



rates driving site visitations that last less than 15 seconds but transfer little information. This is usually because the expectations driven by the campaign do not align with the content at the click destination, he says. Others sites have great success achieving their goal, which may involve driving referrals, discounted trials, or condition education.

“Creating the right expectations and delivering on them are equally as important, and sometimes even more so, than the creative itself,” Mr. Mangano says.

Measurement is also crucial in creating an effective campaign. Digital campaigns should not be created under a “design-and-deploy mentality,” but rather a continual refining process that adjusts to what is working and what’s not working, Mr. Mueller says.

“It’s more important to measure what is not working than what is,” he says. “More often than not we will tweak the campaign as it’s running so it becomes a better-defined campaign.”

“ Digital marketing can engage the audience to get to a high level of engagement, awareness, acceptance, and action. ”
KURT MUELLER / Roska Healthcare Advertising



Research shows creativity is one of the most important components of a successful campaign, however, our experts say there are several other elements behind a campaign that need to be present to make the best of what digital media have to offer. Among them are matching the audience with the most appropriate channel and thoroughly understanding the needs of the target audience. Measurement and tracking are also important to be able to evaluate the effectiveness of the marketing efforts.

According to Kurt Mueller, chief digital and science officer at Roska Healthcare Advertising, it is paramount to understand the target audience’s online habits to best align messages with channels.

“The first question should be, who are we trying to reach and why?” Mr. Mueller says. “For instance, gen-yers’ online behavior is very different from baby boomers and they are also different from healthcare practitioners. After defining the audience to be reached and setting the objectives for the campaign, digital may not be the best strategy.”

For example, if the campaign is for a geriatric medicine, this audience may not be online, but their son or daughter, acting as the caregiver, probably is, so there must be a mixture of online and offline efforts to target both.

“It is also important to engage the audience on a level that meets their emotional needs, this is how a high level of engagement, awareness, acceptance, and action are achieved,” Mr. Mueller says.

Developing a Digital Campaign

Another component of engagement is to keep the consumer coming back to the site, says Eileen Murphy, communications director, Abbott.

“Once there is a captive audience, it is imperative to ensure repeat visits by updating the site frequently with fresh content,” she says.

“Success is dependent on understanding each site’s visitor profiles when placing the creative,” says John Mangano, VP, pharmaceutical marketing solutions, at comScore. “The beauty of

the Internet is that it provides a highly targeted media environment that enables engagement and interactivity. There are millions of sites, each with a particular audience profile, which allows campaigns to be targeted effectively.”

Another key component in a digital campaign is delivering the appropriate information once consumers have decided to interact with the brand.

“There are drastic differences in interactions with advertisers’ content,” Mr. Mangano says.

Some campaigns have ultra-high response

Creativity Increases Sales

By combining data from hundreds of campaigns, comScore ARS quantified the relative impact of various campaign attributes, such as creative quality, advertising spend, elements of the media plan, and other characteristics, on sales. Specifically, the analysis showed that 52% of shifts in brand sales (or market share) are attributable to the quality of creative, making this the No. 1 driver of sales changes. These findings demonstrate the importance of focusing on the quality of creative as part of the ad-planning process, and not just relying on media planning elements, which account for a combined 13% of the changes in a brand's sales.

Source: comScore ARS Global Validation Summary. For more information, visit comscore.com.

Jo Elynn Cook, director of marketing at e-Healthcare Solutions, says it's also important to provide a relevant and trackable call-to-action.

"With digital, interactions can be tracked, and those data can provide useful insights about the campaign," she says. "The story unfolds beyond the number of clicks with the data that can be collected post-click. Post-click activity is the measure of how well the information on the landing page pays off on the relevance of the initial ad message. Once an ad captures a person's interest and drives a click, the landing page should quickly provide the right pay-off. Additional navigation from that page should indicate further exploration of the topic. If visitors quickly navigate away from the landing page then perhaps the message there is not well-enough aligned with the call-to-action that first captured interest."

Ms. Cook says marketers should not waste a single opportunity online. For example, every rich media banner has a back-up gif file for systems that can't load the creative, and typically marketers treat these gifs as throw-away ads.

If each gif for a branded ad were to have a powerful standalone message that is relevant and creative, marketers would have an additional opportunity to reach the audience.

According to Mr. Mangano, the importance of creative in the digital arena is coming into focus. As digital advertising becomes more sophisticated and costs associated with rich media and video campaigns rise, now is the time for the industry to take note of creative's important role and to realize the value of pretesting.

"Although the process of creating a persuasive ad is — and will always be — an art, the practice of measuring how well it accomplishes its objective can be scientific," Mr. Mangano says.



“ Marketing doesn't have to take big risks in order to be creative. ”

JO ELYNN COOK / e-Healthcare Solutions

“ Once there is a captive audience, it is imperative to ensure repeat visits by updating the site frequently with fresh content. ”

EILEEN MURPHY / Abbott



Creativity a Necessary Challenge

"So many pharma companies function in such a safe me-too environment that many of their ads follow the same basic formula, and this is a detriment to the whole industry," Ms. Cook says. "Marketing doesn't have to take big risks to be creative. Being creative or humorous or different from the pack doesn't need to cause regulatory or legal turmoil."

Unless there are claims of superiority or the creative doesn't fit the message, says Barry Schmader, chief creative officer at Dudnyk.

"The biggest challenge is getting creative that aligns with the regulatory environment," Mr. Schmader says. "When pharma companies take full advantage of the power of the digital experience to create a superior experience for their brands, they have to make absolutely sure they are not risking a claim of superiority for their products."

Creative elements that might be risky include making a patient look too healthy, giving a bald guy too much hair, or making an MOA sequence look like a Hollywood movie, he says.

"But of course, we still have to try to be more creative," Mr. Schmader says. "We just also have to be extremely knowledgeable about the latest rulings."

Being creative can simply mean doing something that has not been done before, something that touches people's emotions, gets their attention, and fills a need, our experts say.

"This is a lot easier said than done," says Peter Nalen, president and CEO of Compass Healthcare Marketers. "It's tough to create a

“ Successful campaigns engender ongoing interaction and communication. ”

DAVE MIHALOVIC
Rosetta



campaign that is rich and relevant, especially in a world that is restricted by a label; where many of us still don't think beyond the brochure; and where producing content and tools that rival the depth and quality of third-party medical publishers or advocacy groups just doesn't appeal to many marketers or regulatory folks. Our biggest challenge is pushing clients and their internal teams to challenge themselves and their organizations to create campaigns that offer true value and substance to their customers, to deliver relevant content that the target audience is interested in, and that will voluntarily be selected and consumed."

The digital space is truly the most powerful platform when it comes to connecting to and developing relationships with target consumers — patients or HCPs, says Dave Mihalovic, partner and executive creative director at Rosetta.

"Successful campaigns engender ongoing interaction and communication," he says. "Great interactive campaigns comprise paid and earned media, web sites, digital CRM programs, and even cross-platform applications that extend a brand's value to end users."

There are other benefits to digital channels, such as objectivity and credibility outside of a promotional scenario, Mr. Schmader says.

"We've found that there is often the opportunity to do some hard-hitting creative outside of the positive tone of a brand campaign," he says. "Some of the best, most powerful creative advertising is for disease states."

Depicting or characterizing the disease in a unique, compelling way is possible on an unbranded site. Unbranded campaigns, particularly web sites, allow marketers to vary the visual appeal and talk about some topics



“ Emotional campaigns are more effective than rational campaigns. ”

RANDY ISAACSON / Williams-Labadie

SOUND BITES FROM THE FIELD ▶

PharmaVOICE polled a field of experts to find out which digital channel is the most effective at boosting a great creative campaign, and from the following responses it can be concluded that mobile will be the frontrunner in 2011.



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“ Of all the digital channels available, I believe that apps are best positioned to bring creative value to the brand because of their flexibility in terms of integration and design. Users can easily link to or integrate an app with other digital channels and because the technology is still fairly new, there is greater potential for delivering the wow factor. By offering a more robust engagement for the end user, an app is a great way to bring value to the brand and will open the door to greater customer loyalty.”



KATIE MIHELICH is VP, Account Services at Siren Interactive, which focuses on delivering effective e-marketing solutions for the healthcare and life-science industries. For more information, visit sireninteractive.com.

“ Integration between offline and online initiatives is imperative, but marketers also need to consider integration within the digital channel. We've seen research that shows apps are frequently downloaded but usage is low. Therefore, an app should be considered for awareness building or brand differentiation. The most value will come from identifying solutions that support the brand's goals, such as building awareness or deepening

relationships with patients and physicians; differentiating the brand; or driving therapy adherence. For rare disorder marketing, it's likely all of the above.”



BARCLAY MISSION is Director of Digital Communication, at Topin & Associates, a healthcare communications agency that specializes in strategic marketings. For more information, visit topin.com or e-mail bmission@topin.com.

“ If only choosing just one channel were that easy. Although brand managers need to think in terms of multiple channels, mobile content is where it's at right now. Healthcare professionals, patients, and caregivers are accessing the web, using apps, and sharing info via social networks all on mobile devices. Ultimately, it's the content that attracts the audience and builds value. Each brand is different and requires a different approach, so a single channel is never going to be the solution all of the time. Different audiences, different issues, different messages, different media are required for different brands. Get the message right first, then choose the channel and deliver the content. But make sure the message can reach customers on the move.”



AMY SMITH is Account Director, Clinical Division, at HC&B Healthcare Communications, a full-service healthcare marketing agency that services medical-device, pharmaceutical, biotech, hospital, payer, and provider clients. For more information, visit hcbhealth.com.

“ The best digital channel is one that enhances an integrated approach. And one of the hottest new media trends is all about integration: the QR code. These two-dimensional barcodes — readable by smartphones — are all about instantaneous projection of information. They live within other media, which is what makes them so effective. A patient sees a launch ad in a magazine, uses her phone to scan it, and instantly watches a video about the drug/device on her phone. It's that simple and rewarding. QR codes are an elegant way to tie a multimedia execution of a great creative campaign to a two-dimensional platform.”



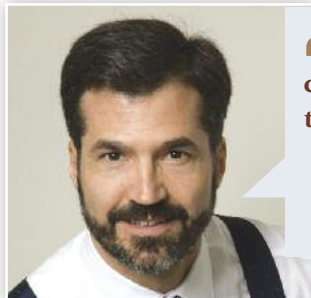
MICHAEL STEINER is VP, Director of Digital AS, at Harrison and Star, a healthcare advertising and communications agency providing strategic and creative services for pharmaceutical, biotechnology, diagnostic, and medical-device industries. For more information, visit hs-ideas.com.

“ Each audience demands a specific, strategic digital marketing approach, which is determined by truly understanding the attitudinal tendencies of the target audience. This dictates what digital asset best serves key constituents to deliver powerful messages, both branded and unbranded, to each target audience at the right time with optimal frequency. That said, mobile applications are arguably the fastest-growing, most in-demand digital asset in all markets for all audiences.”



“The beauty of the Internet is that it provides a highly targetable media environment that enables engagement and interactivity.”

JOHN MANGANO / comScore



“The biggest challenge is to create campaigns that offer true value and substance.”

PETER NALEN / Compass Healthcare Marketers

sources to assist in their day-to-day lives,” Ms. Murphy says. “Extensive research with the people who live with these conditions highlighted that emotional issues were predominant among those suffering from inflammatory diseases.”

According to a recent UK report, campaigns that touch on emotions are significantly more effective than those that work rationally by just providing information.

Emotion does not mean the message has to tug at the heart strings, but rather it needs to express something to which the consumer can relate, Ms. Cook says.

“If consumers can relate to a message that addresses the challenges they face, the campaign will be much more effective,” she says.

“Emotional campaigns are more effective than rational campaigns,” agrees Randy Isaacson, executive VP, at Williams-Labadie. “But we still see so many undistinguishable slice-of-life creative approaches, as well as some misguided abstract creative approaches that fight against the quality of life clichés, but don’t really communicate,” he says. “A great campaign uses words and images that get at that way doctors and patients think about solving a problem. Great campaigns communicate insights and understanding that make a genuine emotive connection, rather than just conveying a visually positive outcome.” **PV**



“Some of the best, most powerful creative advertising is disease state oriented.”

BARRY SCHMADER / Dudnyk

that may be important but verboten, on the branded site, Mr. Schmader says.

An example of a creative campaign that uses a digital channel and stays within regulatory limits is the new MyheathMyfuture web site launched by Abbott in Canada. The site functions as a new interactive digital resource center for patients living with inflammatory diseases, including rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, and ankylosing spondylitis. The focus of the site is to provide information, resources, and support for patients as well as for family and friends, and taps into the emotional aspect of dealing with disease.

“Patients diagnosed with chronic diseases are affected not only physically but emotionally and it is important for them and their families to know they are not alone and that there are re-

USE YOUR SMART PHONE'S QR CODE READER TO ACCESS MORE ON THIS TOPIC.



EXPERTS ▶



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Best Practices for DIGITAL Marketing

We asked our experts to share what they consider to be best practices in building a creative digital campaign within the regulatory confines of the pharmaceutical industry. A common theme emerged; best practices in the world of digital are no different from those in other media.



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1. Be relevant. There is an opportunity to create more variety and assortment of creative executions in the online environment compared with the print environment, and marketers using digital can break out of the one-size-fits-all mentality to match the creative with the medium and the audience.

2. Allow enough time and money for upfront planning. What often happens is that the media planning agency and the creative agency working on the same campaign aren't working together from the beginning. The result: one ad goes in all media. When the creative agency knows where the ad will be running it can create — often subtle — variations of the ad creative to tailor them for different audiences and different placement contexts.

3. Build the creative call-to-action in a way that quantifies the person who clicks. A general ad that says only 'find out more here' does not help distinguish who is doing the clicking. But, if the ad says, "If you are afraid of having a second stroke and are interested in ways to handle that, click here," now you know the mindset of the person clicking.



RANDY ISAACSON is Executive VP, Williams-Labadie, a mid-size, full-service pharmaceutical, medical, and healthcare marketing, branding, and advertising agency. For more information, visit willab.com.

1. Empathize with the customer experience. Real value in digital marketing comes when the customer engages and begins an experience, rather than just thinking about it as a reminder medium. We need to always question whether we're providing an experience that the customer will want to engage in, whether

it's for education, fun, curiosity, or another driver.

2. Be straightforward. The doctor you promote to could be the doctor that treats you or someone you care about. The messages should be clear, accurate, and balanced. Burying info behind clicks or in small type creates a suspicious environment that doesn't help the marketer or the customer.

3. Leverage brand equity. Cross-media marketing with consistent branding keeps all of the oars in the water at the same time. The customer's brand experience starts whenever the name of the product is triggered in their mind.



JOHN MANGANO is VP, Pharmaceutical Market Solutions, comScore, a marketing research company that provides marketing data and services to many of the Internet's largest businesses. For more information, visit comscore.com.

1. Align creative and media placement strategies with the objective of the campaign. Whether the goal is general awareness and brand-building or to target consumers at specific stages of treatment, it is critical to ensure all strategic components are appropriately aligned.

2. Employ a paid search strategy that supports and complements the online media campaign.

3. Ensure the appropriate, holistic measurement of digital advertising to properly account for the campaign's impact and to optimize future campaigns.



DAVE MIHALOVIC is Partner and Executive Creative Director, Rosetta, an independent digital marketing agency. For more information, visit rosetta.com.

1. Know the targets better than anyone and that's more than a simple demographic profile. The secret to creating digital campaigns that connect lies in de-averaging the market

through segmentation, whether it be patients or healthcare providers. By understanding the specific needs and attitudes of the target audience, there will be a better opportunity to affect their behavior by delivering both key messages and utility even under tough regulatory scrutiny.

2. Concept reviews with brand regulatory teams are more important than ever. Great digital marketing campaigns include some combination of the assets of web sites, search/display media, social media, applications, CRM campaigns, etc. Before beginning development, it's necessary to conduct concept reviews detailing a brand's approach. How does an unbranded campaign impact the branded advertising? Or, what type of data will a mobile app transact or store on a device?

3. Know the label to stay on message but focus on delivering the emotional benefit. Ultimately, the goal is to craft a creative campaign that gets attention and drives engagement. Online the story is extensive. It's more than just a print ad or a 30-second spot. It's an opportunity to have an extensive dialogue with the audience. To do this well, creatives have to develop emotional hooks served through an innovative delivery platform. But the fact remains that a drug's label is the label.



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1. Operate under full disclosure and transparency. This is especially important in the consumer space because believability and emotional drivers are paramount for building trust and credibility.

2. Get incredibly creative. Don't wait for guidelines pertaining to digital marketing. Follow the same rules for traditional market-

ing. Brands can get highly creative within the existing standards and that will pay dividends in the long run.

3. Establish a clear social media policy. Establishing clear company guidelines demonstrates a best intent to do the right thing and then hold all campaigns against those standards.



EILEEN MURPHY is Communications Manager, Abbott, a global, broad-based healthcare company devoted to the discovery, development, manufacture, and marketing of pharmaceuticals and medical products, including nutritionals, devices, and diagnostics. For more information, visit abbott.ca and abbott.com.

1. First understand the audience.

2. Choose the messaging based on the needs of the audience.

3. Most importantly, have a complete understanding of the guidelines and regulations both at an internal level and external level that govern direct-to-consumer marketing and communication.



PETER H. NALEN is President and CEO, Compass Healthcare Marketers, an interactive and marketing services agency focused on the patient experience — especially those with rare and orphan conditions. For more information, visit compasshc.com.

1. For any creative campaign, but especially for pharma, customer insights and data have to be gathered so that marketers truly know the end user and what they really want. The creative must be developed to trigger a response and behavioral change. If not, “creative” is just “art” and meaningless to the brand and the end user.

2. Not only does the creative need to be based on real insights, but it should be developed to meet the user’s needs. This depends on what stage they are in within the six stages of behavior change: pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance, and termination. If not, the end user will not consume nor understand it.

3. For creative to be successful it needs to be approved by the regulatory teams and not raise issues with the FDA. Especially with the complexity and interconnectedness of digital work, marketers need to conduct a thorough discovery process for their campaign; they really need to think through all of the angles, all of the channels, all of the connections, and ensure that they have a detailed and compliant plan of action.



BARRY SCHMADER. Chief Creative Officer, Dudnyk, a full-service multichannel marketing, communications, and branding

Regulatory Restrictions Limit Creativity

A highly regulated environment can squelch creativity and tackling the myriad of challenges behind creating an effective digital campaign with a significant wow factor is no easy task. Mixing creativity and regulatory compliance makes many pharmaceutical companies very uneasy. The biggest challenge is to come up with a solution that combines the two, and that pharma’s legal departments will approve.

According to Dave Mihalovic, partner at Rosetta, pharma’s regulatory environment is a double whammy. First, the regulatory climate has become even more conservative while technology is evolving so fast that the traditional agencies and legal teams can’t keep up.

Mr. Mihalovic says the evidence of these two trends lies in the issues and warnings that face companies such as Allergan and Novartis. In the past, high-impact campaigns skirted the boundaries of legal comfort to deliver a differentiated message for a given brand. This is especially true in highly competitive therapeutic areas such as diabetes and CV.

“Brands today are less likely to take any risk and stray from MLR guidance,” Mr. Mihalovic says. “This has a direct impact on what type of campaigns get to market.”

Secondly, digital marketing is evolving so fast that regulatory and legal can’t keep up.

“Mobile apps as advertising, social media, and innovations in search engine optimization have spun far ahead of most companies’ regulatory expertise,” he says. “In the last year I personally have found myself spending as

much time educating as I have creating.”

A digital campaign with a wow factor often implies use of innovative technology and emerging digital platforms. But when regulatory teams are uncertain how to approach a web site or mobile app it becomes less likely that the creative will get through without significant change, he adds.

John Mangano, VP of pharma marketing solutions, at comScore agrees that the biggest challenge facing pharma marketers today is driven by the regulated nature of the industry.

“In the absence of clear FDA guidance, the industry prefers making decisions based on managing risk and avoiding the potential of an FDA letter,” he says. “This makes it difficult for creative wow factors to make it through the approval process. The good news is that the ultimate goal of pharmaceutical companies and the FDA is to improve the health of society; unfortunately they don’t always agree on how.”

A deeper issue is that consumers want and expect real-time connections and conversations with each other, says Peter Nalen, president and CEO of Compass Healthcare Marketers.

“Social media and traditional marketing platforms, including the web, are converging into one,” he says. “Unfortunately, pharmaceutical companies are going to be mostly left out of that convergence, at least in the near future, due to obvious regulatory concerns. The struggle is figuring out how to give customers what they really want and how to create a sense of community, a sense of connectedness, without violating regulatory boundaries.”

agency for the healthcare industry. For more information, visit dudnyk.com, or e-mail bschmader@dudnyk.com.

1. Know the most recent rules before beginning to design and build content. This is where so many talented digital efforts go wrong. Not having a complete understanding of the requirements before creating the digital experience leads to compromises in the original plan when the inevitable regulatory issues come up.

2. Delineate direct to patient from professional experience. The one-size-fits-all site may not fit anyone. Many brands are opting to have completely separate sites and URLs

based on the audience. If marketers want to create a unique creative brand experience for patients, they should concentrate on doing just that. Trying to adapt the same approach or having a common site for various audiences often results in less time spent by all audiences.

3. Consider an unbranded site. Yes, it is possible to speak in the brand voice even on an unbranded site. We have found that having an unbranded site along with a branded site serves some valuable purposes. In most cases, an unbranded sister site allows the audience to link cleanly to outside educational resources of interest. 