

- Speaker 1: Thank you for listening to the only podcast dedicated to the business of pharmacy. Welcome to the Pharmacy Podcast show. You can find all of our episodes at pharmacypodcast.com.
- David Pope: This is David Pope, confounder of Creative Pharmacist, and you're listening to the Pharmacy Podcast.
- Todd: Hey, welcome back to the Pharmacy Podcast. I'm your host and founder the show. Todd, I am so glad you guys came back for another episode. We got a great episode today with very valued sponsors, GRX Marketing, Nicolle McClure is coming to the show again. She's coming back and she's bringing along with her, someone who is not a stranger to the pharmacy podcast. He lives and breathes, the pharmacy industry and bringing value to pharmacist services, David Pope with the creative pharmacist, but before that I wanted to make an announcement, again, the Pharmacy Podcast will transform. It'll constantly be changing and innovating. We want to gather other podcasts that are out there and place them under the Pharmacy Podcast umbrella so that if you're in the pharmacy industry and you run into the pharmacypodcast.com, you'll be able to listen to a plethora of different pharmacy podcast providers of information, clinical technology, community, institutional compounding, business issues, political issues. We're growing our author base. We're growing our thought leadership base, but we need to continue and I want to play a short clip from a future podcast or which we hope to be working with.
- Pharmacy Joe: Hey Todd, this is Pharmacy Joe from the Elective Rotation podcast. I got your tweet today about coming on your show and I would love to take you up on the offer. The Elective Rotation is a podcast about caring for critically ill patients from the perspective of a board certified pharmacotherapy specialist. I cover topics such as pharmacists response to code blue calls, how to stay current with medical literature and how to communicate verbally with physicians. I'm looking forward to hearing you. You can send me an email at Joe@pharmacyjoe.com
- Todd: And if you would very much like to become part of the pharmacy podcast family, please contact us at publisheratpharmacypodcast.com
- Todd: Hey there, welcome back to the Pharmacy Podcast. It is a treat for me and an honor when I have a privilege to interview people who are really in the trenches of the business of pharmacy, helping pharmacy leaders and owners do things that obviously effect the lives of patients that they serve. And today's Pharmacy Podcast is brought to us by GRX marketing who we've been so thankful of being on two other shows. So if you haven't heard their other shows, please go to Google, put in GRX Marketing Pharmacy podcast. You'll find both episodes with Nicolle McClure and we want to welcome Nicolle back to the show. Hey Nicolle, how are you today?
- Nicolle McClure: I'm doing great, thanks.

Todd: And we also have another special guest that our listeners probably have heard before and is not a stranger to the pharmacy industry, the business of pharmacy, the differentiation of the services that we all strive to building excellence for our patients.

Todd: And Mr. David Pope, the co founder of Creative Pharmacist. Welcome to the Pharmacy Podcast, David.

David Pope: Thank you so much for having us, Todd.

Todd: You're very welcome. So I was excited about the show. My favorite topic is really innovation and I'm a technology geek and I like how technology can be leveraged to really change businesses and how it can help to elevate a provider so that you can do things more from a consultative perspective, medication therapy management, and really touching the patient, counseling the patient rather than the beginnings of the pharmacy and the basics of pharmacy, which are also important, the safety aspect being behind the bench. But it's almost like that's where a pharmacist starts their career, but it's the passion that drives a pharmacist to do more for the actual patient's life, a human longevity, wellness, and really being better. So I was so excited to bring on the both of you taking a marketing leader, taking a programs developer, David Pope and Nicolle McClure and basically throwing these guys in the pharmacy podcast sandbox and just want to talk about thought leadership where we are in the industry.

Todd: Pharmacy is one of the most competitive aspects inside our healthcare system and it's interesting, you start out with your physician, but where do you always end up? You always end up back at that pharmacy because that's what's going to drive completing your care and finishing your care through obviously proper adherence and many of the things that are happening. So thank you both for coming today for this thought leadership show. I'm going to turn it over to Nicolle. Nicolle, just guide us through from your aspect of marketing and seeing what pharmacy owners are doing correctly, what mistakes that they're making and how leveraging the right type of marketing plan can really put them on levels that that their competitors are not.

Nicolle McClure: Yeah, definitely. I think what independent pharmacists do well and have always done well is make that connection with their customers, their patients. So we all know, they go above and beyond just filling their prescriptions. They take the extra time to really get to know their medication history, know their family, know what they're about. And I think that definitely separates them from the competition. What they can do better is empower that personal service and carry it over into a marketing type plan. So, you know, going out in the community, getting beyond the pharmacy walls and sharing that information, whether it's through community presentations or that sort of thing. Having a successful kind of step by step marketing plan put together definitely helps them keep on track because they're so busy with other things going on in the pharmacy insurance and just everything that comes up every day.

Nicolle McClure: And so if you don't have some sort of plan to keep you on track, it's really hard to take advantage of everything that they could do. So. And I think, as far as mistakes or things that they could do better is maybe adapt some of the new technologies that are available out there to capture patients. And I know David has experience with mobile apps and that sort of thing as well. So David, what do you guys see on your end as far as technology and you know how pharmacists could do a better job of adapting those practices?

David Pope: Nicolle, that's a great question and it's something that you guys focus on, I know how very heavily. I guess in order to answer that question, I would say we have to look at the statistics and it shows that two thirds of US adults now are smartphone owners. And if you look at who has internet access, it's now 90% of all US adults. And so there is a huge market for that. And even if you're looking at from a consumption standpoint, from a retailer standpoint, we know that shoppers do view ... Let's just say a video online are 174% more likely to purchase than viewers who did not or users who did not. And so therefore today's pharmacist has to ensure that they are not only reaching out to the masses in terms of saying, hey, we're different, but how are you going to do that and what are you going to be different about?

David Pope: Is it really going to be we are fast and accurate and we'll get you in and out quickly and we've been around for 50 years? Or are you going to raise a different banner over your pharmacy utilizing different technologies that say if you have diabetes, then we speak your language. And in fact we have an app that will connect to you and I together so that we might not just say, here's your medicine, but we might partner with you to improve your health. And so what we see in the marketplace is that pharmacists across the country are now taking a different aspect to marketing where they're not only marketing within their four walls, but now they're reaching out and not just in traditional ways of traditional television advertising, but they're reaching out through social media channels, they're reaching out through specific apps that connect them with their patients and on a variety of different ways.

Todd: What do you think Nicolle, is the reluctance of a pharmacy leader, director, owner, one pharmacy, 10 pharmacies to really embrace mobile touch to their patient as well as social media to their patient? What do you think the biggest barriers to embracing a social media and digital health?

Nicolle McClure: I think it's change. It's something different, you know, that they maybe don't fully understand. And so, they've done it one way for so long and to adapt a different sort of marketing that maybe they're not quite sure how it works is, I guess, fearful for them. So yeah, just change, I think for them. Adapting new practices, new ways of reaching the market. I think some of it is the perception that social media is only for younger people and you know those that maybe aren't their demographic not realizing that adults 65 plus are the fastest growing segment on Facebook and some other social media channels.

Todd: You know, David, I obviously know from interviewing you before with the rethink pharmacy platform and how you know that means that hashtag a rethink pharmacy means more than just one thing. It's the entire world of what is pharmacy and how, as we talked before we started the show today, we talked about the silo walls of different sectors of healthcare are coming down because of the collaboration and the overflow needs of pharmacy into so many aspects of our healthcare system are finally starting to flow the way that they should have been from the beginning. Physicians, specialists are starting to look at the pharmacist as this core provider of ongoing therapy needs for this patient.

Todd: So when we look at the pharmacist themselves and the time that they have and the time that they don't have and we see where mobile touch back to the patient is necessary. Where social media touch back to the patient is necessary, but then you have to worry about policy, you have to worry about saying the right things, you have to worry about HIPAA. The very first thing that comes in my mind, referencing back to my comfort zone of technology is technology. So what is it specifically David, what do you suggest that a pharmacy owner does when they're trying to put this all together?

David Pope: And that's a great question. In order to go down this route, we first have to answer the question of why we certainly have a how and that really is GRX Marketing and how they have a handholding approach. But before we even look at that, you have to look at the why, and that is that when we know that when pharmacists get involved, outcomes improve and therefore insurances now know that PSAO's are seeing this and being able to utilize that for those pharmacies who are excelling, they're banding them together and saying, hey, we have a different group of pharmacies. We have a high performance network and so therefore we can bring you access to more patients. We're also seeing, gosh, ACOs is in the marketplace, even adopt pharmacy spaces. We're seeing hospitals now paying pharmacists to be able to engage with their patients so that they might not be penalized for re-admissions.

David Pope: And so again there is a huge wise that outcomes improve and there is a secondary windfall benefit for financial gain and growth within the pharmacy. Now if we look at social media and how that plays a role, one stat that just blows my mind and I've heard from Jay Williams with Pharmacy Directions just the other day. He said that there are 72% of all adults visit Facebook once a month. But you know what blows me away is that it's not just once a month. You know 72% are visiting it once a month, but 65% actually use it daily. So there is a huge connection point that we are missing if we do not engage intentionally with our people and throughout our community. And it's not just maybe through a blast type piece that's very generic in nature but more so it's all about connecting with our people in the community and interacting with them just as what GRX Marketing can assist us in doing so

David Pope: Nicolle, GRX Marketing has a specific plan for social obviously, and the plan you had described on your other podcasts is kind of the beginning of it. What do you

do when the pharmacist reaches that second point of growth in leveraging GRX Marketing, especially the social side of things? Are you, are you kind of coaching them to train one specific technician or pharmacist or thought leader inside their organization to continue to drive those sincere touch points in conversations with patients?

Nicolle McClure: Yeah, absolutely. I think it's vital to get somebody, you know, local involved that can really help take that social media presence to the next level for them. So having somebody kind of in the trenches and being able to post local things definitely propels them above their competitors.

Todd: So it's really a mixture of kind of an information feed that you can trust, some good content that you can trust, but then you also have to mix that with some local sincerity, communicate it, communication interaction between, that patient in the community pharmacy organization?

Nicolle McClure: Yeah, definitely. And even just staff photos and that sort of thing. People love seeing what other people are doing. And I think even just a photo of the pharmacist out talking at a community presentation or dressed up for Halloween or something like that takes five minutes to do, can help it so the customers remember you, you become top of mind, it doesn't have to be a hard sell to them on your services necessarily. It can just show your engagement in the community and the pharmacy.

Todd: David, when I see organizations like United Health, who's been a sponsor on the show, Humana, Walgreens, CVS, dumping hundreds of thousands of dollars into digital health, social media, it's like, it's not a question anymore. It's like time to catch up people. It's time to meet patients where they're at and there and we know David through the statistics that you shared, that we're using our mobile phones more than we're using our desktop computers really. So when you are at a conference or you're talking with someone even about the creative pharmacist program, when you're talking about kind of the change, where in the conversation does it come that you're almost saying, hey, you gotta get off of your rump pharmacy owner, you gotta get going. Like, when does that happen?

David Pope: It's very true that if we do not make a change and if we are immovable in that way, then we very well may be caught in the cracks of this ever changing landscape. And again, it doesn't take a rocket scientists to be able to connect in this way through social media channels, through a chronic disease management and the like. You just have to partner with the right people in order to do so. You know, we all grew up without social media for the most part as kids. Only, the youngest generation has grown up with this kind of as a common thing that they've grown up with. The rest of us have all had to adapt. And again it's all about out points to communication. Gone are the days where we say, here's your Metformin, I'll see you if and when you ever decide to come back and refill your prescription again.

David Pope: Now, it's more like today is day one and we're going to connect with you. We're going to partner with you, we're going to educate you. And again, you'll even see an all that we do and if there's anything that comes out of this pharmacy for whether it be a flyer, whether it be a video, whether you see us on Facebook or anything else, it will speak a specific message and it's no longer, we've been around for 50 years and we offer great customer service. Now it is, when you come here we are have a vested interest in your outcomes and are we going to say that in marketing? No, but it will be certainly implicated in all that we do through high end marketing as well. Not just the kind that says, hey, I have a cousin who's a 15 and when do they get off from school today, they can go do a couple of things for us and we'll just xerox that and slowly it will become black and white and then it'll twist to where it looks almost like uneatable. We're going to have excellence in all things and because that's what we as a pharmacy want to be known for. Because when you come to this pharmacy and you have heart failure or COPD, you name it, that's the exact same difference that you will see. And that's what sets us apart from our competition.

Todd: So if you're listening to this show, and you may be at different stages, you may be at the beginning stage that you're like, I don't even know what to do to start out first. You might be at a second stage where you've said, hey, I've made an investment into digital communication into mobile, into a social media strategy. You might even be at a third stage per se if we're kind of breaking this into stages and saying, hey, it hasn't been successful and I kind of need to relaunch it. If you're listening, GRX knows what's going on. I mean, they're, they're doing this every day. They're, they're taking care of you, the pharmacy director, the pharmacy owner and management team, like you're taking care of your patients. So, if you're listening to this it's that kind of thought leadership that Nicolle is tapping into so many other pharmacy owners and knowing what's working and what's not working and people like David Pope who are also tapping into so many different owners to know the difference between the beginning stages of such a campaign and an initiative to being successful or not successful with it.

Todd: If you're gonna make the investment, you have to start out with a plan. As we've said in the very first GRX Marketing pharmacy podcast we did. So Nicolle in kind of wrapping up, what, what can you invite or what can you say to the listeners today? Some of them are of course pharmacy leaders and kind of making those first steps towards kind of looking for an outsourced expert, looking for that thought leadership in helping them bring something to the table.

Nicolle McClure: Just that we can help you get started. And what makes us different is that we do the work for you, we work with you and find out what your ideas are, what are your goals for the next six months, what do you want to promote as far as your services. Is it getting your adherence up or is it starting a new program, that sort of thing? And we do it for you. We come out with the ideas, the concepts, we execute it for the pharmacy owner, and then we report back with return on investment reports to show how your marketing's working for you. So we make

it easy to get started and to go to that next level no matter where you're at in that process.

David Pope: Absolutely. Again, I think the point's been made today but just that today's an exciting day to be in pharmacy practice. It really is. Whereas there's lots of change and with change always comes apprehension. But I would say that there is no better time to be a pharmacist than right here and right now. And again, just partnering with the right people is key. No one is the greatest at everything, so we just band together. Pharmacy is a small group and a tight group and so therefore we're looking after each other and again by using a Creative Marketing as well as by partnering with the right crews to be able to connect you even in greater ways to your chronic care patients I think is key. And again, just exciting parts who are exciting times to be a part of a of the change within pharmacy.

Todd: There's going to be some show notes and some links in the show notes of this pharmacy podcast. I have a homework assignment for the listeners. There is a paper that was put out by Dr. Blake Toni, which was in part with the college of pharmacy of the Ohio State University and it's called Social Media as a Leadership Tool for Pharmacists. Once again, that's Social Media as a Leadership Tool for Pharmacists. You Google that, it'll come right up. And it's an incredible paper of the research of what social media truly means. And what a digital marketing and digital health truly means to that pharmacy leader, to that pharmacist leader. So definitely take a look at that and then reach out to the GRX Marketing team, ask questions, get Nicolle to kind of give you some direction and, and do something different to prepare you for what's coming in 2016, which things aren't going to get any easier, but we can definitely innovate and become much more successful oriented pharmacists that are looking to engage patients at their level, at their world, and the extension of human longevity in being better.

Todd: David and Nicolle, I thank you. It's been a treat and like I said, it's been a privilege to have leaders like yourself on the Pharmacy Podcast Show.

Todd: And a special thank you to GRX Marketing for a sponsorship of this series.

Nicolle McClure: Thanks Todd.

David Pope: Thank you, Todd.

Todd: You are listening to the Pharmacy Podcast. We were with Nicolle McClure with GRX Marketing and David Pope, who is co founder of the Creative Pharmacist, and we thank you for listening.