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# CASE STUDY

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# GROWING PATIENT ENGAGEMENT IN EMERGING MARKETS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVATION TECHNOLOGY



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The client is the international division of one of the largest U.S.-based pharmaceutical companies in the world. The company is focused on producing and providing life-saving vaccines, medications and other products to patients around the globe.

### THE BACKGROUND: THE NUMBER OF ACTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA USERS IN EMERGING MARKETS IS RISING

Almost two-thirds of the world's active social media users are based in Asia Pacific (AP) and Latin America (LA). According to Hootsuite, there are now, for the first time ever, more total active social media users in South East Asia and South America than in North America and Western Europe combined.

With so many people in AP and LA using social media, pharmaceutical companies trying to promote patient health are looking for ways to reach those users and improve patient outcomes by connecting people who need treatments and medications with the doctors who can provide them.



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### THE CHALLENGE: IDENTIFY, REACH & INFLUENCE SOCIAL MEDIA USERS STRUGGLING WITH KNEE PAIN

The client's goal focused on identifying, reaching and influencing target patient populations suffering from knee pain who might benefit from a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug. The client needed a third-party provider of social media activation technology to test the effectiveness of finding and influencing patients on social media. With its goals defined, the client partnered with EPAM, based on the popularity of EPAM's innovative iSwarm technology, for digital patient recruitment.

**When the engagement started, the client had four questions:**

1. How significant are the populations of social media users in emerging markets who are potential patients of interest?
2. Can we utilize social media marketing to share targeted public health education information with these users?
3. Can we generate engagement via social targeting strategies?
4. Is it possible to identify and quantify these patients via social media?

With these questions in mind, EPAM, in conjunction with the client's social media team, set out to prove the power of social media to impact patient outcomes, leveraging the power of iSwarm to identify, reach and influence patients in emerging markets.

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## THE SOLUTION: IMPLEMENT SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVATION TECHNOLOGY TO ENGAGE TARGET PATIENT POPULATIONS

EPAM knew the power of iSwarm to digitally recruit new patients, but there was still a lot of work to do in order to implement the solution across the client's social channels. First, EPAM worked with the client to establish parameters to define a "qualified patient"—a patient suffering from knee pain who would benefit from a specific anti-inflammatory drug. **These parameters were based on the following demographics:**

1. Gender
2. Weight
3. Duration of knee pain
4. Diagnosis in both knees
5. Mental state
6. Diagnosis of other diseases like diabetes, for example

**From this data, two target personas were created:**

1. Patients suffering with knee pain
2. Relatives of patients with knee pain

With the target personas established, EPAM worked with the client's social team through two stages to identify and then reach and influence target patient populations to take control of their health. In the 'identify' stage, EPAM used its iSwarm technology to monitor Twitter conversations on Twitter Firehouse, which allows for searches across 100% of all public tweets within the last 30 days. About 2 million tweets were identified and then run through iSwarm's proprietary indexing and persona matching engine, resulting in the geo-location of approximately 30-35% of the total tweets as fitting the patient personas.

From the geo-located tweets, EPAM analysts determined that a substantial number of matching personas were found in two countries – one in AP and one in LA—which were chosen to represent emerging markets. The personas identified in these two countries were targeted in the 'engage' stage, wherein the client partnered with local scientific associations to generate pain-relief-related, brand-agnostic patient education messages of interest to the identified target social media population. Lastly, promoted tweets linking to a microsite geared toward people in need of relief from knee pain were deployed over a three-month period, and a web survey was implemented on the microsite to capture behavioral intent.

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## THE RESULT: PROOF THAT TARGET PATIENT POPULATIONS CAN BE REACHED & INFLUENCED BY SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

At the end of the campaign, the client finally had answers to the questions posed at the beginning of the engagement. Before getting into the key conclusions, here are the results from both stages:

### 'IDENTIFY' STAGE RESULTS

To recap, the two targeted personas for the 'identify' stage were knee pain patients and relatives of knee pain patients. Here are the numbers of identified targets for each country:

-In the LA country, 149 unique twitter users per day matched our qualified patient personas through geo-location

-In the AP country, 18 unique twitter users per day matched our qualified patient personas through geo-location

-Additionally, we matched an additional 7,851 unique users per day who were English speaking and 5,216 who were Spanish speaking, but we could not geo-locate them to a defined market

These findings equate to ~54,000 qualified individuals per annum in LA and ~4,500 in AP who are active on Twitter, thus establishing a significant target audience for the client to engage via social media.

### 'ENGAGE' STAGE RESULTS

| METRIC                    | AP COUNTRY    | LA COUNTRY    |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Population                | ~6 Million    | ~125 Million  |
| Knee Pain Prevalence      | ~128,000      | ~2.9 Million  |
| Active Twitter Users      | ~1.2 Million  | ~8.1 Million  |
| Qualified                 | 5,660         | 30,700        |
| Impressions               | 107,399       | 720,505       |
| Engagement                | 903           | 6,402         |
| Engagement/Qualified Rate | 15.95%        | 20.85%        |
| Mobile Users              | 97%           | 90%           |
| Gender Split              | F: 45%—M: 55% | F: 64%—M: 34% |

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## QUESTIONS?

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For more information,  
PLEASE VISIT [EPAM.COM](http://EPAM.COM)



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## KEY TAKEAWAYS

EPAM helped the client to analyze millions of digital conversations across the two countries. Beyond that, the true value of EPAM and iSwarm came from the ability to find qualified patients and get them to take the necessary next steps to take control of their knee pain by visiting a doctor who could provide them with the appropriate anti-inflammatory pain relief drug.

For the patient, the client's product has been proven to provide exemplary pain relief. For the client, the annual net patient value has been shown to be \$227.50. Taking some of the above numbers into consideration and annualizing them, thousands of new patients each year will experience improved quality of life and millions in additional revenue can be reinvested into R&D for the pharmaceutical company.

Furthermore, iSwarm presents a new method of marketing in pharma that is not only measurable in terms of ROI, but also successful in connecting patients with the potentially life-saving drugs and clinical trials they need. With iSwarm, pharma companies can finally reach targeted patient populations and have a detailed view of the effectiveness of a social or digital marketing campaign.

All of these impressive results were made possible by EPAM's iSwarm social activation technology and extensive collaboration with the client's social media team. If you'd like to find out how EPAM can help you reach your brand or product's ideal audience, please contact us today!