



*The California Paraoptometric Section is interested in having more volunteers serve on the section's board. Please join us in developing useful programs for our members, and to spread the word by recruiting new CPS members! Contact Kim Pantel for more information at [khym@hotmail.com](mailto:khym@hotmail.com).*

## FACEBOOK, TWITTER, YELP...HELP!

### Tips for Optometric Staff to Get Started with Social Media

#### CPS Update

#### WELCOME! New CPS Members

Rosemary Baptista  
Teresa Cronin  
Jeanie Muravez  
Karin Walters  
Janet Winstead

**CPS recognizes the Sacramento Valley Optometric Society** for having the highest number of CPS members in their region, comprising 12% of the overall total CPS membership.

#### **Paraoptometric Recognition week is September 12-18, 2010!**

To order promotional kits for your office during Paraoptometric Recognition Week, e-mail the AOA Paraoptometric Section at [ParaRecognition@aoa.org](mailto:ParaRecognition@aoa.org).

The social media age is upon us, but it's not just a means for friends to keep in touch anymore. It's become a powerful tool for businesses to interact with customers and create two-way relationships.

This includes your optometric office. Did you know that social media Web sites are a great way for your office to connect with current and potential patients? Have you considered creating a Facebook or Twitter account, but don't know where to start? To help get the ball rolling, we spoke to Cathy Ives, co-owner and blogger of The Optical Vision Site, LLC, who provided a few tips to help optometric staff delve into social media marketing.

#### **Do the research:**

Facebook, Twitter, Yelp. These are just a few of more than 1,000 social media sites in the marketplace today. So many choices can be overwhelming, so ask friends, family and patients what they are currently using. Consider the demographics of your patient base and research which sites they are more likely to utilize. Visit the sites, poke around and see how they work and what the "buzz" is about.

#### **Take the good with the bad, consider the pros and cons:**

The best thing about social media marketing is its cost-effectiveness — many social media sites are free to use. With just a few minutes a day you can reach a larger audience, generate exposure for business, reduce overall marketing expenses, increase traffic to your practice and your Web site, and provide better customer service by keeping in touch with patients. Keep in mind that rating sites like Yelp allow users to rate businesses they frequent. A bad review can be detrimental to business.

#### **Go for it:**

Once you have determined which social media vehicle(s) is right for your office, it's time to get started!

- Take it easy! Start out slow and go with one social media outlet at a time until you get the hang of it. If successful, you can add more sites into your social media mix as time goes on.
- Set aside enough time, at least one to two hours, to get signed up to the site(s) and to set-up all your desired settings.
- If your office has its own Web site, be sure to refer or create a "link" to it for more information.
- Many social media sites allow you to upload e-mail contact lists, so be sure to upload your patient's and vendor representative e-mail addresses to invite them to join you on the site. If you currently do not collect your patient's e-mail addresses, now is a good time to start.
- Don't know what to post? Encourage your patients to ask questions, promote upcoming events in your practice, remind patients to schedule eye exams for their kids around back-to-school time, post the latest eye care product and health news, etc. Remember to keep your message short, concise and to the point. Here's your chance to get creative!
- Get all staff involved. Don't feel like you have to designate only one person for this task. Different staff will share different perspectives.