



## Introduction

A growing popularity of social media usage, especially among physicians<sup>1</sup>, sparked our interest in exploring the trends of health communication via online resources by U.S. board certified ophthalmologists. Specifically, we were interested in understanding the type of content distributed on online platforms by ophthalmologists nationally.

## Methods

We used the American Academy of Ophthalmology's "Find an Ophthalmologist" directory to randomly select 20 ophthalmologists from each state except Alaska (N=18) and Wyoming (N=9). Practice websites and online profiles were evaluated for degree of social media utilization and quality of self-education material based on a four-point scoring system (Shown below).

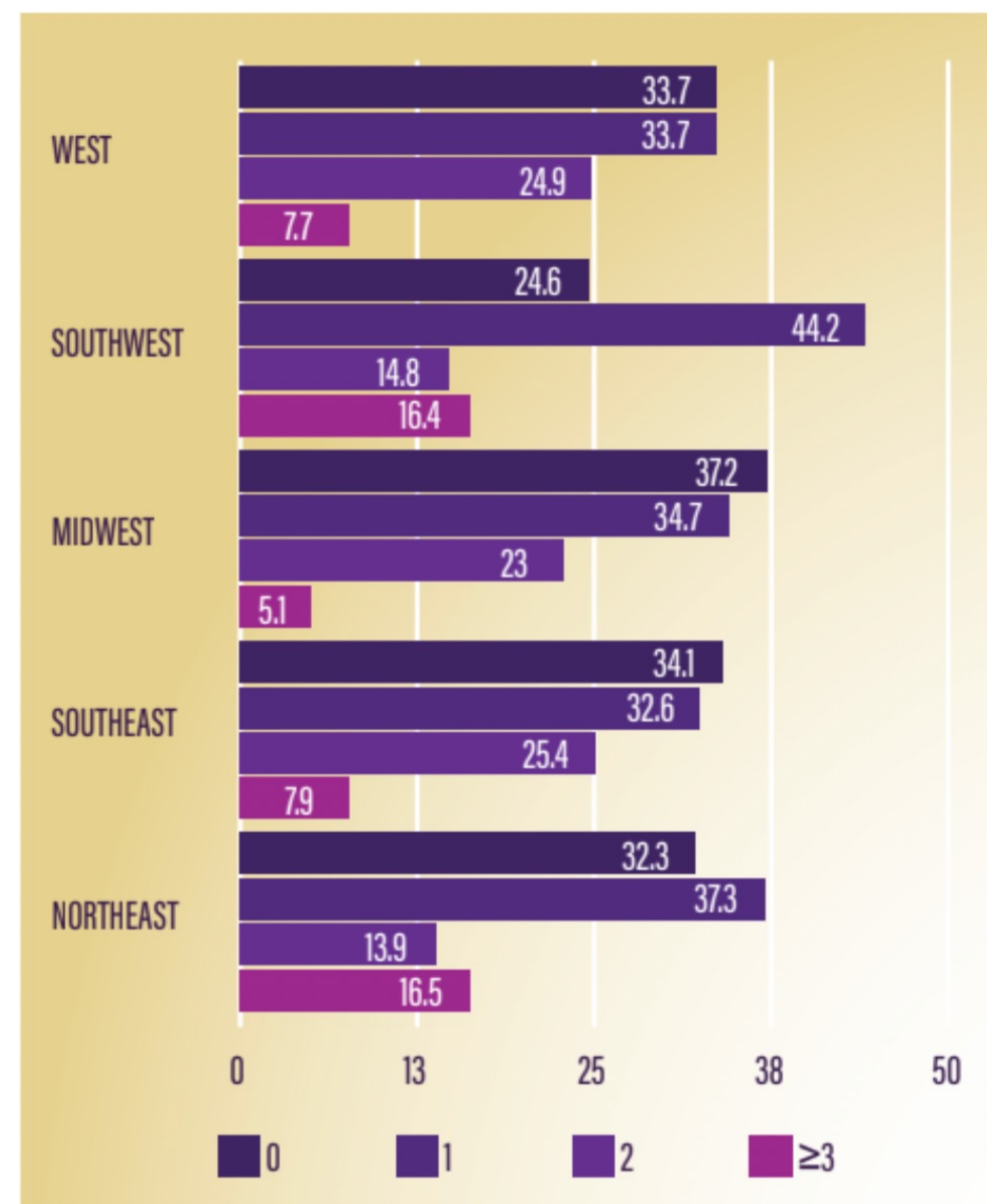
### CRITERIA FOR GRADING OF QUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

SCORE (0-4):	SCORE	NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF OPHTHALMOLOGISTS
1. Detailed description of common conditions and/or treatments	0	284 (33.5%)
2. Video content further discussing conditions and/or treatment	1	300 (35.3%)
3. Presence of hyperlinks for more information	2	185 (21.7%)
4. Presence of ready-to-print documents	≥3	81 (9.5%)

## Results

We identified a total of 1007 ophthalmologists. 851 (84.5%) of all ophthalmologists were found to have ≥1 online profile with more than half of all website profiles (57.0%) displaying a moderate quality of educational content (score 1-2). However, 33.5% of these profiles provided no educational content.

### Distribution of online content scores by U.S. region



## Discussion

Overall, the majority of our study's ophthalmologists held an online profile or practice website, more than 1/3 used their online presence for commercial purposes only. Further research is warranted to evaluate health information seeking patterns by ophthalmic patients. A better understanding of patients' search patterns can facilitate the development of patient-centered ophthalmology content with better-tailored practice websites. Additional studies may be conducted to assess the degree of effectiveness of online materials in longitudinal ophthalmologic patient care outcomes. Ultimately, our study reveals the current social media usage by a sample of U.S. ophthalmologists in patient care and has generated more questions to be addressed.

## References

1. Surani Z, Hirani R, Elias A, Quisenberry L, Varon J, Surani S, Surani S. Social media usage among health care providers. BMC Res Notes. 2017 Nov 29;10(1):654. doi: 10.1186/s13104-017-2993-y. PMID: 29187244; PMCID: PMC5708107.

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