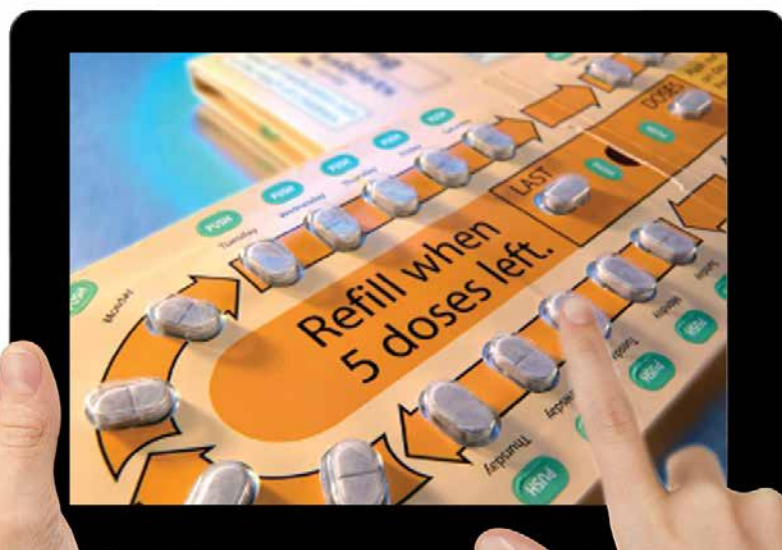


# Show Don't Tell

## MESSAGING IN THE

# DIGITAL AGE



Visual content with compelling images receives 94% more total views than content without visuals.

In 1911, a newspaper editor was the first to use the phrase “A picture is worth a thousand words,” and the relevance of this statement remains today. More than 100 years later, it is even more important to represent a brand or brand message in as a quick and visual way as possible, especially online. Multitasking, media-savvy consumers make split-second decisions based on visual content.

According to MDG Advertising, clear, detailed images are deemed to be very important by 67% of consumers and carry even more weight than product information, full description, and customer ratings.

Article content featuring compelling images averages 94% more total views than those

without. Social media posts with photos have higher levels of social engagement than other types of posts.

“Images are the rising stars of the Internet, and harnessing the enormous power of image optimization in a company’s photo marketing strategy can result in unlimited potential and performance for an image-savvy business,” says Michael Del Gigante, CEO, MDG Advertising.

### Visual E-Detailing

Visual content is especially important in e-detailing, as every physician is time crunched when searching for relevant informa-



### Instagram: The Perfect Channel for Visual Content

#### Major pharmaceutical companies embrace Instagram

In 2013, the first pharmaceutical company to engage with Instagram was Boehringer Ingelheim; today, the company has 50 posts, 1,106 followers, and is following 239 others on its Instagram account. Other pharmaceutical Instagrammers include:

- ▶ Novartis has 180 posts, 2,315 followers, is following 59 others
- ▶ Genentech has 160 posts, 2,068 followers, is following 178 others
- ▶ Lilly has 56 posts, 650 followers, is following nine others

### FAST FACT

#### THE BRAIN PROCESSES VISUALS

60,000 TIMES FASTER THAN TEXT.

tion. Using visual content can engage physicians quickly and speed communications, says Maria Casini, co-president, managing partner, Guard Dog Brand Development.

“Animated charts and graphs, interactive diagrams, mechanism of disease or action of a drug can be effectively used to make the e-detail more compelling and valuable,” she says. “They hold viewers’ attention longer, which makes for a better, more memorable detail.”

Visual content is easier for healthcare providers to comprehend, remember, and engage with, particularly on mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones, according to Susan Bertocci, creative director, Avant Healthcare. When integrated intelligently with content, images can increase physician engagement significantly, she says.

“The reality is that more HCPs than ever are appearing on our clients’ no-see and low-see lists, so pharmaceutical companies have realized that if they invest their time and resources into building strong e-detailing strategies, they can better ensure that their

## Using Visual Content to Tell The Story



The visual in this award-winning journal ad produced by the UK-based agency Langland uses a sleight of hand trick to illustrate how a person living with MS might feel losing her independence and the inability to do small tasks due to spasticity as a result of the disease. At first, viewers see a woman drinking coffee, and then a second later they realize that someone else's hand is holding the cup.

products — and more importantly, the correct promotional messages around those products — are getting in front of physicians, even if that doesn't occur in a face-to-face meeting with a sales representative," Ms. Bertocci says.

Images used in e-detailing need to be chosen carefully, Mr. Del Gigante says. The purpose of the images will determine their design; for example, images used to sell should be different from images meant to inform.

"Images used to sell need to convey emotion and impact," he says. "Images used to inform need to be universally understood to show a clear meaning."

Visual content is effective for all audiences and any audience, but needs to be tailored to the specific needs of each audience, Ms. Casini says. Using appropriate images is a high priority in the design. If the images are too general or irrelevant to the text, they will not be helpful in engaging the consumer.

"As one would expect, a medical professional audience typically prefers visuals that are more scientifically detailed than a lay audience," she says. "The importance of visualizations of science cannot be underestimated."

Guard Dog recently asked practicing oncologists from around the world how valuable infographics or visualizations of molecular/mechanisms of action are in communicating a product's features and benefits. On a scale of 1 to 10, the oncologists scored the importance as an eight.

"Generalized content speaks to everyone, which really means it speaks to no one," Ms. Bertocci says. "The target audience is the plat-

form around which the story should be built. Determining that resonance comes from solid demographic segmentation and/or psychographic differentiators applied to the creative."

The color of the graphic or image can also make a difference in its success, as can the typeface and font size.

For instance, red might not be an ideal color choice when the audience is mostly male, since about 8% of men have red-green color blindness, Ms. Casini says.

Type size is yet another audience-specific consideration. Elderly audiences and those with certain medical conditions such as multiple sclerosis, for example, tend to benefit from communications in larger type sizes, she adds.

"It's certainly important to understand the target audience when choosing visual content; it's important not only to know the channels they use to receive information or be communicated to but also the way they best react to messaging," Mr. Del Gigante says.

## Adopting Visual Content Across Channels

Our experts say visual content has the same impact across all channels, but the format of the image may differ across various media.

"Messages are messages," Ms. Bertocci says. "The channels and media through which they are communicated may vary, but the same fundamental marketing principles apply regardless of how that message is communicated. Capturing attention and then keeping it through a strong, persuasive message will compel action in your audience."

The medium may dictate whether it's the image or the copy that does the attention-getting, Mr. Del Gigante says.

"A platform like Twitter is similar to outdoor messaging, where you have six words or less to grab someone's attention," he says. "This makes the impact of images huge."

As a general rule, social media is dominated by visual content. Tweets are re-tweeted more often when a visual is attached. Social media networks such as YouTube, Flickr, Instagram, and Pinterest are focused on imagery, often telling stories in a visual way.

"Infographics, short videos, even photos from mobile phones, allow pharma and patients to share brand messages

and health information to millions quickly and inexpensively," Ms. Casini says.

Pharma companies need to do more than show an image of their products, however. The best use of visual content evokes emotion as well as informs. For example, the journal ad for Bayer's Sativex, which won three gold placements in the 2014 Lions Health awards in Cannes, used imagery in an innovative way. The Windsor, UK-based advertising agency Langland created visual content that instantly portrays the story of patients with MS and their challenges with spasticity. The ads fea-



E-detailing is the perfect medium for using visual content to engage and speed communications.

**MARIA CASINI**

Guard Dog Brand Development

A platform like Twitter is similar to outdoor messaging, where you have six words or less to grab someone's attention.

**MICHAEL DEL GIGANTE**  
MDG Advertising





If a message can be communicated visually, communicate it visually; statistics show that visual content works best for retention.

**SUSAN BERTOCCI**  
Avant Healthcare

ture people doing everyday activities, such as washing hair, brushing teeth, and drinking coffee, only they are being assisted by others.

“It’s hard to get an image to communicate exactly what a particular drug does, but what a good visual can do is capture the viewer’s attention, set the tone for the brand, and potentially convey a benefit,” Mr. Del Gigante says.

Applying an archetypal strategy as the basis of brand development is a solid approach, Ms. Casini says, because the technique uses subconscious motivational patterns to create brands and content with higher resonance.

“In fact, archetypal brands have been proven to be 97% more effective than those that are not,” she says. “This type of strategic design goes beyond simply showing the bottle or the box.”

### An Instagram Impact

One way some pharma companies are starting to use visual content is through Instagram. According the Pew Internet’s report earlier this year, some 26% of online adults use Instagram, up from 17% in late 2013. Almost every demographic group saw a significant increase in the proportion of users. Most notably, 53% of young adults 18 to 29 now use the service, compared with 37% who did so in 2013. Besides young adults, women are particularly likely to be on Instagram, along with Hispanics and African-Americans, and those who live in urban or suburban environments. <sup>PV</sup>

## Nine Rules for Visual Content

Our experts outline their top three tips for creating great visual content.

### MICHAEL DEL GIGANTE’S TOP 3 RULES



**USE VISUALS.** The most important thing to remember when creating pharma marketing content is that messages don’t always need to be written text. Make sure to include visuals. Written content containing relevant images gains, on average, 94% more total views than content without visuals.



**IMAGES NEED TO CONVEY EMOTION AND HAVE IMPACT.** While a cliché, “a picture is worth a thousand words,” still holds true. It’s always been our philosophy that words do the attention getting and the picture supports the message or conveys a feeling.



**DON’T MISREPRESENT PRODUCT.** While it’s easy to reach for stunning imagery that will create an emotional connection to your product, don’t misrepresent the product’s effects. “Safety first” not only is a motto for the health-conscious, it’s also a wise phrase to remember when looking to protect your pharma product from claims of false representation.

### MARIA CASINI’S TOP 3 RULES



**ENGAGE.** Engage your audience with meaningful images that support content. Be selective in your choice of imagery to ensure you cut through the information overload we face every day with a visual that is relevant and resonates with your target audience.



**INFORM.** When we distill complex ideas visually and verbally they are easier to understand. In fact, the importance of visual content in informing audiences is well documented. A study by

Dowse and Ehlers found that when it comes to comprehension rates of medicine labels, 25% greater comprehension is found with a combination of images and text compared with just text alone.



**DIFFERENTIATE.** When developing visual content, purposefully and strategically design with a distinctive illustrative/photographic style and color palette that reinforce the brand. Too often visual content looks interchangeable from brand to brand. Think about the generic look of the average infographic.

### SUSAN BERTOCCI’S TOP 3 RULES



**MESSAGES SHOULD BE ENGAGING.** People don’t just read or hear messages, they see and feel them. This creates memory, recall, and ideally, compels them to think or act differently.



**CHUNK THE INFORMATION DOWN.** Distill the information into four or fewer pieces — think phone number rhythm. Our brain processes images more quickly than text, so make sure that information comes in bite-size chunks when possible. When working with pharma brands, realistically, this won’t always be possible, but it’s a standard to strive toward.



**IF IT CAN BE COMMUNICATED VISUALLY, COMMUNICATE IT VISUALLY.** Statistics show that visual content works best for retention because we are visually wired: 70% of our sensory receptors are in the eyes — we use our senses to assess a scene in less than one-tenth of a second. Also, 50% of our brain is involved in visual processing — to not engage a majority of the brain is to lose a majority of an audience’s attention.

# A case for cartoons

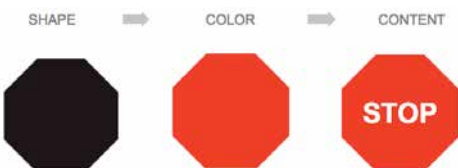
## Building valuation with visuals



**Maria Casini** Co-Founder and Managing Partner,  
Chief of Strategic Design  
Guard Dog Brand Development, LLC  
[www.GuardDogBD.com](http://www.GuardDogBD.com)

People have understood the power of visuals since our early ancestors told the stories of their hunts with simple line drawings on cave walls, and used symbols as directional or warning signals. Today, international signs are visuals with no copy, and our reflex response to an octagonal shape at the end of a block doesn't require reading the word STOP. **When it comes to communicating the value of scientific innovations, even the most complicated science can be explained more clearly and more quickly through the use of visuals.**

The importance of visuals and shape is hard-wired in our brains. Research has shown that the majority of people are visual learners.<sup>1</sup> The human brain acknowledges shape first, then color, then finally decodes content. This is known as the sequence of cognition. Understanding this sequence of cognition provides valuable insight and opportunity to create visuals that are highly effective for busy stakeholders, whether they are KOLs, potential partners, or investors.



Investors, in particular, need to understand potential value in terms that resonate with them quickly.

**Science visualization cuts through the communication bombardment people face every day in a meaningful and memorable way.** These visuals, often referred to as “cartoons,” are powerful business tools that distill complex ideas into their essence. Cartoons blend strategy, differentiating relevant language, and strategic design together to immediately convey compelling ideas about why the product or innovation is likely to be a market success.

### Cartoons are anything but funny.

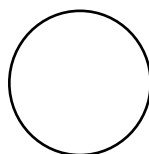
Whether displaying mechanisms of action (MOAs), the technical aspects of an innovation, or information about a disease, cartoons are an opportunity to convey the most important aspects of the innovation in a compelling, digestible way, starting as early as Phase II. Cartoons help all commercialization team members tell a clear, consistent, distinctive, engaging story quickly. Margaret Read, PhD, former vice president of product development at Infinity Pharmaceuticals, noted, “First and foremost, when we introduced a new compound, was the establishment of clear visuals and a lexicon that were adopted by all team members, from the bench scientists to our CEO. The resulting slides and visuals were sought after by our investigators and adopted by thought leaders.” The faster a scientific innovation can be placed in a visual context that target audiences can quickly understand, the sooner its value can be appreciated.

**When creating a cartoon, always consider your target audience:** Being sensitive to the needs of your audiences when designing a cartoon is essential. The tone of the copy and style of illustration need to be taken into account. Cartoons created for KOLs are different from cartoons for investors or patients. One needs to be more highly scientific than the other.

**Below is an example of how quickly our brains interpret shape compared with text and how a visual can be more memorable:**

**Text:** A closed plane curve consisting of all points at a given distance from a point within it called the center

**Visual:**



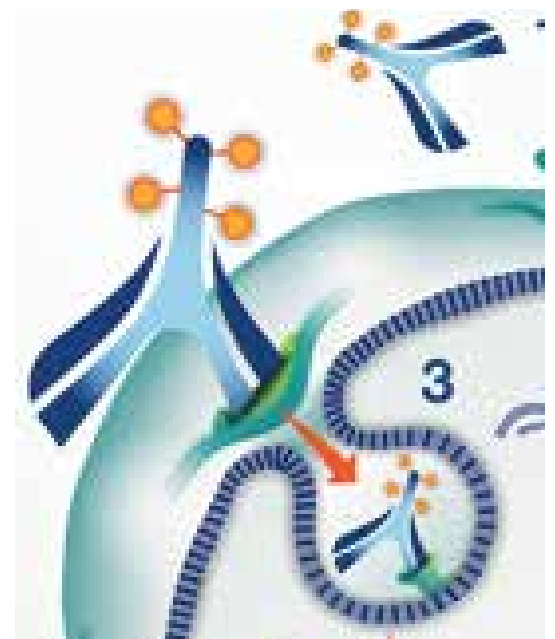
Isn't it easier and faster to recognize a circle from seeing it?

### Consider the benefits of investing in cartoons.

A picture really is worth 1000 words. Guard Dog recently completed a global survey with practicing oncologists. In that survey, we asked “On a scale of 1 to 10, how valuable are infographics or visualizations of molecular pathways/mechanisms of action in communicating a product's features and benefits?” Oncologists scored the importance of cartoons as 8 out of 10.<sup>2</sup> We would hypothesize that this is true for most if not all medical specialties, not just oncology. By giving stakeholders a clear, simplified, memorable image that conveys features and benefits quickly, you can just as quickly spread the word that your product or innovation has value.

### Cartoons are strategic tools that help improve business communications.

Visualized science clarifies information and can help stakeholders engage more quickly and act more decisively on the information you provide. This makes building visual language that can be applied to cartoons, information graphics, and the display of quantitative data essential in the business of healthcare and the life sciences.



1. Kathy A. Lutz and Richard J. Lutz (1978), “Imagery-Eliciting Strategies: Review and Implications of Research”, in *NA-Advances in Customer Research Volume 05*, eds. Kent Hunt, Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Consumer Research, Pages 611-620.