



INFLUENCING THE INFLUENCERS

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2016 THE GUIDE TO  
DIETITIANS' SOCIAL  
MEDIA HABITS

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Research insights brought to you by



# Key Take-outs



Dietitians – nearly universally – are on board with social media. **97% now access social media** for both personal and professional reasons.



Social media has increasingly become a destination for the latest news. **More than a third of dietitians check social media more than 10 times a day**, benefitting from its steady stream of updated, fresh content.



**Facebook remains the top way to reach dietitians:** more use it for personal and professional reasons than any other platform.



**Visual imagery is hot:** Instagram has surged in popularity among dietitians, making it the second most popular platform after Facebook.



Want to capture the attention of a dietitian? It's all in the timing: the most popular time of the day for dietitians to check social media is between **7pm – 9pm**, followed closely by **7am – 9am**.



Making your content **mobile-friendly is a must** if you're hoping to reach the dietitian community. 99% of dietitians now access social media via their smartphones, while access via desktops and tablets is on the decline.



What's drawing dietitians to social platforms recently? Sourcing **recipes**, along with researching **food and product reviews**.



**Dietitians are increasingly keen to build their professional brands** through their social media presence. Provide content that is sharable, current, and fresh to help them reinforce their position of leadership in the nutrition space.

# Introduction

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The power of dietitians in Australia is not to be underestimated.

This group of more than 6,000 professionals influences the nutrition choices of Australians, daily. Dietitians are serving the population via a diverse array of settings: primary care, the community, the food industry, media relations, and more. Dietitians are the interpreters of science-based research on nutrition, the public's authority on all things diet and nutrition – and essential to the population's overall wellbeing.

To engage with this influential group of health professionals, it's important to understand how to reach them through social media channels. This report sets out to study how, where and when to reach dietitians via social media. Now in its second iteration, our report benefits from a bank of comparative data, so we can measure year-over-year changes in social media consumption by dietitians.

If you're planning to undertake outreach to dietitians, there's no better place to start than with this report. In fact, there's none other of its kind.

## Research Methodology

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Over two weeks in August 2016, a survey was sent via the Dietitian Connection e-newsletter to approximately 4,500 nutrition professionals. The survey had previously been sent out via Dietitian Connection in 2014. This e-newsletter was sent to all members, which captures more than 75% of all Australian working dietitians and students.

A total of 195 dietitians and dietetic students completed the survey. The survey results were then compared with the 2014 data, to establish trends in dietitian social media usage.

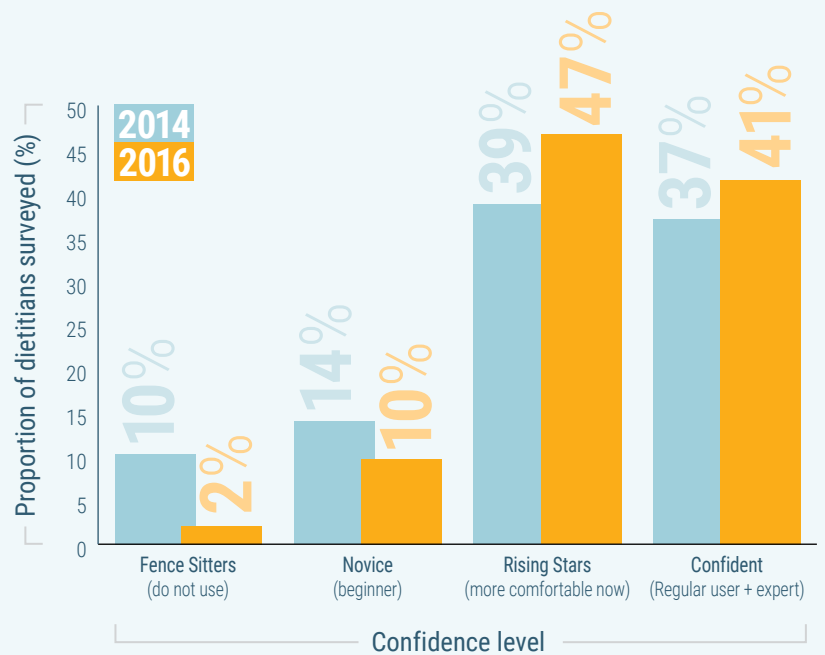
## DEMOGRAPHICS

- ❖ More than half the respondents were aged less than 29 (58%)
- ❖ 48% graduated from university within the last two years
- ❖ Of the top three practice settings, 22% were students, 21% worked in private practice and 20% worked in public hospitals.
- ❖ There was little change in the respondent demographics from 2014–2016 in respect to age groups, locations and practice settings.

# Key Findings

## 1. SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE AND CONFIDENCE

- Nearly all dietitians make use of social media. 97% are now accessing social media – a 5.7% increase from 2014.
- There are fewer newbies. Dietitians are gaining in confidence as social media users – the niche identified as ‘Rising Stars’ is up 8%, and ‘Confident’ users are up 4.5%.



# 35%

Over a third of dietitians now access social media more than 10 times a day, benefitting from its steady stream of updated, fresh content.

Today's dietitians are – nearly universally – consumers of social media. They're also increasingly savvy and confident in their usage.

No marketing plan should overlook this medium when designing targeted outreach to dietitians.

## 2. SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

Position	2014	2016
1	Facebook	Facebook
2	Blogs	Instagram
3	Twitter	Blogs
4	LinkedIn	LinkedIn
5	YouTube	YouTube
6	Instagram	Twitter
7	Google+	Pinterest
8	Pinterest	Google+

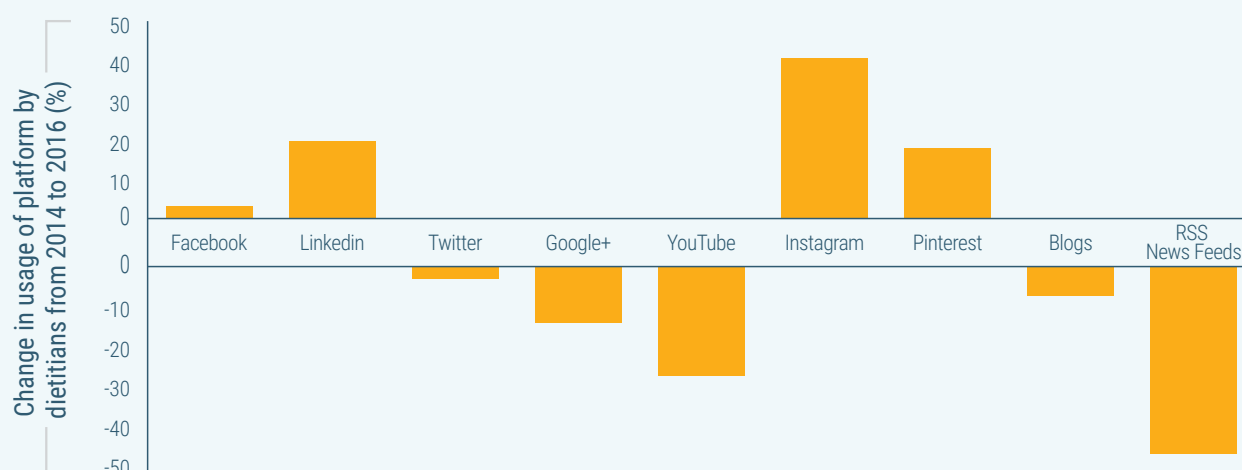
### CHANGES IN CHANNEL PREFERENCE

- ❖ Facebook remains the #1 go-to platform, with nearly 6 in 10 dietitians surveyed choosing Facebook as their preferred channel.
- ❖ Visual imagery is on fire. Instagram is on the rise, jumping up to second most preferred platform. The medium is perfect for showcasing food products, recipes and other visuals sought after by dietetics professional.
- ❖ The once-hot Twitter has fallen in preference, from third to sixth place.

Visual imagery has become irresistible for dietitians, who are increasingly showing a preference for Instagram and its mouthwatering photos and videos. Ensure your social media strategy includes enticing, Insta-worthy images to capture the visual attention of this audience.

### CHANNEL USAGE TRENDS

- ❖ Instagram is making significant gains in popularity among dietitians, with an increase of 41% in usage over 2014. Pinterest – also a very visual medium – similarly showed an increase in usage, of 18%.
- ❖ Also hot? The professional networking site LinkedIn, with a 20% increase in usage.
- ❖ RSS feeds are solidly off the radar for dietitians. YouTube also showed a decline, perhaps reflective of the quantity of video content increasingly appearing on Instagram and Facebook.



### 3. TYPE OF CONTENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

#### DESIRED CONTENT

- ✦ We're hearing resoundingly from dietitians surveyed that they're using social media to find recipes. 86% of dietitians now seek out recipes, up from 42% in 2014.
- ✦ An interest in nutrition news via social media remains strong, at 85%.
- ✦ Career growth is increasing in interest: the percentage of dietitians saying they used social media for professional development events jumped to 67% in 2016 from 18% in 2014.
- ✦ 65% of dietitians are now seeking food and product reviews (a 13% increase).

2014		2016	
Position	Content type	Position	Content type
1	General nutrition info	<b>1</b>	<b>Recipes</b>
2	Nutrition news	2	General nutrition info
<b>3</b>	<b>Recipes</b>	3	Nutrition news
4	Research	4	Food and product reviews
5	Food and product reviews	5	Research
6	Professional development events	6	Professional development events
7	Patient resources	7	Patient resources



Recipes draw in dietitians, who are increasingly turning to social media to find new inspiration in this area.

For maximum effect, ensure you're using visuals to accompany them!

## PURPOSE OF CONTENT

- ❖ Personal communications continue to be the main purpose of dietitian's social media usage.
- ❖ Dietitians are understanding – and leveraging – the power of professional branding and differentiation. Over half (54%) of dietitians now have a professional social media page, up from 29% in 2014.
- ❖ Dietitians are becoming more marketing savvy themselves. 29% use social media to promote their own organisation - a 14% increase. And 22% use social media to promote products and services, a 7% increase.

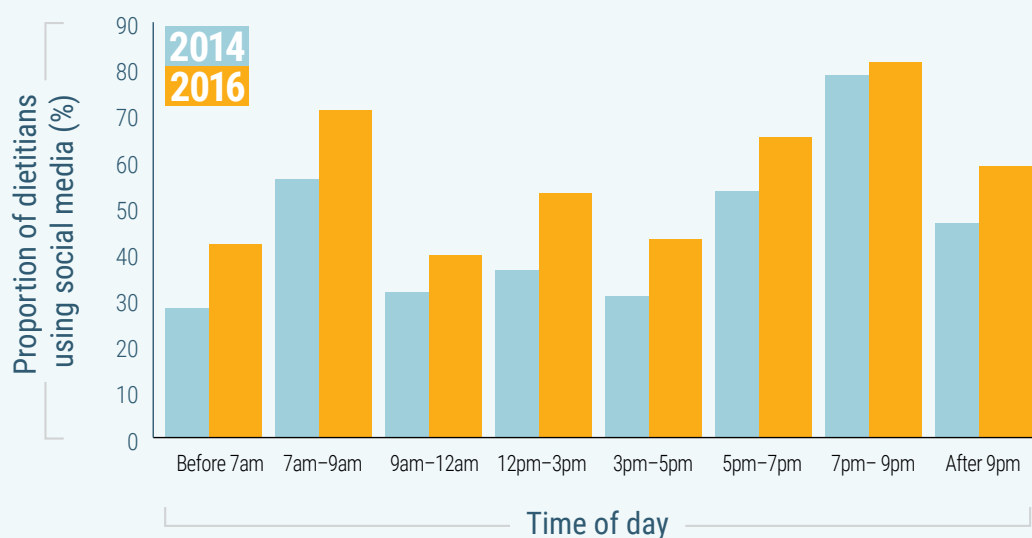


Dietitians need a steady stream of new content that they can share on to advance their own professional brand and position themselves as leaders. It's a great opportunity to generate tools they can use.

## 4. TIMING OF SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

### TIME OF DAY

- ❖ Want to reach dietitians when they're online? 7pm–9pm remains the #1 timeslot to access social media, with 7am–9am a close second. Think: just before and after traditional work hours.



## WHERE

Dietitians access social media in a range of situations, the top three being:

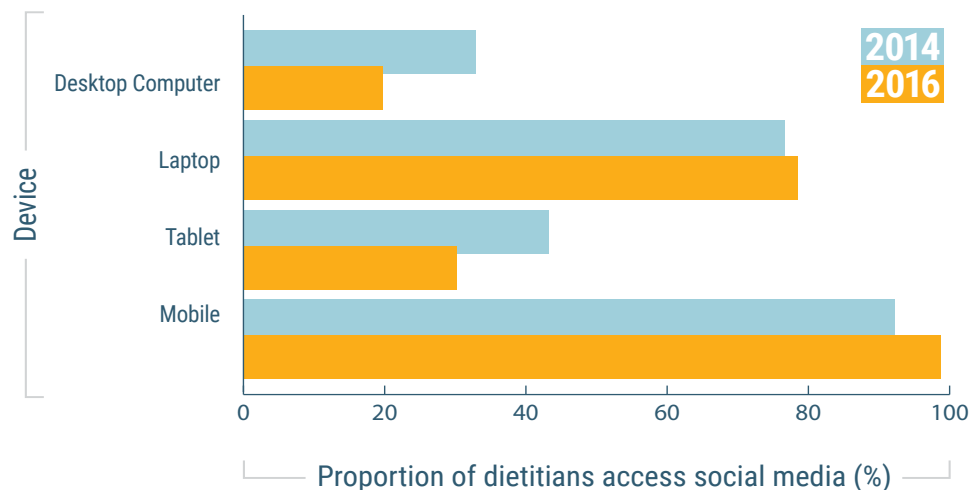
1. While waiting: 92%
2. On the couch: 83%
3. In bed: 80%

Dietitians are increasingly accessing social media on the go; 69% of dietitians log in on public transport, up 20% from 2014.



## DEVICE

- ❖ Make sure your marketing is mobile-friendly. 98% of dietitians now use a smartphone to access social media, up 5%.
- ❖ Dietitians accessing social media via desktop computers has fallen by 13%. **On the go is where it's at.**



Target your communications to times when dietitians are most likely to be online, to maximise your exposure.

**Think: 7–9am and 7–9pm.**



# 6 Key Implications

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**Social media is a non-negotiable.** For communicators, social media is now, without a doubt, a core medium through which to reach the highly influential audience of dietitians. 97% of dietitians are using social media – and over a third now report accessing it more than 10 times a day.

2

**Think visually.** While Facebook remains a top platform for reaching dietitians, there has been a substantial increase in the popularity of visual-centric Instagram. Key takeaway: visuals, from photos to video, are a must in any marketing strategy – and should not be an afterthought. Think: high-quality images that are Insta-worthy and highly hashtag-able; quick and catchy video clips; sharable content; and, especially for recipes, mouthwatering imagery.

3

**Know when your audience is online.** Dietitians continue to be most active on social media between 7pm – 9pm; however, there has been a big increase in dietitian's social media activity between 7am – 9am. Any marketing strategy should aim to cover these two key time periods for maximum reach.

4

**Feed your audience what it's hungry for.** Dietitians want to see recipes, food and product reviews and research. If you are able to contribute original content in these areas via your social channels, this is a great way to gain eyeball share of your target audience. And don't forget to add beautiful visuals that entice.

5

**Give mobile the respect it deserves.** Dietitians are accessing content both on the go and, increasingly, on smartphones. Ensure your mobile strategy incorporates the latest innovations in this medium (e.g., apps), that your presentation is tailored to this format and that you're able to be responsive in real time.

6

**Help dietitians build their own brands.** Recognise the increased interest by dietitians of presenting a professional brand on social platforms. Then, consider offering content that is easily repurposed, current and fresh, and can – in short- help dietitians improve their own profiles and position themselves as leaders.

# ACDC

**In early 2014, Appetite Communications and Dietitian Connection formed a strategic alliance, fondly termed ACDC.**

Our unique alliance provides clients with integrated communication solutions targeting Australian nutrition leaders.

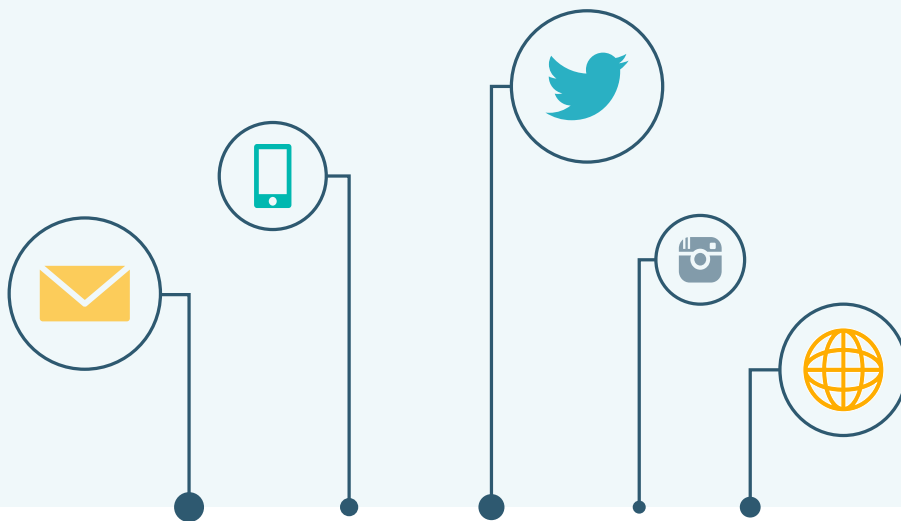
**WE OFFER:**

- ❖ Market insights
- ❖ Strategic communication planning
- ❖ Content generation
- ❖ Campaign implementation and evaluation

With combined strengths in the nutrition and communication space, ACDC works together to deliver timely, creative and effective solutions.

Importantly, we broaden your reach to the up-and-coming generation of nutrition leaders through digital media and events – integral to establishing long-term meaningful relationships.

The ACDC relationship is driven by aligned values and innovative, credible, collaborative communication.



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