Extend your brand impact with **exclusive messaging opportunities** via dedicated emails, e-newsletter & direct messaging

New innovations

Reach your engagement & education goals using Live Events, E-Detailing, Dynamic Targeting and more



Study overview & methodology

The “Meet the Social Savvy Physician & Learn How to Better Engage Them” Report is a primary research study conducted summer 2021 on the utilization of social media, both personally and professionally, as reported by Sermo physician members. Insights were gathered in two ways: via a custom RealTime survey and via a Sermo Physician Social Platform Poll.

All 604 participants are licensed, verified physicians. 126 physician respondents were incentivized to participate through the research study. The study was conducted with a random sample of doctors from 13 countries including the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Australia, India, Japan, Turkey, Brazil, Russia, China. Physicians across the following specialties were sampled: Internal Medicine, Endocrinology, Neurology, Oncology & Rheumatology.

The social platform poll was not incentivized and included insights from 1,936 physician respondents from 54 countries and 52 specialties.

Each respondent’s personal identifiable information has been decoupled from the sample survey, and subsequent analysis is completely anonymous. The data was processed and analyzed to create descriptive statistics summarizing physicians’ attitudes about the various survey topics.



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with Sermo's insights &
engagement solutions, email
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