

# 6 Insights to Market Boldly in the Digital Age

**A**s pharma marketers, we no longer “do digital.” Instead, we are digital. It is a mind-set. It has become the core of every facet of a marketing plan.

When we think about the work that we do, the goal should always be to connect with customers — HCPs, patients, care partners, advocacy groups, etc. — in ways that provide value as defined by each of our audiences. That value is intended to remove the obstacles to effective products and services.

In order to do it right, it’s critical to consider six guideposts when building the plan. These guideposts are:

1. Incorporating measurement along the way
2. Ensuring organizational pull
3. Working off the right insight
4. Bringing humanity
5. Optimizing engagement
6. Creating and delivering support and services that tie it all together

We gathered several of Fingerpaint’s industry experts — Andy Pyfer, Bill McEllen, Nick Megjugorac, Laura Wilson, Carol Patel, and Craig Mattes — to talk about how pharma leaders can guide their teams during this age of digital transformation.

## Andy, how does data guide you in the dark?



Data really can be a light in the darkness. A tool that allows you to get a real look at where your audience is, what connects with them, and even how they behave. And the light data sheds gets even brighter as your audience engages with your content. This engagement informs what is relevant and allows for truly personalized experiences throughout their journey with your brand.

That personalization is essential, but we’re also learning that timing is equally essential. Data allows you to respond to customer actions

quickly — within minutes, not days. That’s what people have come to expect with non-pharma brands, and we must follow suit. After all, people are engaging with pharma during some of their most intimate personal moments. As pharma evolves and gets better at personalization and timely response, we’ll be able to shine a brighter light for our audiences, too, as they navigate their brand journeys.

## Bill, how does an organization get buy-in to truly integrate digital — or really any new initiative — in their marketing approach?



I believe buy-in always comes when you work from the ground up. When edicts come down from on high at the leadership level, it can be challenging to make it happen. But when you sit down with the people who are actually doing the work every day and ask them how they think a change will work for them, that level of collaboration helps people feel ownership and control over the new way of working.

Digital integration on teams is actually something our people are very passionate about. They know that digital work is the center of everything we are doing now and into the future, so they are looking for ways to do this work as successfully as they can. In some cases, we are able to work together with our clients to build the kind of infrastructure — silo-free — that allows for true integration and collaboration. Once that’s set, we just need to get out of the way and let it happen.

## Nick, how has insight mining evolved in the age of digital?



At times, the insights that can be pulled forward are almost an embarrassment of riches. The threshold to interrogate/segment audiences is so low; it feels like we have great command of the process to arrive at meaningful insights. Because this data is so accessible, we often have

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this perception that we truly understand a particular population. We find ourselves consistently going back to ensure that what we have identified for a group of individuals can be effectively translated to any single one of them. This connection is very much a two-way street. On one hand, we need to trust that we don’t lose what is unique about a given person when we try to harmonize learnings about a collective. Conversely, we need to be specific enough about group understanding to ensure it is representative of what is really happening on an individual level.

## Laura, as an expert in patient advocacy and human learning, what should marketers consider when they are building their digital strategy?

As we think about educating stakeholders, we must first think of them as people. Not patients, not healthcare providers, not sales teams. People. And people remember stories, not facts.

Incorporating measurement along the way together

Working off the right insight

Optimizing engagement

Ensuring organizational pull

Bringing humanity

Creating and delivering support and services that tie it all together



This doesn't mean that we can't share facts about a health condition or its treatment. But we can share information in ways that are meaningful and relevant. A few years ago, when direct-to-consumer television ads moved from the fast-paced litany of the Important Safety Information (facts) to including the same information as part of the storyline, it felt stilted and unnatural; however, it was a step in the right direction.

Our challenge now is to find ways to incorporate compelling and relevant stories into our campaigns, digital media, and training materials. How can people living with a condition share what it is really like to face their daily challenges and successes? What does it really mean to experience side effects or to be unsure how to administer an injection to oneself or a family member?

These must be stories about people, not about brands. And we have to be honest enough to show the challenges as well as the successes for people to truly learn about managing their health. This requires working closely with people who have these daily experiences when we're developing the stories; turning those stories into text-based, video, or audio content; and then helping approval teams gain comfort in this approach.

**Carol, when does engagement get involved in the creative process, and what are the consequences of de-prioritizing digital engagement?**

Engagement strategy is actually really similar to the creative process, as it sits half in strategy and half in execution. The more en-



twined engagement and creative teams can be, the better the solution. Accordingly, doing creative conceptualization while thinking about how the content will be consumed in the real world is going to provide stronger, more independent ideas, as opposed to applying a concept across tactics after-the-fact.

When digital engagement is de-prioritized, teams can struggle with being boxed in by content. For example, if a concept is text-heavy and the client asks for an augmented reality tactic, it's going to be tougher to retrofit the experience in a way that will really stick with people and be easy to experience.

We all love "surprise and delight" moments, which usually come when creative and tactics are well matched. You can only get this when you think about potential tactics from the start — digital or otherwise.

**How does the work that Nick and Laura do affect your suggestions when considering engagement planning?**

The work Nick and Laura do is incredibly important in keeping us grounded. We need to consider individuals as people while thinking about their needs. Of course, we'd all want to get every client using new, cool technologies like virtual reality or AI. And those tactics definitely have a place. But, as I've learned from teammates like Laura, oftentimes the innovations that truly help people or solve a complex need are built on existing habits.

Simplicity is really tough to actually do well, and that's one of the things I now challenge myself to look for when creating an engagement plan.

**Craig, given what Carol said, how do you incorporate digital into the creative process end to end?**



Every single year, digital advancements give us new opportunities to tell stories in new ways to a more precisely targeted audience. Story, however, is what remains critical to our creative process. Digital properties should be tools that enhance great strategic thinking and conceptual work, not the thinking itself.

There was a time recently when every marketer felt pressure to create an app to support their product. We would always ask, "What is this app going to do to deepen the user's experience with the brand?" and "What will entice users to engage with an app that comes with their treatment?" It's that sort of critical thinking that I ask my creative teams to take on when embarking on a digital project.

It all comes back to concept and story. If your campaign is strong enough, a VR experience or social media platform may allow your audience to engage with it in an exciting new way. Another interesting facet of our industry is that many of the brands we're supporting, such as smartphone diagnostics and connected health platforms, are digital properties themselves. That means that our creative work has to be a reflection of the state-of-the-art technologies we're advertising. <sup>PV</sup>

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