The Role Artificial Intelligence Plays in Humanizing the Health Experience

It used to be a broad, one-size-fits-all remedy for common complaints. If you needed it, there was little choice in what kind you received. If you didn't need it, someone was ready to convince you otherwise. Fine-tuning it for an individual need was so cost-prohibitive the idea was basically science fiction. But then a rush of innovation changed the game. Suddenly it wasn't outrageous to tailor the tool to the need — in fact, it was the core of a new business model.

It may sound as if we're talking about a drug, but we aren't. We're referring to artificial intelligence (AI). And as with a new drug discovery, AI, when aligned to customer needs, can deliver exceptional value through tailored support.

Driving authentic patient engagement in health, or humanizing the health experience, should involve a decisioning mechanism, supported via AI, that delivers an unprecedented level of trust, relevancy and value, and enables patients to proactively engage in the management of their health. Effectively elevating the human experience requires consistency in engagement across the entire patient journey, engagement that is a blend of unbranded and branded messaging and content that addresses the entire patient and not just the disease they have. This is the role that AI can play.

Promising AI Avenues

▶ **Cognitive Engagement.** This is the fusion of voice recognition and advanced online interfaces with machine learning to interact with patients, physicians, payers, and colleagues on specific topics. For example, external-facing applications can fortify interactive voice response and chatbot functions with the ability to pick up on behavioral and attitudinal cues, generating useful insights that make engagement more rules-based and effective. If the channel is digital, AI can feed directly into that enhancement by answering the questions: What's the right "next best message," and what channel should deliver it? What's the best time of day to deliver it? For other channels like physical direct mail, AI might be less vital. What's important is knowing where AI can make the most impact and applying it for "right time engagement."

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▶ **Predictive Social.** This ability extends beyond one-to-one contacts. AI-based monitoring of social media can actually predict hot topics of conversation days in advance, positioning a pharma company to be able to get out in front of a trend or a problem. Predictive analytics applied to key messages can also help a company optimize its paid media content, from both a spend and targeting perspective.

▶ **Cognitive Insight.** Internally, AI can help life-sciences companies identify target populations for trial studies. Insights derived from patients can support superior decisioning making. When cognitive engagement is layered-in, pharma companies can drive improved recruitment that can help patients stay engaged throughout the trial.

Move Forward at Your Own Pace

Today, the adoption of AI doesn't need to be an overwhelming feat. Life-sciences companies can ease their way across the AI frontier with small-scale pilots that match their real-life challenges and financial resources. Because AI is customizable to an organization's unique stance and needs, using it well requires a clear internal understanding of what those needs are. Which decisions or operations can benefit from an injection of higher-level technology, and how will you measure that advan-

tage? Initiative mapping can be performed to determine an effective path forward, starting with AI projects that promise more impact with less effort.

Also, AI tools are more scalable, modular, and flexible than before. A lif-sciences organization can dip its toe into the use of AI without taking on a major investment — or a major disruption in how it does business.

The innovators who create new drugs, devices, and therapies are working hard to help their customers understand the promise of a new age — and today we can realize possibilities that seemed fanciful a generation ago. The promise of AI applies to these innovators in a parallel fashion. You've heard the stories for years now. At first they were speculative. Then they were real, but impractical. Now AI has turned the same corner the life sciences have turned: It can bring real patient benefits, at an achievable scale, right now. **PV**

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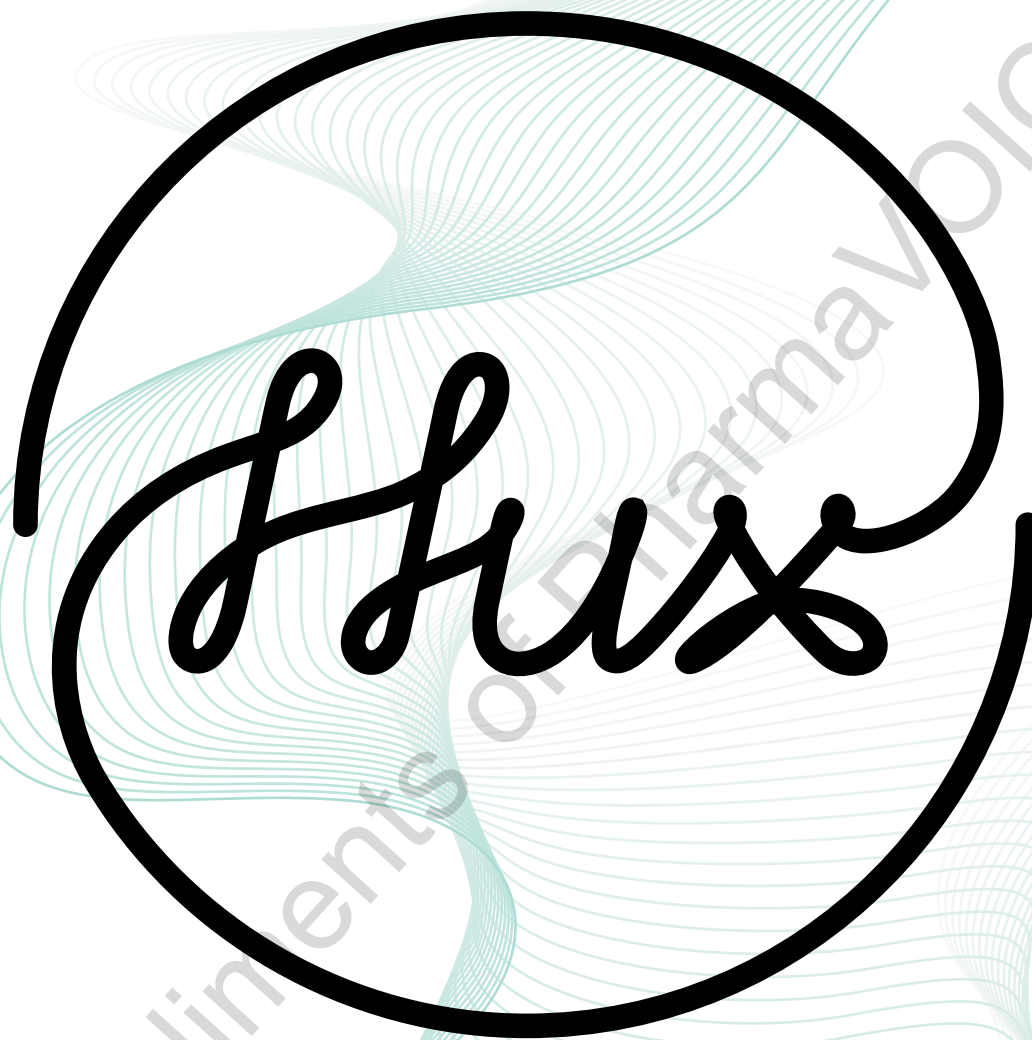
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