

ACTAS Derma-Sifiliográficas

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OPINION ARTICLE

Actas 2.0: ACTAS DERMOSIFILIOGRAFICAS Joins the World of Social Networking[☆]

Actas 2.0: el salto de ACTAS DERMOSIFILIOGRAFICAS a las redes sociales

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The Internet and social media have entirely changed the traditional paradigm of communication. Instantaneous knowledge sharing is just one of the benefits of these new forms of communication, which are already an integral part of our everyday life.¹ Many young dermatologists start their day by catching up with the latest news on Twitter and use their Facebook pages to share items that catch their attention; others keep in touch with developments in our profession on LinkedIn. It is estimated that 80% of Internet users in Spain use social media.

In a concurrent phenomenon, the increase in the use of social networks has been accompanied by the emergence of smartphones and the generalization of their use. According to current estimates, some 60% of Spanish Internet users have a smartphone. Perhaps even more interesting, 77% of smartphone users report that they connect to the Internet every day. By affording users continuous access to

social networks, smartphones facilitate instant communication and rapid interaction, two key factors in the success of this new form of communication.

At the same time, it has become increasingly common for healthcare professionals and their patients to turn to the Internet for information.² Everybody is joining social networking sites, and the healthcare sector is no exception: the number of physicians with an Internet presence grows daily, hospitals and clinics are increasingly visible on social media, and the high-impact scientific journals have also embraced this new medium.

Following in the footsteps of other successful publications, such as the *Archives of Dermatology*,³ the *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*, and the *New England Journal of Medicine*, our journal, *Actas Dermosifiliográficas*, has developed a social networking strategy. This task was undertaken by a team of four—Aram Boada García, Patricia García Gavín, Juan García Gavín, and Ana María Molina Ruiz—led by Editor José Manuel Carrascosa Carrillo. The overarching objective was to show that *Actas Dermosifiliográficas* is an open and dynamic source of information.

An awareness that our journal had no presence on the social networks was the driving force behind this initiative, which was launched almost 2 years ago. The aim was to give *Actas* a presence in the world of Web 2.0 and to try to transform the way we understand communication in Spanish

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Figure 1 Screenshot of the Actas Dermosifiliográficas Facebook page.

dermatology. The task was not just to involve the dermatologists who were already familiar with the world of Web 2.0, but also to strive to make *Actas* a gateway to the social media for dermatologists accustomed to more traditional channels. To this end, we decided to start by creating a profile for *Actas* on the two social networks with the most influence and number of users worldwide: Facebook and Twitter.

ACTAS on Facebook

Facebook—currently the world’s most important social networking site—is a platform that allows millions of people to interact and share content. It currently has 900 million registered users around the world and more than 13 million active users in Spain. As most people tend to use Facebook for leisure and entertainment purposes it might appear to be a somewhat audacious choice for a scientific journal like ours (Fig. 1). As the *Actas* 2.0 team was familiar with the habits of Facebook users, we knew that the best way of introducing our publication to this community would be to complement what already existed, that is, the print and online versions of the journal. The challenge was to innovate with simple, concise, and engaging content that would attract readers. We felt that it was important to present scientific information in an attractive way that would encourage readers to

consult the full text of the article and would stimulate them to share the information with others on their own Facebook pages. Another fundamental objective was to stimulate debate about our content on the social networks and foster discussion on certain topics, thereby bringing the journal to the attention of a larger number of healthcare professionals.

Today, having an active presence on the world’s most influential social network as well as attractive, up-to-date content gives us an edge over other journals in the specialty. *Actas* already has 341 followers on Facebook and the community is growing daily; it not only includes Spanish dermatologists but is also drawing followers from all over the world. New items are posted daily and the aim is to increase the readership of the journal and of the articles published. We also post information concerning articles in other journals and scientific publications of interest, always giving priority to links that include images or videos likely to attract the user’s attention.

ACTAS on Twitter

Twitter is a social network with a microblogging service that allows users to communicate in real time with others by way of messages of less than 140 characters. Using this channel, *Actas* can broadcast information to and interact with a large number of users from different sectors. Tweets keep our 325

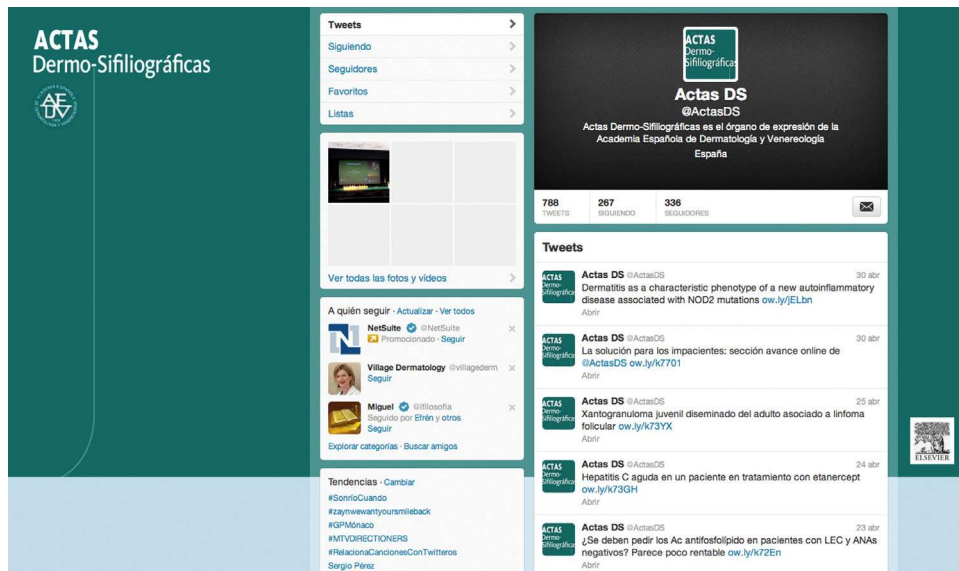


Figure 2 Screenshot of the Actas Dermosifiliográficas profile page on Twitter.

Twitter followers up-to-date on the most important news in dermatology and provide links to articles of interest and important developments in the foreign media (Fig. 2).

Challenges for the Future

While our new adventure in the world of Web 2.0 has only just begun, the team is enthusiastic and optimistic about the possibilities of expanding the project and broadening participation. Our journal now has its own voice and presence on the Internet—*Actas 2.0*—which is the voice of the community of Spanish dermatologists. Our aim is to serve the professionals who choose to publish their work in *Actas* by expanding the readership of their work and also to serve all those physicians who are interested in reading this content every month.

Actas 2.0 is an exciting project that has launched our publication in the world of social media where it will gain a much wider readership, which we hope to increase

day-by-day, beyond the borders of Spain and of our specialty. The hope is that *Actas 2.0* will reach the four corners of the globe and will be read by other specialists, medical students, and perhaps in the future by patients as well. But above all we want to make this tool useful to all Spanish dermatologists. With that aim in mind, we encourage those who have not yet done so to visit our Facebook page, check out *Actas* on Twitter, and become followers.

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