

www.Sport-und-MS.de

Internet-based platform for physical activity promotion in persons with Multiple Sclerosis

R. Streber¹, A. Tallner¹, K. Pfeifer¹

¹ Institute of Sport Science and Sport, Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg (FAU), Germany

Background

- Germany: approx. 200,000 persons with Multiple Sclerosis (pwMS)
- many positive health effects of physical activity (PA) in pwMS
- physical inactivity is common in pwMS and linked with an increased risk of non-communicable diseases
- various reported PA barriers (e.g. uncertainties, information deficits about where, what or how to do exercise)
- the internet is one of the most widely used health information sources in pwMS, although peers and health-care professionals are the most credible health information sources for pwMS
- Physical activity-related websites predominantly provide information on health benefits, with unidirectional information provision

Mission and Vision

1. Implementation of a web-based social network platform to promote health-enhancing PA among pwMS - nationwide
2. Facilitate a sustained provision of physical activity-related health services for pwMS in Germany

For pwMS:

- provide access to information about PA providers in Germany,
- facilitate social support and exchange between peers and with PA providers,
- provide access to information about health benefits of PA

For provider:

- build a network among health-care providers,
- attract new participants and members,
- expand exercise-programs and optimize exercise-related content and methods

Visit & User characteristics

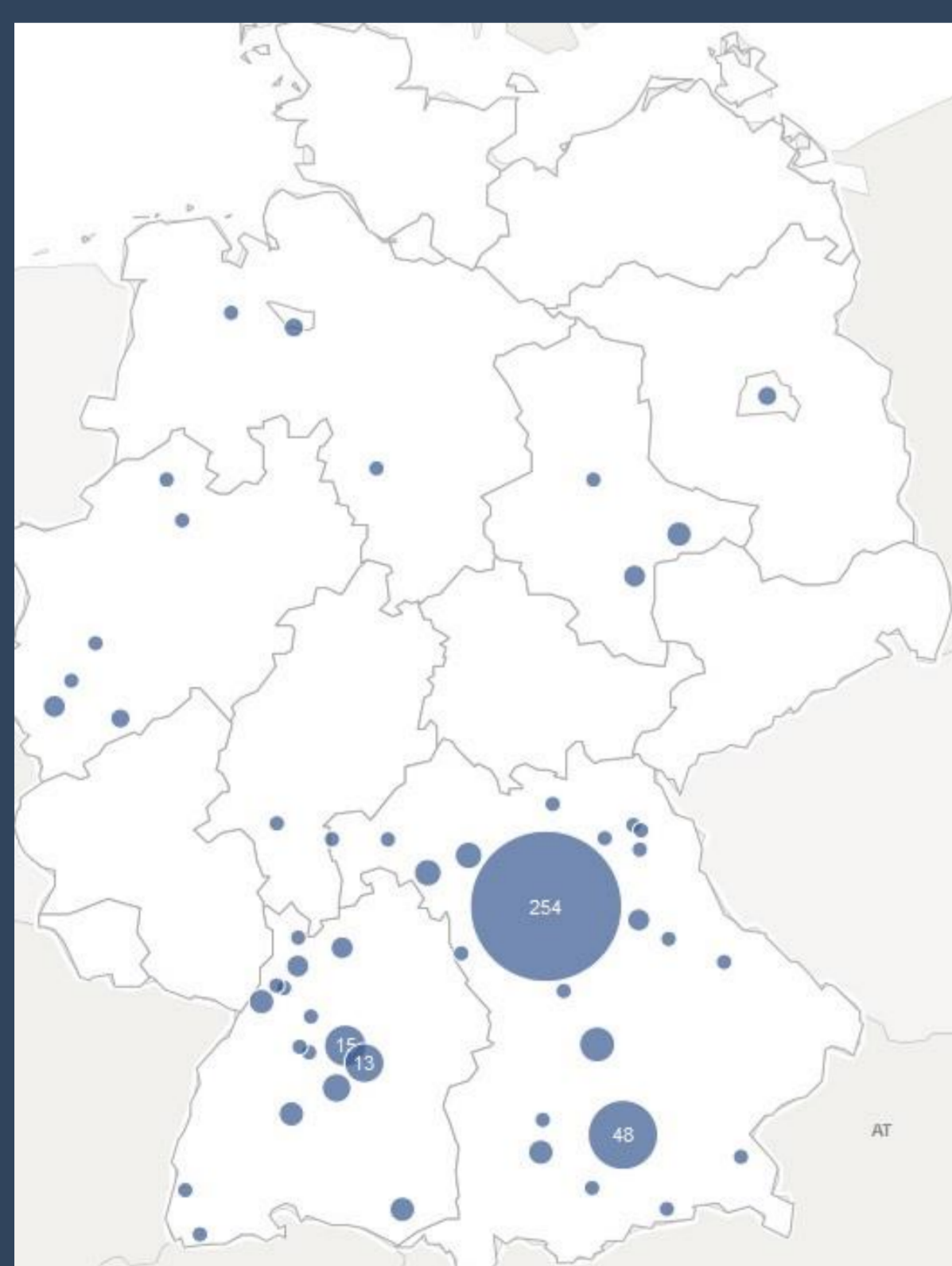


Fig. 1 Visits from September 01, 2015 to October 19, 2015

Website launched: September 2015

PwMS:

- Users: 50 pwMS
- Gender: 40♀, 10♂
- Age range: 20-52 years

Provider:

- 4 providers
- Regional MS Society, e-training provider, MS climbing group

Engagement

- 10-20 visits per day
- Most visited pages: members, forum, groups and community

Concept & Key features

Technical information:

- Basic technical implementation and maintenance is supported by the regional data center of the FAU
- Content-Management-System: Wordpress
- Thirty-two plugins to realize all features (e.g., social network, anti virus/firewall, editing, following users, forum, maps)
- Responsive and compatible to all end devices

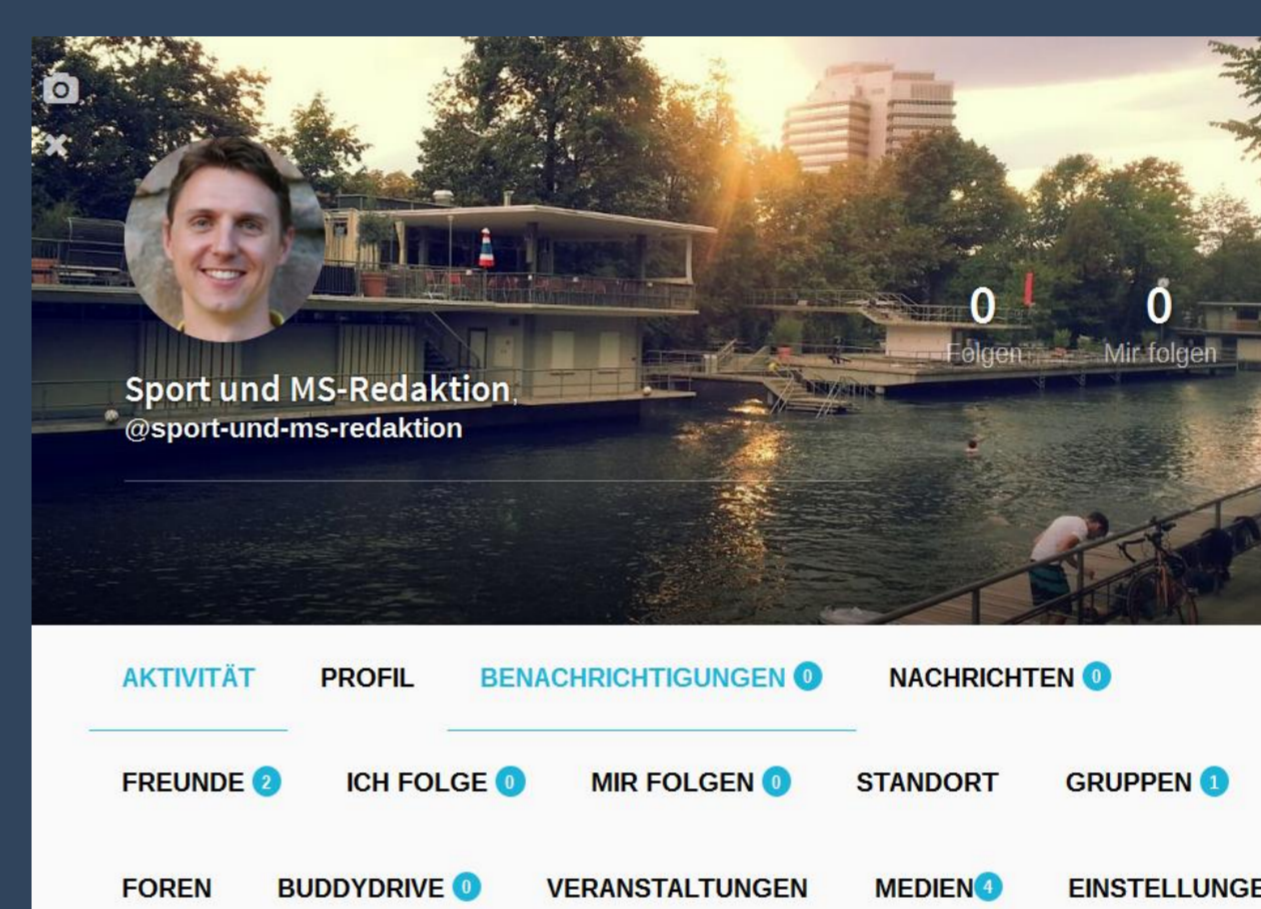


Fig. 2 Profiles allow the user to specify exercise-related motives, needs, limitations as well as its location; providers can describe their programs in detail

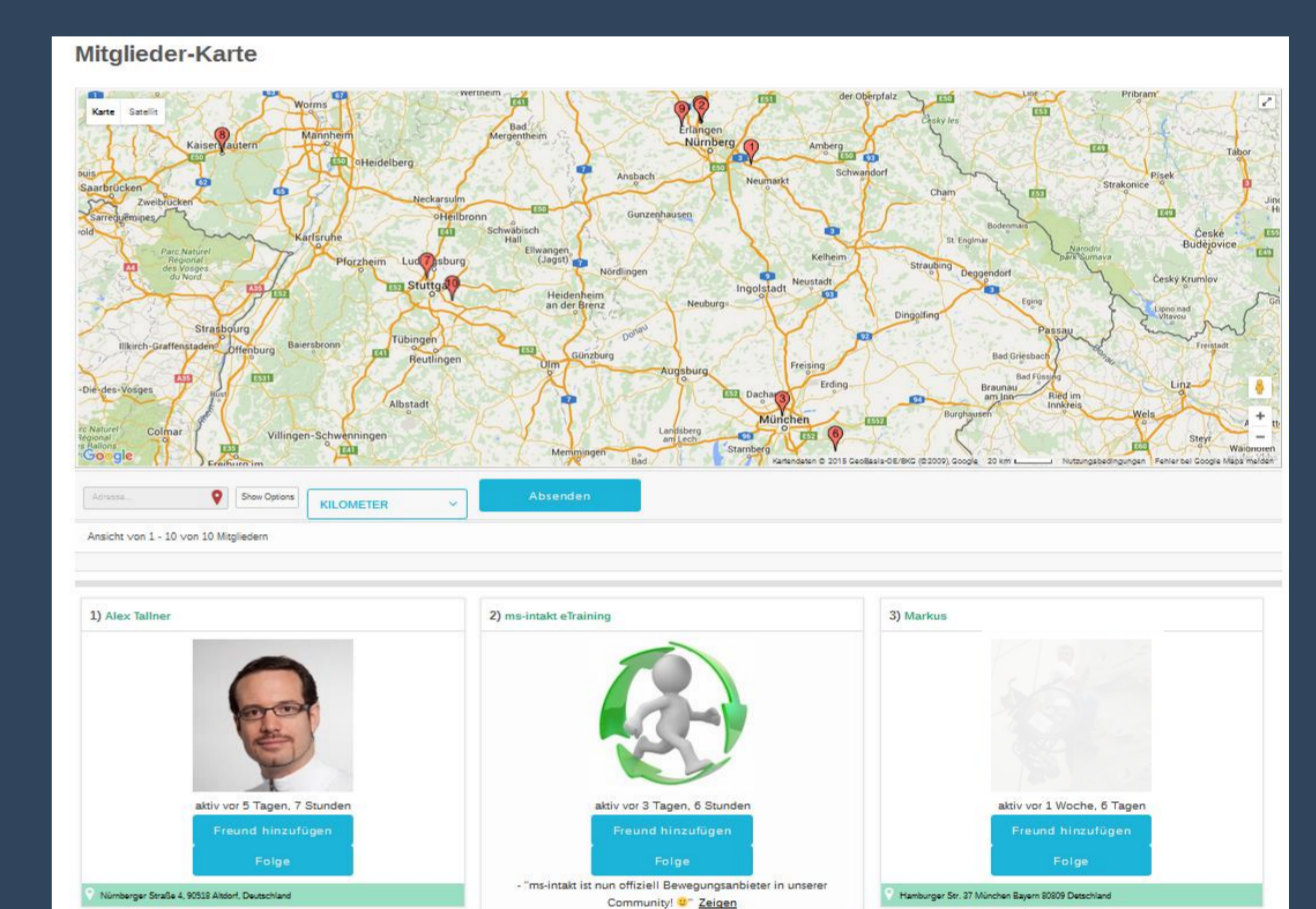


Fig. 3 Maps, lists and search tools allow a quick search for members, exercise partners, events and PA-providers

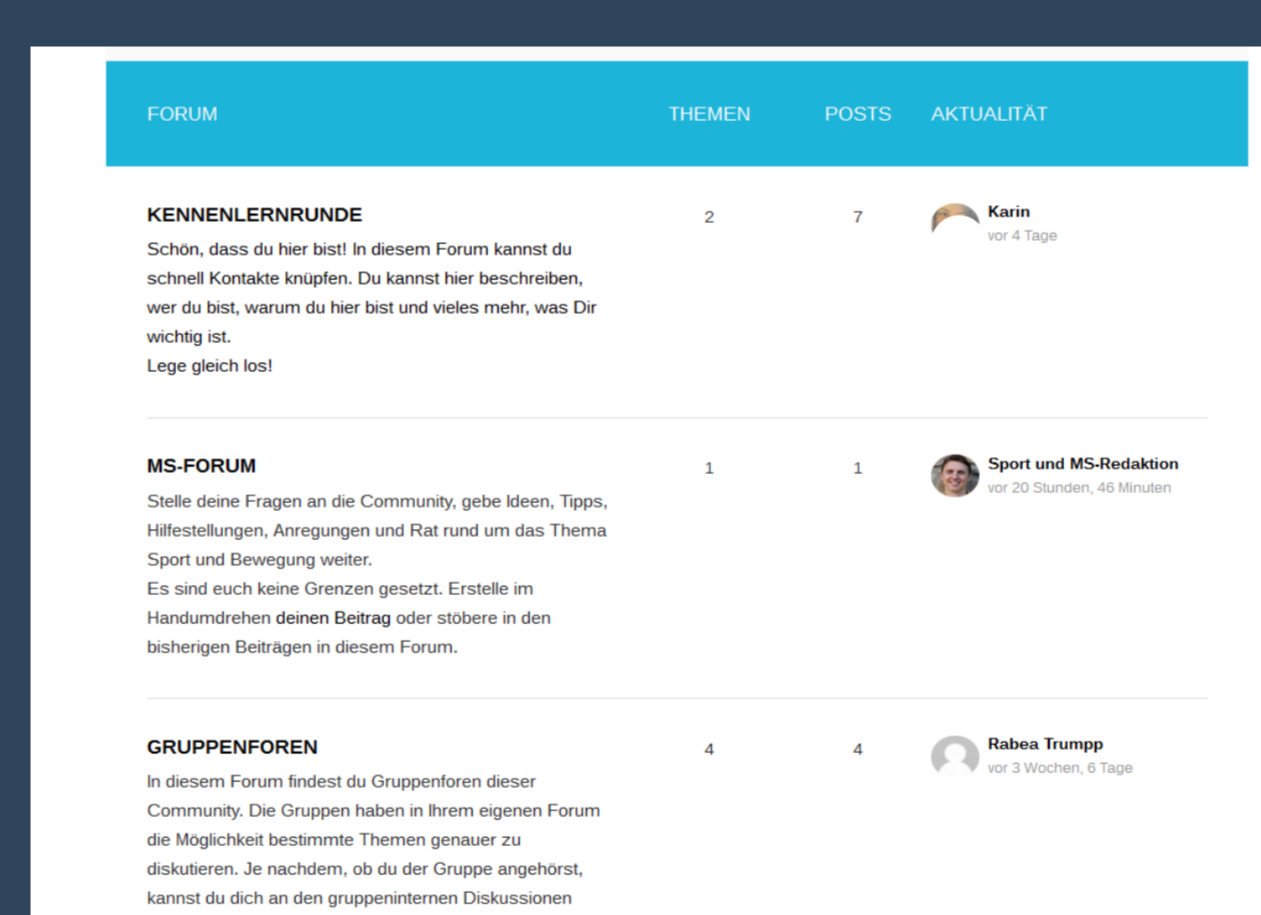


Fig. 4 Knowledge and experiences can be exchanged with members, follower and friends in the community's forum, via messaging services and in community groups

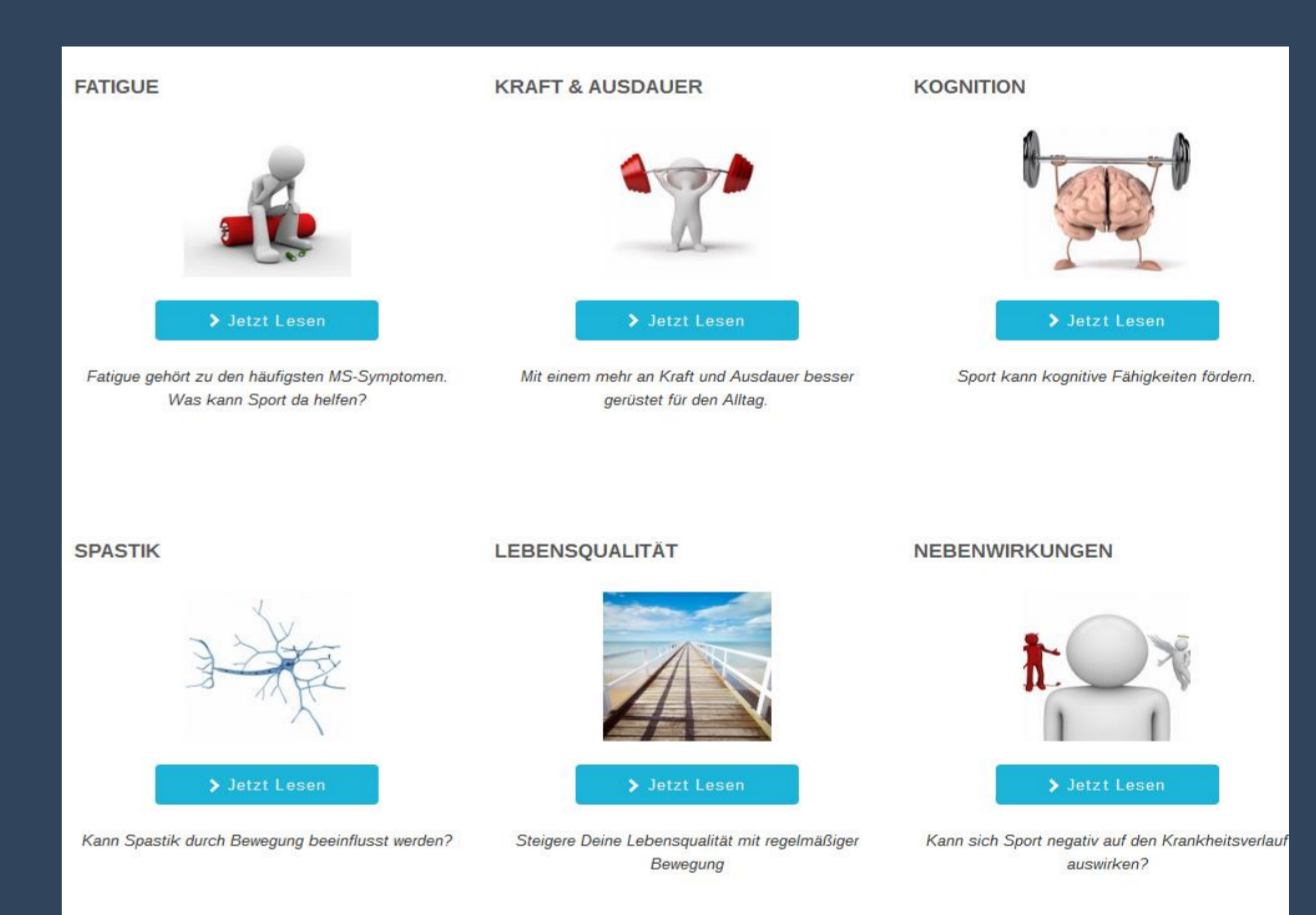


Fig. 5 Transparent and current information and recommendations on the dosage, effects and safety of PA

Next steps

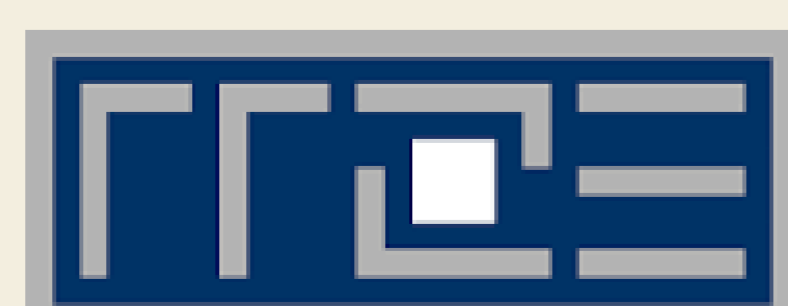
- Implementation of a marketing plan (e.g., social media, print media, direct mailing) to increase the number of users
- Conceptual development: integration of users in the content generation, moderation and maintenance of the website
- Intensify the cooperation with the National MS Society
- Implementation of the financial plan

Conclusion

- www.Sport-und-MS.de offers a social network between peers, providers and health care professionals. This website can have an impact on an individual's, organization's and community's resources to facilitate regular PA.

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Contact

Rene.Streber@fau.de, Alexander.Tallner@fau.de
Institute of Sport Science and Sport (FAU)
<https://sport-und-ms.phil.fau.de/kontakt>
@SportundMS

