Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition Council
2011 Spring Symposium: Mitigating Consequences of an Outbreak/Adverse Event

Using Social Media to Communicate in Times of Crisis

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International Food Information Council Foundation

April 28, 2011
IFIC Mission: To effectively communicate science-based information on food safety and nutrition issues to health professionals, journalists, educators and government officials.

IFIC Foundation Mission: To effectively communicate science-based information on health, nutrition, and food safety for the public good.

www.foodinsight.org
Consumer Perceptions
Food Safety Confidence

Similar to previous years, close to half of Americans (47%) rate themselves as confident in the safety of the U.S. food supply. Those who are “not very confident” is down significantly from 2009 and 2008, with an increase now seen in the “neither confident nor unconfident” category.

To what extent, if at all, are you confident in the safety of the U.S. food supply?* [Select one]  
(n=1024)

*Question asked since 2008.
When asked who they believe is responsible for food safety in the U.S., 74% of Americans believe that the government is responsible, 70% say food manufacturers, followed by farmers/producers (56%), retailers/food service (49%), and consumers/individuals (41%).

In general, who do you believe is responsible for food safety in the U.S.?*

[Select all that apply] (n=1024)

Selected 5 or more: 31%
Selected 7 or more: 12%

Government 74%
Food manufacturers 70%
Farmers/producers 56%
Retailers/food service 49%
Consumers/individuals 41%
Livestock veterinarians 29%
Consumer advocacy groups 22%
Other 2%

*Question asked since 2009.
Most Important Food Safety Issue Today

Americans believe that “foodborne illnesses from bacteria” is the most important food safety issue today, followed closely by “chemicals in food”.

What, in your opinion, is the most important food safety issue today?* [Select one] (n=1024)

*Question asked since 2009.

▲ / ▼ Significant increase/decrease from year indicated.
### Recently Used Food Safety Sources

Americans are receiving their food safety information from the media, with TV news program topping the list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TV news program</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet article</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends/family</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazine article</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food label</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking shows/hosts</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk shows</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery store, drug store, or specialty store</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government agency/official</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product or manufacturer communications (i.e., Web sites, advertising, etc.)</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio news program</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health professional (e.g., doctor, nurse, physician assistance, pharmacist, etc.)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health association</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer advocacy groups</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At/from schools</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the past six months, from which of the following sources, if any, have you heard or read about food safety practices?* [Select all that apply] (n=1024)

**NOTE:** Responses <5% not shown

*Question added in 2010.*

▲ / ▼ Significant increase/decrease from year indicated.
Trusted Food Safety Sources

Government agency/officials and health professionals are the top cited trusted sources for food safety information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government agency/official</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health professional (e.g., doctor, nurse, physician assistance, etc.)</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV news program</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health association</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food label</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietitian</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazine article</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer advocacy groups</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet article</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends/family</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking shows/hosts</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery store, drug store, or specialty store</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio news program</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product or manufacturer communications (i.e., Web sites, advertising, etc.)</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk shows</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At/from schools</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative extension service agent</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which of the following sources, if any, do you trust to deliver food safety information? *  
[Select all that apply]  (n=1024)  
NOTE: Responses <5% not shown  
*Question added in 2010.  
▲ / ▼ Significant increase/decrease from year indicated.
In 2009, we joined the social media conversation.
New Web Site: www.foodinsight.org

Features Interactive Content

Utilizes new graphic identity throughout

Shows breadth of information available

Encourages users to “dive in” to the site
Blog, Twitter and Facebook

✓ Foundation Blog
  • Provide almost daily postings.
  • Reach out to more than 100+ influential bloggers.
  • Write as a guest blogger on outside blogs.

✓ Two Twitter Accounts
  • More than 1,500 followers on our new Twitter Handles (IFICMedia and FoodInsight).

✓ Facebook Account
  • More than 1000 Fans on our Facebook Account (FoodInsight).
Media Impact in 2010

• **315 million**: Total national audience for IFIC-originated/influenced news stories (100 million increase from 2009)

Social Media - Connected Stakeholders to our Messages One Million Times through Online Tools

• Posted **160+** blog entries.

• Reached more than **500,000** people through seven Twitter chats.

• Attracted nearly **2,000** Twitter followers between IFICMedia and FoodInsight accounts and **1,000** Facebook followers.

• Named in “Who’s Who of Food Safety on Twitter” by *Food Safety News*.

• Selected as one of HealthCastle.com’s top-rated food and nutrition blogs.

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IFIC Panelist in AgChat Twitter Chat:

121 Overall participants

214,332 total followers of all participants

80 Twitter mentions or re-Tweets of FoodInsight during chat

55 mentions or re-Tweets of IFICMedia during chat
Today’s Presentation

– Communications Landscape
– Social Media Landscape
– Do Your Social Media Homework
– Blogs
– Social Networking Tools
  (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter)
– YouTube
– The Future
– Final Thought
COMMUNICATIONS
LANDSCAPE
The Emergence and Rise of Mass Social Media

Traditional Media
- Television
- Movies
- Radio
- Print

Institutional Control

Social Media
- Blogosphere
  - Syndication
  - Podcasts
  - Vlogs
  - Forums
  - Wikis
  - Enterprise 2.0 Platforms

Us

Centralized mediation

Contribute

Publish

Push

Observation

Distributed mediation

Network effects

Social Consumption via comments, trackbacks, IM, feedback, etc.

Shift

Source: http://web2.wsj2.com (CC BY 3.0)
“Viral” Networks of Messaging Through Social Media Can Deliver Great Impact
Who Are the Influencers?
Online Food Safety Influencers

Bill Marler is an accomplished personal injury and products liability attorney. He began litigating foodborne illness cases in 1993, when MORE...
What You Can Do

• Connect With Your Communications Department

• Participate Yourself
  – Start Slow
  – Build Relationships
  – Join the Discussions

• Come to IFIC
SOCIAL MEDIA LANDSCAPE
Stakeholders Have Power

“Do as I say or I’m gonna go social on you!”
Make it easy for your stakeholders!
Make it about THEM, and not you.
DO YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA HOMEWORK
Learn the Social Media Tools That Are Best for Your Target Audience.

- Blogs
- Social Networking Sites
- Microblogs
- Wikipedia
- Video Sharing
- Podcasts
BLOGS
Blogs 101

• Short for “Web log”
• User-generated Web sites where entries are made in journal style:
  – Most recent content appears first
  – Other characteristics include:
    • title, text, photos, videos, tags, and comments
• Unlimited topics:
  – News, Commentary, Reviews (books, products)
  – Journals and Personal Diaries
  – Advice and Tips
Blogs Are a Two-Way Street

• Conversations between blogger and readers.

• Provides an opportunity to connect people with similar interests, link to interesting content, and comment.

• Become part of the dialogue. They will talk... with or without you.
Hobnobbin at Fitbloggin

By: Eric Mittenthal  Date: 3/22/10

This past weekend I had the unique opportunity to attend and present at the first ever Fitbloggin conference. The conference which was arranged by Roni Noone of Roni’s Weigh was an opportunity for health, fitness and nutrition bloggers to come together, talk shop and connect in a new way. I have to admit, I’ve been to conferences before, but this one was unlike any other I’ve come across.

Read More »

Focus on Fruits and Veggies

Note: As part of National Nutrition Month, we’ll be highlighting tips from our Registered Dietitians around the theme of “Nutrition from the Ground Up.” For more info see our kickoff post or visit ADA’s National Nutrition Month page.

By: Elizabeth Rahavi, RD  Date 3/19/10

Adding more fruits and vegetables to your diet doesn’t mean having to eat things that you don’t like. The key is to understand that when it comes to getting your recommended intake of fruits and veggies.

Getting the most flavors from your favorite — or even less loved — fruits and vegetables doesn’t have to involve heavy-duty preparation, but some people find that different cooking methods add appeal. For example, I’m not a fan of many raw veggies, but I love steamed broccoli.
Original Blog Posts: “Rules of Engagement”

• Keep it between 300-500 words (use word economy)
• Write conversationally: Make it your voice & use “I”
• Let major points stand out with subheadings or bullets
• Use links to other relevant material, as well as pictures and video
• Remember that people **SCAN**:
  – 79% don’t read all the text, they look for keywords
  – Read dozens of articles and posts a day via scanning
Tailor to Your Audience

• What message do you want your audience to receive?
• The Reader is Wondering…
  – What’s in it for me?
  – Why you?
• Capture attention: title, snappy lead, and memorable ending.
• Include appropriate humor, stories, pictures and video.
• **LINK, LINK, LINK:** Give “link love” to other blogs, builds credibility, satisfaction, and relationships.
Following Blogs:

What Are Your Stakeholders Reading?

Person to Person

- Ask peers
- “Blogrolls”

Search and Find

- Google searches
- Technorati

“Home Delivery”

- Google alerts
- RSS feeds (Real Simple Syndication)
Blog Search and Find: Technorati

- The “go-to” resource for blogs.
- Blog-specific search engine.
- Looks at “tags” from blogs and categorizes results.
Home Delivery: Google Alerts

• Email updates of the latest relevant Google results based (news, blogs, videos) on your choice of query or topic.

• Easy! http://www.google.com/alerts
Home Delivery: RSS Feeds

- Real Simple Syndication
- Feeds you content from a specific source (i.e. New York Times)
- Feed readers sorts feeds
- Can also feed out your material
Understand What Is Being Said: Navigate the Blogosphere

• Get a short list of important blogs to track.
  – Active, at least 6 months old, comments
  – Well-written relevant content, author expertise
• Engage by commenting on posts.
  – Establishes trust
  – Make it substantive and follow up on responses
• Promote blog posts you like through social media.
Other Blogs: Determining Influence

• Bloggers with previous reputation
  – Authors, scientists, journalists, etc.
• Popular blogs that cover topics you care about
• Check for comments
• Posts are more important than the blogger
• Post topics as “hot issues”
• Posts appear on Google search rankings
• Blog at least 6 months old
• Frequently updated
Tools to Monitor the Trends

Conversation Cloud

- blood
- time
- nutrients
- cause
- fish
- disease
- energy
- levels
- fatty
- vitamins
- health
- exercise
- heart
- natural
- visit
- foods
- low
- advice
- fat
- avoid
- problems
- effective
- protein
- fiber
- good
- causes
- weight
- free
- medical
- eating
- food
- healthy
- related
- daily
- products
- best
- vegetables
- high
- acids
- important
- contains
- better
- life
- intake
- water
- risk
- information
- eat
- fruits
- diet

Topic Trends Chart

Comparative Topic Analysis Charts

- omega-3: 240 (12.3%)
- soy: 333 (17.1%)
- probiotics: 230 (11.8%)
- vitamin D: 374 (19.2%)
- vitamin B: 53 (2.7%)
- calcium: 723 (37.0%)
What Drives Blog Coverage?

• Reposting of mainstream media articles
  – (with and without additional commentary)
• Grassroots movements drives increased public awareness
• New guidelines
• Research
• Government policies and regulations
• Seasonal stories
• Pop culture
Constructive Comments: Blogger Engagement

• What do you want to say and why?
  – Provide value; Add to the conversation

• Length is key
  – 1-2 sentences; Share links to supportive information

• Consider your opening
  – Clarify if you are responding to the post or another comment

• Admit if you are wrong

• Follow up

• Be respectful, personal, positive, insightful, credible, trustworthy, and friendly
Social Networking: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter

- Sites allow users to create their own “space” through mini-Web pages, profiles, photos, and videos.
- People can connect and keep up with the lives of friends, family and business contacts.
- People can join groups and connect through similar friends or interests.
Facebook

• Not just for college students anymore.
  – 30% of users over 25.

• 100,000 new members/day.
  – 35-54 year olds is the fastest growing group of members.

• Users can create personal pages or fan pages.
LinkedIn

• Social networking site focusing on professional networks.
• Users can create an online resume and use their network to discover professional opportunities.
• Provide and give recommendations.
• Join groups (public and private).
David Schmidt
President & CEO at International Food Information Council
Washington D.C. Metro Area | Non-Profit Organization Management

Current
- President & CEO at International Food Information Council

Past
- Leesburg, VA Councilmember at Town of Leesburg, VA
- Director of Information and Legislative Affairs at USDA Food Safety & Inspection Service

Education
- Vanderbilt University

Connections
97 connections

Public Profile
http://www.linkedin.com/pub/david-schmidt/2/354/735

Experience
President & CEO
International Food Information Council
Non-Profit; 11-50 employees; Non-Profit Organization Management industry
January 2006 – Present (4 years 3 months)
Twitter

- Microblogging service.
- Users can write updates, known as “tweets,” which are no more than 140 characters long.
- Develop a list you’re following & followers.
- Get real-time trends.
Twitter: Ideas for Use

- Follow those who you’re interested in reaching.
- Develop a list of followers.
- Tweet about your blog or interesting work.
- Search topic areas you’re interested in.
- Use for News Alerts.
- Be creative with 140 characters.
Tweet: Be sure to see @IFICMedia during #fitbloggin for their session on evaluating science. 7:48 AM Mar 19th via web


Tweet: The Luck ‘O the Irish is in Eating Green. Have a Happy #stpatricks Day! http://bit.ly/a84ZSR RT @IFICMedia 8:25 AM Mar 17th via web

Tweet: What do you think about the Healthy Apps for Kids competition? http://www.appsforhealthykids.com/ #nutrition #child #obesity 12:00 PM Mar 12th via web
Twitter Search In Plain English

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jGbLWQYJ6iM
YouTube
YouTube

• Founded – 2005.
• Premier destination to watch and share original videos worldwide through the Web.
• Anyone can easily upload and share video clips: www.YouTube.com.
• See first-hand accounts of current events and interests, and negative consumer situations!
• Empowers people to become the broadcasters of tomorrow.
Our YouTube Channel: FoodInsightTV.

On FoodInsight.org
and
YouTube

http://www.youtube.com/user/FoodInsightTV
The Future
The Future of Social Media

New Definition of Success:
Total Reach & Channel Percentage

Event & Crisis Communications Channels

- LinkedIn
- Blog
- Site
- Twitter
- Facebook
- RSS
- Newsletter
What’s Ahead?

Mobile + Video =
When There’s a Major Outbreak
Case Study: Salmonella & Eggs
Blogosphere Response

Two Primary Blogosphere Responses:
- Blame the Government
- Buy Local & Organic
“We need a single agency empowered to oversee our food safety. This overlap between the FDA and the USDA is dated, inefficient and ineffective. The fines levied against these companies need to be large enough that they aren’t considered “the cost of doing business.”

“The FDA oversees inspections of shell eggs, and the Agriculture Department is in charge of inspecting other egg products. That explains everything. Congress refuses to give enough employees to monitor our food supply…..The FDA is totally corrupt from top to bottom. Their food inspectors are like the oil drilling inspectors with lots of extra pocket change to supplement their lousy salaries.”
Buy Local & Organic

- “If you choose to buy corporate farmed garbage, you should not be surprised if you get sick. It is not that hard to figure out. Buy local, from a local farm, and buy Oregon Tilth Certified Organic. Yes, it costs more. Easy solution is to eat less of it. Problem solved.”

- “Yet another reminder of the travesty of corporate agriculture. EAT LOCAL - EAT FRESH - KNOW YOUR FARMER.”
What IFIC is Doing
Final Thought
Get on the Wagon

• Ordinary stakeholders are empowered, so meet them on their playing field.

• Embrace social media to connect with your stakeholders on a personal level.

• This is an investment you can’t afford not to make!
Vision Statement

- The International Center of Excellence in Food Risk Communication will be the premier global resource for risk communication on food and health.

Mission Statement

- The International Center of Excellence in Food Risk Communication provides resources to help government officials, health professionals, academicians, food producers, journalists, the public, and other stakeholders communicate and understand concepts, practices, research, and data about food safety, nutrition, and health.
Confirmed Partner Organizations

- *Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ)*
- *Health Canada*
- *International Food Information Council Foundation (IFIC)*
- *Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (JIFSAN)*
- *National Center for Food Protection and Defense (NCFPD)*
- *U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)*

Other Institutions Involved in Food Risk Communications

- *Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)*
- *World Health Organization (WHO)*

www.foodriskcommunications.org
Welcome to the International Center of Excellence in Food Risk Communication

Our Vision

The International Center of Excellence in Food Risk Communication will be the premier global resource for risk communication on food and health.

Our Mission

The International Center of Excellence in Food Risk Communication provides resources to help government officials, health professionals, academicians, food producers, journalists, the public, and other stakeholders communicate and understand concepts, practices, research, and data about food safety, nutrition, and health.

Our Goals

- Converse credible and influential governmental, communications, and
Debut of the Understanding Our Food Communications Tool Kit

http://www.foodinsight.org/understandingourfood.aspx
Get Connected to the IFIC FOUNDATION in 2011

✓ Register for the FoodInsight Newsletter on our Web site:  www.foodinsight.org

✓ Join our Facebook Fan Page: Search For FoodInsight

✓ Follow us on Twitter: Search for FoodInsightOrg or IFIC Media
For More Information:

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Washington, DC  20036

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Phone: (202) 296-6540