

Chief DIGITAL OFFICERS

Some say the chief digital officer (CDO) is a “futurist” who predicts trends based on current market conditions and then works to ensure that the business moves to react to those conditions. Others consider the CDO to be that executive who brings together various disciplines within an enterprise to reinvent the business, thereby creating a new competitive advantage. CDOs typically live at the intersection of technology application, customer experience, and corporate strategy.

RITESH PATEL
Ogilvy

A Digital Transformation

There are two areas where digital has an impact. On the commercial side of the business, the inability to be able to call on the customer physically due to COVID-19 and the lockdown has forced digital on marketing and sales. The rush to embrace the omnichannel framework is real, but few have figured it out. Sales rep-generated emails via Veeva are the norm.

On the clinical side, as trials came to a halt during the outbreak, we had to find a new model. Site-less or decentralized trials have finally become a reality, with new players and platforms entering the market.

Global Engagement

In 2021, my focus is on innovation and developing new models for customer engagement that can be applied globally. How can we use data in healthcare, what new areas can we explore to engage with the customer, social, account-based marketing, EHR, etc., and what partnerships can we create with innovative companies. So knowledge of all of this, and then being able to translate how these things can help the organization, how to manage change, and how to educate the employees are all crucial.

Redefining Digital in the Future

I don't see a change this year in the CDO role as every organization is dealing with “how do we do digital?” However, I think the role may be redefined to chief innovation officer in 2022, as digital becomes part of our muscle memory and a way of doing business.

MANJUNATH SHANABAG
DXC Technology

Opportunities Abound

I believe life-sciences companies are yet to make the consistent moves to take full advantage of the new “digital” capabilities. Opportunities to take advantage of emerging technology are abundant, be it cognitive intelligence, cloud, mixed reality, or digital twins. The biggest transformative impact we are seeing and will continue to see in the foreseeable future is the use of artificial intelligence in developing new therapies, along with digital therapeutics. This trend is also driving the industry towards rapid adaptation of emerging tech in cloud and data integration.

A Customer-Centric Approach to Customer Needs

My peers and I at DXC have to wear multiple hats to meet our customers' demands. So, a customer-centric mindset is key to our success. We also need to interface with them as innovators, constantly bringing in new ideas to them. Another important component to success is also storytelling and connecting the dots. We need to string together the end-to-end scenario and business outcomes with digital innovations to be the right partner.

A Transformative Role

The very essence of the role is transformation. Taking an organization from “where it is” to “where it should be.” Along with being an innovator and/or disruptor, a successful CDO needs to be a dreamer. I would even say that one day each business unit within an organization may have its own CDO, who is not afraid to take risks and is able to lead teams

from cross-functional disciplines. The role will more likely evolve to be that of a chief growth officer.

NAGARAJA “SRI” SRIVATSAN
IQVIA


Digital — From Molecule to Market

Digital is having a transformative impact across all areas of life sciences from molecule to market. In R&D, digital has played an important role in the areas of patient recruitment and patient engagement. An ever-increasing number of clinical trials must meet diversity and inclusion criteria in patient recruitment. Digital technologies such as AI/ML are being used to make patient recruitment more efficient. In the areas of patient engagement, digital technologies are used to involve the patient pre-trial, in-trial, and post-trial and make trial participation easier. Digital technologies help in collecting patient data from participants such as diary and connected device data. In addition, digital technologies improve patient engagement by moving the patients towards better compliance with trial-specific requirements. By making use of digital technologies, both science and the patients are better able to succeed.

Driving Outcomes

As a chief digital officer, I feel the most important aspect of my role is to drive business outcomes for my clients and my organization. Digital has become mainstream. The proof of a successful digital program is the impact it has on each organization. Driving and owning the right business outcomes helps digital officers everywhere unite in our vision of delivering better value for everyone.

Sustaining Transformation

The role of the chief digital officer is both sustainable and necessary as we move into a new normal post the pandemic. We have not yet seen the full impact digital can have across all the functions of the organization. Digital technologies, when implemented properly, have a transformational impact on the organization. They help acquire and engage customers better, drive efficiencies, improve productivity and help teams collaborate and engage better. The CDO role continues to not only identify the opportunities but to execute the strategy required to ensure that business outcomes are delivered for the betterment of life sciences, its sponsors, sites, and most importantly, patients. In addition to bringing technology forward in the business, the role must help business understand the benefits of adopting technology to drive change within the organization. 

The Commanders & Chiefs



RITESH PATEL

Chief Digital Officer — Health, Ogilvy

Ritesh is a digital evangelist who works in the Ogilvy Consulting Practice, consulting with major clients on digital transformation and innovation. For more information, visit ogilvyhealth.com.



MANJUNATH SHANABAG

Global Head — Life Sciences Solutions, DXC Technology

With 24-plus years of expertise in strategizing and actualizing end-to-end solutions for global, multimillion dollar industry leaders, focused on the life-sciences sector, Manjunath Shanabag drives digital transformation, solution accelera-

tors, and premium assets. For more information, visit dxctechnology.com.



NAGARAJA "SRI" SRIVATSAN

Chief Digital Officer, IQVIA

As Chief Digital Officer for R&DS Technologies at IQVIA, Srivatsan is responsible for driving growth and leading product development and operations of R&DS Technologies. For more information, visit iqvia.com.

Be heard.

Be here.

Pharma VOICE

THE FORUM FOR THE INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE

(c) PharmaLinx LLC. Rights do not include promotional use. www.pharmalinx.com