

Data, Marketing, and the PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

It's 2016, and we are living in an age where data is everywhere. It's a bit like oxygen or water, data flows freely, generated by you, me, and the plethora of devices with which we interact. The planets that lined up to enable this are the ever-more powerful set of devices we possess, on-demand connectivity almost anywhere, and the cost of storing data becoming cheaper as time goes by. And so it goes, we generate data in immense amounts from our devices, our social sharing, and our passion to now document every aspect of our life.

Many Internet infographics have been foisted upon us showing how much data gets generated in one minute on the Internet. It's a lot — in every minute that goes by, 216,302 pictures are posted on Facebook, 6.9 million videos are viewed on Snapchat, 400 hours of new videos are shared on YouTube, and 99,000 requests are made to Siri.

A New World for Marketers

All this data is creating a new world for marketing directors, a world where marketers are now able to use real-world data to optimize the way they acquire new customers and activate existing ones. For healthcare marketers in particular, access to consolidated data has been elusive. For the first time, however, there are technologies to address this issue with healthcare providers (HCPs) — with actionable information that is all gathered within the bounds of what is legal and appropriate.

AS MOST OF THE MARKETING WORLD HURTTLES TOWARD A NEW DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING REALM, WHERE TECHNOLOGY AND THE ABILITY TO COLLECT, STORE, AND ANALYZE DATA FOR MARKETING PURPOSES AND ACT UPON IT BECOMES A REALITY FOR MANY INDUSTRIES, THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY LAGS BEHIND.

For a digitally savvy marketer in any field, data can be the key to understanding audiences, optimizing campaigns, developing the right marketing messages in the relevant medium the customer expects and consumes the message, and enable the creation of long-term customer relationships.

We are seeing an explosion of data-driven-audience targeting in a number of industries. The consumer goods, retail, fashion, and travel industries have already embraced these tools that promise all manner of feature functions to develop data-driven marketing programs.

Salesforce Marketing Cloud, Marketo Inc., Domo, Inc., Oracle Marketing Cloud, and IBM Marketing Cloud provide a suite of tools that enable the marketer to get to know their customers better, create long-term customer value by using real-world data to truly understand their customers, and turn the dark art of marketing into a science where information can be leveraged to understand consumer profiles, preferences, behaviors, and potential to buy a product.

A Major Market Shift

A major shift is occurring in the market, and new data-enabled marketing ecosystems are emerging, which enables real-time marketing precision. The growth of programmatic advertising can be traced back to the ability to gather massive amounts of data and use it for almost real-time optimization.

The potential for applying data in marketing today is virtually unlimited. We are now living in a world where everything is interconnected, and the devices we possess and interact with store data constantly and serve it up to marketers almost on demand.

The best example of an integrated approach to using data for marketing is none other than Google. Google tracks your search habits (Google), video viewing habits (YouTube), Email messages (Gmail), internet browsing (Chrome), mobile activity (Android), and storage of content (Google Drive) and seamlessly and dynamically uses that data to generate art and copy that feels completely personalized.

This involves the collection, storage, managing, and serving up of data. This is also why data scientist is the new, most sought after role in many enterprises.

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A Data-Driven Lag

So as most of the marketing world hurtles toward this new data-driven marketing realm, where technology and the ability to collect, store, and analyze data for marketing purposes and act upon it becomes a reality for many industries, the pharmaceutical industry lags behind.

This is surprising given the nature of the industry and its penchant for collecting all manner of data. The industry lives by clinical end point data, can't bring a drug to market without real-world evidence and clinical trial data, and collects a wealth of data on their customers from opt-in databases for promotion to sales force territory data, prescription sales, and claims data.

There are a number of reasons, some legitimate and others not, why the industry has not embraced a data-driven marketing approach as fast as some of the other industries mentioned.

There are legitimate legal issues that the pharmaceutical industry faces when collecting data about their HCP customers. Many companies have different standards for opt-in management for marketing purposes and it's not HIPAA friendly to collect data on patients due to any potential PII infringement.

In most cases, pharmaceutical companies are also saddled with many legacy, and silo-based systems containing disparate data that has been collected over time. The ability to share this data requires rationalizing and connecting these systems at a vast cost. There's also a severe shortage of people equipped to develop the technology and analytics needed to extract value from the existing data as many favor the allure of Silicon Valley over working for a pharmaceutical company.

Many pharmaceutical companies believe

that there is little value to investing in improving data management and analytical capabilities since there are few examples of pharmaceutical companies creating much value from the improved use of data.

Pharmaceutical companies need to keep pace with changes brought about by digital technology. Mobile communications, the cloud, electronic health records (EHRs), advanced analytics, the collection of all manner of data and soon, the internet of things, are among the innovations that are starting to transform the healthcare industry.

A New World

Digital technologies have opened up a new world for the pharmaceutical marketer. In the United States, sales reps, medical science liaisons, and patient-service teams can inform and influence patients, physicians, and caregivers, either in person or via mobile devices, using apps, or on social media. With the advent of the EHR, healthcare consumers are using patient portals for their medical records and to communicate with their physicians; they use apps to fill prescriptions and online patient communities to speak with other patients with the same disease.

These interactions offer pharmaceutical companies the opportunity to derive value; however, to realize it, they will have to build advanced digital marketing and engagement capabilities similar to those deployed by leading retailers, airlines, telecom companies, and consumer goods companies.

For example, they could link and analyze data from insurance claims, clinics, laboratories, sensors, apps, social media, and more to generate real-world evidence about a drug's efficacy, guiding reimbursement, and clinical practices. A world in which clinical decisions about the best treatment options are suggested to physicians by advanced analytics. In this environment, winning pharmaceutical companies will be those able to positively influence the algorithm.

But these are future vision types of issues. The industry should begin to crawl before walking and then hurtle toward the holy grail of data.

Simply, and at its most basic, marketing and sales forces should use the data to understand their HCP customers and their prescribing behavior, and to create HCP profiles with data that will enable a more precise targeting of providers as well as increase the number of prescriptions filled. Understanding channel preferences, referral behavior, brand sentiment, specialty and prescription habits at an individual level should be the goal.

BEFORE THIS PROMISE OF DIGITAL MARKETING CAN BE ACHIEVED, PHARMA COMPANIES MUST CREATE A STRATEGY FOR COLLECTING AND STORING THE RIGHT TYPE OF MARKETING DATA. THE FOCUS SHOULD BE ON CREATING SOMETHING THAT WILL ENABLE A UNIVERSAL HCP PROFILE BY BRAND, BY FRANCHISE, OR FOR THE ENTERPRISE.

This kind of approach should enable the industry to get back to the days of HCP relationship management, where the company knew a lot about their customers for a brand or a franchise, and long before the industry got hooked on the "drug" known as an iPad e-detail.

But before this promise of digital marketing can be achieved, the pharma company must create a strategy for collecting and storing the right type of marketing data. That begins with deciding which type of data to collect and how to store this data in the most efficient and accessible way. The focus should be on creating something that will enable a universal HCP profile by brand, by franchise, or for the enterprise.

For most pharmaceutical companies, this kind of data is disparate, and is either completely siloed or in the process of being manually assembled. Imagine being able to access a single platform which could offer a wholly unified view of the HCP by providing an understanding of the kind of content that truly engages the HCP, while highlighting their attitudes and propensity to prescribe based on transactional data, behavior patterns, social data, and content consumption data.

Understanding that the industry in general hasn't been able to bring data together in a format that the pharmaceutical marketer requires, at a cost that would be justifiable and within a timeframe that is acceptable, an innovative startup in New York City called Medikly recently worked with healthcare experts to create such a platform.

The Medikly platform enable the capture and storage of a multitude of data sets from

salesforce, to IMS data, to content consumption and other segment data to create a robust profile of the HCP.

The team at Medikly collaborated with experts in healthcare marketing to provide a unique database that contains, in a central data store, more than 5.5 million profiles of HCPs in the U.S. The profiles include items such as prescription, referral, formulary, facility, procedure, and quality-of-care data. Using this as a base, they further defined attributes for each HCP, including geographic, demographic, behavior, lifestyle, and interest to enable the team to hone in on individuals.

Finally, adding third-party data enables the group to further enrich that base profile. Social media presence and influence, Medicare claims, EHR messaging, and media consumption, as well as online publisher data, helps create a universal HCP profile.

For those in the pharmaceutical industry, this profile opens up a new world of understanding the individual-level HCP. Basic details, such as segmentation can be tailored and are much richer based on real-world behavior as opposed to surveys and market research. Content consumption on channels and platforms can be tracked and optimized based on user behavior, and marketing communications strategies and tactics can be created from an informed perspective.

The first uses of this cloud-based platform have been in the area of data normalization and enrichment to enable the creation of new, pre-targeted, and niche HCP segments based on behavior.

Obtaining an existing customer list by brand or franchise, normalizing it, overlaying it with the data in the cloud, and then creating segments based on behavior, has already proven to be more effective for pharmaceutical marketers.

Data sources will continue to be added to enrich the data which will truly enable the creation of a universal HCP profile for customers.

This marketing cloud will provide customers access to the types of digital marketing tools enjoyed by the other industries highlighted in this article, but with a true healthcare bent, and in the manner that legally allows healthcare marketers to become digitally savvy marketers in 2016. ^{PV}

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