

If You Want To Be A Great Brand Builder, Learn How To Be A Great Gift Giver

I have heard seasoned professionals describe the present state of building biopharma brands as increasingly complicated, confusing, and messy. It requires the knowledge of multiple topics and an army of specialists. Marketers entrusted with building brands must know a lot about a lot. I agree. But I think we can do better.

In an effort to contribute something helpful in navigating today's marketing maze, I find it easier to mentally translate "brand building" to "gift giving."

Before our colleagues start yelling, "You can't do that in pharma!" let me emphasize that I am not suggesting that we give actual gifts to customers. I am advocating that we apply the principles inherent in giving a meaningful gift to the decisions we make about the information, services, and experiences we create for patients and healthcare professionals.

Here are two principles we should consider to become great brand builders.

1. To Give a Great Gift, Truly Know The Recipient

Great gifts demonstrate how well the giver knows the recipient's likes, dislikes, passions, vices, hopes, fears, and needs. Knowing someone well takes time and effort. In biopharma, that means we should understand that people living with a disease are not just patients but are individuals with multiple facets to their identities and lives. Instead of just giving them a typical, "everyone gets the same content" plan, we might offer an ongoing stream of how to navigate being a parent while living with a rare disease, in addition to product information, efficacy, side effects, and dosing.

The same applies to healthcare professionals. We mirror healthcare professionals' training for evidence-based decision making. And rightly so. But when we think of healthcare professionals as busy employees or business owners or parents or consumers or teachers



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or managers or patients themselves, we may want to take greater care of what and when we communicate. For example, we might send an invitation to a clinical video series at a time that's convenient to them — generally after work hours, in their local time. By focusing on the healthcare professionals' unique likes, dislikes, and preferences, we can then make sure that the invitation is seen and not buried in the inbox.

2. Give a Gift That The Recipient Will Value — Not the Gift You Want to Give

The real value in a gift is not the price. It is in knowing that the gift they received reflects the care that the gift giver has taken to really understand them. That demonstrates empathy.

If we want to do more than promote effective products and actually build brands that matter, we must follow the path that our empathy for patients and healthcare professionals leads us — even when that path is non-conventional. Maybe people living with the disease want to be understood by the general public. Maybe they need emotional and practical support to live their lives one day at a time. Maybe they want help on how to continue working despite the challenges of their condition. Or maybe they need something else entirely — all the above and more.

The point is, if we really want to create a brand that is meaningful and has value in the minds of our customers — where all brands should live anyway — then we must be willing to do not just what we want or are required to do. We must be willing to take the time to understand what our customers need and want and then have the willingness to act on that empathy.

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closerlook is an analytics-driven digital marketing agency serving biopharma brands. The agency creates specialized omnichannel marketing programs that drive demand and sustain customer loyalty by focusing on what matters most — better outcomes for patients and greater business impact for the brands that serve them.

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