Academy online presence

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It is well known that with current technology, organisation doesn’t exist unless it exists in cyberspace (or at least in the eyes of our millennial members). For this reason, after discovering that our domain had been involuntarily re-appropriated, it became a key objective to re-establish an online presence that not only provided members and the general public with organisational information, but also added value to our members.

We have also come to realise that a static website on its own has a limited impact and it is essential to develop an integrated approach to improving our online presence. As an executive committee, we realised that the necessary expertise to embark on such a campaign was limited and hence, we co-opted an additional member to facilitate this process. Our goal was to re-establish our digital footprint by developing our website and integrating it with key social and professional media platforms such as Twitter and LinkedIn. It was also essential that our website, while providing essential information to the public, also provided functionality to our members that could add value. To this end, our website was developed with a members-only section, where members can access discussion platforms to communicate with other members about topics specific to academic pharmacy, such as research equipment needs and availability, research grant applications and new technologies in teaching and learning. The aim is to get members to engage with us as a committee and with each other in order to further our efforts in achieving our mandate of promoting research and teaching in the pharmaceutical sciences.

Thanks to our committee member in charge of this campaign, Lorraine Thom, and to our website development partners Aucourant for making this goal a reality. Our website, Twitter and LinkedIn accounts have been launched. We decided on Twitter as a social media platform due to the pace that information can be disseminated and LinkedIn was also chosen as it is a professional media platform that is congruent with our being a professional organisation.

Both our Twitter and LinkedIn profiles are moderated, which is in line with the PSSA communication policy and, frankly, a responsible approach in this day and age of cyber trolls. Our entire committee will be involved in the moderation process and we expect that there would be a very short delay in posts being approved. Our new website address is www.pssa-academy.org.za. We encourage our members to register on the website and engage with each other through this platform as well as our Twitter and LinkedIn profiles.

Our hope for this campaign is that our members and the larger academic pharmacy community will become actively involved in the affairs of the society through our integrated web presence and that, in turn, they will begin engaging with each other to allow for greater collaboration within our sector.