

Personalizing the Non-Personal in an Age of eDetailing and Multichannel Marketing

The personal and the non-personal.

In the world of pharmaceutical sales and marketing, that's how communications have traditionally been measured. And the division between the two was distinct. Personal communications—one-on-one in-person 'detailing' with physicians, designed to help pharmaceutical reps make an impression while they hand out samples of their wares—were handled by the sales department. Marketing took care of the non-personal, including direct-to-consumer and journal ads.



Today, though, a shift is underway. Personal interactions are becoming more difficult to arrange, as doctors and healthcare providers find themselves busier, with less time to meet with pharmaceutical reps, and more regulations that restrict the traditional detail men from their widespread methods of the past. Sales and marketing have had to overlap more than ever, and pharmaceutical companies have turned to multichannel marketing as a way of reaching their target audience.

Non-personal interactions have become more pervasive as a result. But traditional non-personal marketing isn't enough—not without a personal touch. While becoming less reliant on traditional detailing, pharmaceutical companies also need to find a new, individualized approach to appeal to today's busy healthcare providers. The detail man's journey needs to follow a new path.

The Evolving Face of Pharmaceutical Sales

In the past, a pharmaceutical sales representative was something like a cruise director: wining and dining healthcare providers, hoping to make an impression, with the aim of encouraging them to prescribe their drugs. But recent shifts in the healthcare industry have changed that. New legislation—including the Sunshine Act and the Affordable Care Act—in conjunction with changing attitudes within the healthcare industry, have called for more transparency, hoping to remove potential conflicts of interest between doctors and pharmaceutical reps. As a result, pharmaceutical companies have been restricted in how much they can spend entertaining physicians and healthcare providers, while at the same time—faced with budget constraints brought on by expiring patents and subsequent sales drops—have found themselves cutting back on their sales teams. The number of pharmaceutical representatives has been reduced by as much as 75 percent in some companies, with high turnover rates in the positions remaining, as pharmaceutical companies look for the best way to reach physicians and healthcare providers.

CASE IN POINT

Looking to add a more personal approach to their marketing efforts, one healthcare company created a personal/non-personal hybrid solution by using marketing cloud technology to create a collection of 'personal' email messages. While sent automatically, each message emailed was chosen based on personalized parameters—leaving recipients feeling it was sent personally just to them.

With fewer in-person meetings available for traditional face-to-face detailing, and fewer sales reps on staff, more pharmaceutical companies have started to rely on eDetailing as a way of reaching healthcare providers, using tablet technology during presentations to more efficiently showcase their wares, while reaching physicians through online forums and social media sites as well. With that, the line between marketing and sales has blurred, as sales and marketing face off to determine who owns the eDetailing process.

But the most successful pharmaceutical sales and marketing teams have found a different approach: working together to try to personalize traditionally non-personal interactions, melding personal and non-personal approaches in order to make their eDetailing efforts more effective.

But it Doesn't Stop With the Detail Man



In the same way that these new approaches to sales and marketing are reshaping how pharmaceutical companies navigate their traditional sales channels, other expectations are emerging from the various communication 'pillars' in the pharmaceutical valuebuilding chain. These include the physician, patient, pharmacist, and healthcare payer—all of whom are invested in the pharmaceutical process today, and have unique needs that need to be addressed, with a unique set of stakeholders. Pharmaceutical companies have to find a way to reach them all.

With all of this in mind, pharma companies are searching out new opportunities and technologies to help them reach everyone, and to reach them in a way that truly connects. New Modern Marketing practices can help them do that, while increasing productivity and efficiency along the way.

Modern Marketing and the Personal Touch

Today, sales is just one channel in a pharmaceutical company's multichannel marketing process. And with Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems helping to automate the sales process and capture data, the smaller sales teams have become more efficient than ever. But more can still be done. With Modern Marketing practices and the right marketing platform—including Oracle Marketing Cloud for Life Sciences—that sales data can be coordinated automatically with marketing efforts, synchronizing multichannel methods to give both departments a better chance of reaching all of their target healthcare audiences. The result is sales enablement and an acceleration of the contact-to-sales process, with prospect behavior better fueling sales, integrated with CRM to create improved results.

A pharmaceutical-specific marketing tool like Oracle Marketing Cloud for Life Sciences can help teams analyze and understand the needs of prescribers, meeting requirements that emerge through their lifecycle, content, and social marketing efforts. It can help pharmaceutical companies create a central marketing hub to analyze customer data and deliver personalized experiences, messages, and promotions; develop, manage, and deliver relevant content that accelerates the prescription path and improves long-term loyalty; and engage deeply with prescribers to advocate the medicines their detailers represent.

Oracle Marketing Cloud can also help them recognize the places where their target audience congregates, allowing them to not only create marketing messages that resonate, but to target them effectively. Scoring each opportunity and using Digital Body Language™—a study of the way customers and potential customers seek, receive, use, and interact with online information—can create new insight into what healthcare providers require, allowing them to nurture the most promising leads in a way that's unique to the provider in question.

In doing so, sales and marketing move from being a cruise director to an information concierge: creating a Center of Excellence where all sales and marketing information flows through a central location, ensuring the right information always reaches its true target.

Conclusion

Detailing isn't the same as it once was. The detail man has evolved, fueled by new regulations and the emergence of eDetailing and a multichannel marketing environment. But just because the industry has changed, doesn't mean the personalized approach of the past has to disappear completely. Pharmaceutical companies simply need to find new ways to get that personal message across.

Marketing automation—and Oracle Marketing Cloud for Life Sciences specifically—can help them do that.

About Oracle Marketing Cloud

Modern Marketers choose Oracle Marketing Cloud solutions to create ideal customers and increase revenue. They use integrated information from cross-channel, content, and social marketing with data management and activation to deliver personalized customer experiences across all marketing channels. Visit oracle.com/marketingcloud.