

Quick Response (QR) Codes

The Next Frontier for Pharma?

Those little ink blot-like codes are cropping up everywhere — in consumer newspapers and magazines, out-of-home advertising, brochures, in stores, and elsewhere. When you snap a picture of them with your mobile device they take your handheld to brave new worlds of content. Being QR code savvy might reward you with a special discount coupon for a favorite restaurant, a color and size chart for a line of outerwear, even a video guitar or golf swing lesson.

The potential uses are plentiful, and that's why they're becoming so ubiquitous — everywhere that is, except in pharma promotions.

Two factors point to what should be the landslide acceptance and use of QR codes by the pharmaceutical industry. First, physicians are relying increasingly on their mobile devices for information (27% of Apple's approximate 5,000 health-related iPhone apps are for use by HCPs, according to MobilHealthNews). Second, pharmaceutical marketers need to impart a lot of information, including study data, MOA, dosing, prescribing information, etc.

To find out where the industry stands with regard to awareness, current, as well as potential use of QR codes, PharmaVOICE surveyed its readership. The results show that QR code usage in pharmaceutical marketing really has nowhere to go but up, but there is a core of early adopters leading the charge.

Of the 513 responses received, 330 of them were from people involved in marketing. About half of each group said they were somewhat familiar with QR codes, while only 12.3% overall and 14.5% of marketers said they were very familiar.

While significant numbers of those surveyed have QR codes on their radar screens, the survey shows they have not started incorporating them into their marketing plans yet; 64% of the marketers reported that their companies are not currently using QR

codes for marketing purposes and another 28% weren't sure.

But there's a vanguard 8% (n=27) of marketers who said their companies were currently using QR codes for marketing purposes and roughly double the percentage (17%) indicated that they or their firms plan to use QR codes in 2011. So the tipping point for the use of QR codes by pharmaceutical marketers may be in the very near future.

A Sea Change for QR Code Adoption in 2011

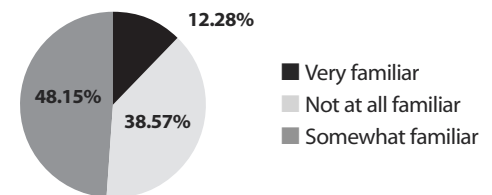
The demand for increased access to data through mobile devices is huge and growing at record pace. The technology is there. Awareness of the potential for this cutting-edge tool is all that is needed, which is why PharmaVOICE is incorporating QR codes into the publication from cover to cover starting with this issue. The QR code on the cover is an innovative marketing tactic by Roska Healthcare and the QR codes at the end of articles will link readers directly to the bonus online content.

The QR code content in this issue will reveal the wealth of possibilities that QR codes bring to both the HCP and consumer marketing segments. For example, when QR codes are embedded in DTC ads, consumers can get a guide for initiating a discussion with their doctors delivered to their phones, along with coupons for a starter supply of medication that can be scanned at the pharmacy with their prescriptions. Within the pharmacy, QR codes placed strategically in the OTC aisles can link to information about prescription medications for similar conditions.

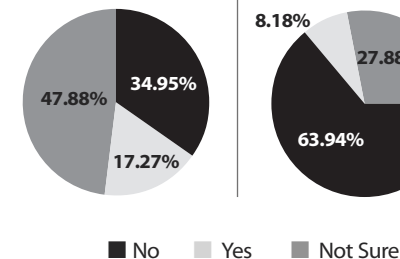
Within journal ads, physicians could snap QR codes to have a specific clinical study delivered to their mobile device, or watch a brief video about a medication's method of action. QR codes can change the in-office dynamic with waiting room or treatment room posters that allow patients to view informational videos and link to additional resources on their mobile devices.

The technology is available; all marketers have to do is put it to use. Survey results indi-

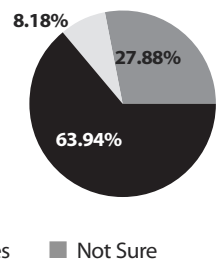
Familiarity with QR Codes — All Respondents



Marketers whose companies currently use QR codes



Marketers whose companies plan to use QR codes in 2011



cate that almost 64% of pharma marketers who are either "very" or "somewhat" familiar with QR codes have a good understanding of what they can do. Specifically, 62% know that the codes can be read by cameras in smart phones; 56% know that they are 2-dimensional bar codes that can store more data than traditional codes; and 46% know that the codes can take viewers to a Web site, watch a video, or download a coupon.

PharmaVOICE is pleased to be benchmarking this information about QR codes at the very beginning of the adoption curve and will follow up with another survey at the end of the year to evaluate uptake.

With 64% of marketers in our survey indicating that trade publications are their primary sources of information for new technology and marketing communications, PharmaVOICE is proud to be ahead of the curve when it comes to bringing cutting-edge technology and innovative information delivery vehicles to its growing print and online audiences. **PV**

TRY IT NOW!
USE YOUR SMART
PHONE'S QR CODE READER.

