



POV: SERMO Drug Ratings: A New Window Into
HCP Sentiment About Brands

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In recent months, Intouch Solutions has worked closely with SERMO in preparation for the launch of Drug Ratings, the only peer-to-peer drug-review system provided exclusively for verified licensed physicians. We're excited to be able to bring forward opportunities that can benefit the physician and pharma social community through access to data and complementary services from both organizations. This POV outlines the importance of Drug Ratings as part of the SERMO social platform, as well as how it will benefit physicians, pharma and pharma marketers through access to a wealth of previously untapped insights.

BACKGROUND

Today, people looking to make purchase decisions have an abundance of resources at their fingertips that allow them to see how others have rated and ranked products or services. From researching restaurants on Yelp, to products on Amazon, to hotels on TripAdvisor and even doctors on Healthgrades, the availability of mass ratings has forever changed the way purchase decisions are made. And despite physicians' long-time reliance on peer opinions, they have never had a central resource for aggregated ratings on prescription pharmaceutical products.

Social network use continues to grow among adults and professionals, including those in the healthcare industry. For physicians, having trusted colleagues available for consults about real-world medicine is key. [SERMO](#) — which has more than 650,000 registered users worldwide, and which has been called the “[Facebook for doctors](#)” — may just be the answer. With the launch of Drug Ratings, SERMO's value as a resource for physicians, and pharma marketers, has increased exponentially.

SERMO's DRUG RATINGS: ONE TOOL TO SERVE THEM ALL

Last year, [we talked about](#) the benefits of engaging with and learning from physicians via SERMO Pages. The value of the relationships and networking opportunities on SERMO just became even more powerful with the release of its physician-to-physician drug-rating tool. [Drug Ratings](#) is the only global proprietary



peer-to-peer drug-review system provided exclusively for verified licensed physicians. Its statistical methodology was developed and independently verified by biostatistics consultants from the pharma-specialized Blue Null Consulting Group.

SERMO's Drug Ratings tool allows physicians to evaluate drugs according to five dimensions:

- Efficacy
- Safety
- Tolerability
- Accessibility
- Adherence

With more than 2,400 drugs in the rating system so far, the power of social influence on SERMO continues to grow:

- 250,000+ drug ratings
- 20,000+ associated comments
- 85,000 views in a three-week period





WHAT IT MEANS FOR PHYSICIANS

Physicians looking for opinions on prescription drugs can turn to their social network and have ratings and comments in the palm of their hand. No need to find a colleague down the hall or between appointments.

“For doctors dealing with real-world medicine,” says Peter Kirk, CEO of SERMO, “manufacturer information is very important and a good baseline, but it isn't enough, because:

- There is a significant trust deficit: 91% of doctors believe that pharma marketing spins information about drugs at least some of the time.
- Medicine is far more complex than what is presented in clinical trials; patients often face co-morbidities, drug-access issues, lack of adherence and tolerability issues. A drug may be highly effective, but if it's inaccessible or causes severe heartburn, it may not be used.
- The **combination** of these real-world issues shape the real perception of a drug. Up to now, there hasn't been a way to share that perception among doctors, globally and at scale, until SERMO Drug Ratings.”

“For doctors dealing with real-world medicine, manufacturer information is very important and a good baseline, but it isn't enough ...” -- Peter Kirk, CEO of SERMO

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR PHARMA

While pharma marketers cannot participate in the ratings process or interact directly with physicians who rate medications, having access to the aggregate data will allow pharma to gain insights through reports on ratings by indication and drug class. Then, sometime in late Q3 or Q4 of 2017, SERMO will make available a portal to view and access data directly. This will give pharma the opportunity to increase the sources of business intelligence available so it can learn even more from physicians *and* improve products and services for physicians and consumers.

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Ahead of the anticipated reports and access to ratings data, pharma can already begin to establish their social presence through [SERMO Pages](#). The opportunity for pharma's entry to physician engagement, coupled with actionable insights that can come from ratings, will provide for more meaningful exchanges.

CONCLUSION

Drug Ratings is a powerful new value proposition for both the HCP community and pharma that is now a component of SERMO's already valuable online social network, providing peer-to-peer engagement for the HCP community. With the launch of Drug Ratings, SERMO continues to develop ways that allow pharma to leverage the business-intelligence resources of its social network, while maintaining the privacy and anonymity of connected physicians. Pharma should continue to watch SERMO in coming months for additional functionality that could enable near real-time access to Drug Ratings data, placing additional value on SERMO as a business-intelligence resource.

For more on how to leverage SERMO as a part of healthcare initiatives, or how Intouch Solutions can help leverage the power of Drug Ratings, contact <mailto:Ron.Kane@intouchsol.com> today.

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