

MOBILE Marketing



Experts anticipate that mobile marketing is going to contribute significantly to the pharmaceutical marketing mix in the future.

From text messages to videos, smart phones can be used to help educate and mentor a patient to be more compliant and adherent and create better relationships between patients and physicians. These technology advances, coupled with the many other challenges facing the industry today, make mobile marketing the next best thing to being there.

NOT SO FAST ... USA

"While there is no denying the financial challenges pharmaceutical companies are facing, these are very exciting times for mobile marketing," says Joe Kleine, senior VP, healthcare sales, Epocrates. "The United States has lagged behind the EU in recent years because of a combination of circumstances. But today, there are new and increasingly affordable smart phones being introduced almost every month, such as the iPhone, Blackberry, Palm devices, and more. As network carriers are becoming increasingly competitive, the costs of using smart phones are decreasing, thereby leveling the playing field with other global markets."

As more physicians and healthcare practitioners take advantage of the convenience of smart phones in their day-to-day personal and professional lives, pharma marketers are investing more aggressively in nonpersonal promotion to physicians, and smart phones can serve as a vehicle to reach and influence others at the point of care, Mr. Kleine says.

"Between the proliferation of smart phones and the government's focus on healthcare technology, pharma brand managers will surely be evaluating their e-spending and mobile marketing plans," Mr. Kleine adds.

Although the EU has a greater number of people receiving SMS advertising than the United States, America is still a viable market for mobile.

"The United States leads the EU in mobile gaming and accessing downloaded applications," says Geoff Melick, executive VP, interactive marketing and e-innovation, Kinect Interactive Digital Communications. "For brands that can offer a rich experience or a lot of information, the United States can be a superior market. As wireless providers have improved their networks and new, feature-rich hardware has been released, we have seen huge growth in the channel. As long as this con-

JOE KLEINE • *Epocrates*

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tinues and the price for wireless bandwidth does not become an issue, the United States should reach EU levels in the upcoming years."

"For U.S.-based pharma marketers to get up to speed with the more global use of cell phones in its marketing practices, they will have to become more aggressive in their use of new technology platforms integrated into line functions — in other words, they will have to start viewing and using cell phones as computer platforms," says Jim Mercante, partner, TGaS Advisors. "Pervasive use of cell phones and their availability across cultures and the socio-economic spectrums allow other countries to exploit this platform."

For example, Japan is experiencing serious mobile marketing growth, according to a recent Infinita mobile marketing report. The report states that Japan is the world's most advanced mobile society. In Japan, the vast majority of the population uses mobile Internet services and therefore, mobile marketing is fast-evolving into a standard part of the marketing mix. According to the report, this is a scenario soon to become a reality in many other parts of the world as well.

According to Argelio Dumenigo, senior strategist at Razorfish



ARGELIO DUMENIGO • *Razorfish*

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**JIM MERCANTE** • *TGaS Advisors*

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**JONATHAN KAY** • *TNS Healthcare*

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office, the U.S. mobile audience is actually catching up to other countries due in part to growing smart phone ownership, particularly Apple's iPhone, which has given users a better mobile Internet experience. Other factors impacting the growth in the American audience include an increase in the unlimited mobile data plan options and lower costs carriers are offering, and the greater availability of better mobile Internet speeds (3G and even Wi-Fi for the iPhone).

"Marketers now have more opportunities that go beyond text messages and banners on mobile Internet sites," Mr. Dumenigo says. "Just check out the iPhone and Google Android application stores to view all of the opportunities to connect with and provide branded services to a mobile audience."

But there remain several barriers, including the difficulty that still exists with launching campaigns across multiple carriers, which reduces reach; marketers giving away products like ringtones and wallpapers, which provide revenue streams for carriers; and a lack of understanding and faith in the medium from advertisers.

"With the right target, the right partner, and clear business goals and expectations in mind, U.S. marketers may really just need to take the leap," he says. "Some already have; if not, Microsoft, Nokia, AOL, and others would not have invested millions in mobile marketing technology companies in recent years."

But mobile messaging will not be a solution for every brand. Making sure the product and message fit the medium is key. Marketers need to determine that the product or service will benefit from smaller, tighter messages that need to be seen in a multitude of different locations. Content for these platforms must be designed to bring added value to the recipient in a transient setting, Mr. Dumenigo says.

The cell phones, PDA, or Blackberry are personal technologies, therefore, the more personalized and relevant the message, the more likely it will be read and have a chance at leading to a desired outcome, says Jonathan Kay, head of brand management, TNS Healthcare.

"Cell phones represent great potential in the United States for DTC advertising, personalized marketing, and also programs for compliance and disease management," he says. "For example, sending a text message to a patient that reads: 'Did you take your cholesterol medicine today?' can be very effective."

MOBILE DOESN'T MEAN GLOBAL ALL THE TIME

Going mobile does not necessarily mean going global, however. Although currently there are about 3 billion mobile phone subscribers worldwide — and some of them have more than one phone — a single, global mobile campaign is probably not technically feasible because of differences in phones and networks.

Another barrier is that there are many countries' whose privacy practices and standards differ from those of the United States, making a consistent global campaign impossible.

"In pharma, promotional guidelines and liabilities differ greatly from country to country; some products are not even indicated consistently in the EU, let alone the Middle East, Japan, or South America, for example," Mr. Melick says.

But individual, national campaigns are definitely viable, says Mr. Dumenigo, as long as marketers account for each country having its own behaviors and mobile usage patterns.

"In some countries, text/SMS would be the primary focus of a campaign," he says. "In others, the use of barcode and image recognition technology that allows a consumer to use his or her mobile phone camera to access mobile content might be more appropriate."

For example, 2D barcodes — sometimes called QR (Quick Response) codes — are very popular in Asia and Europe. Scanning the barcode or image containing a code launches a user's mobile browser and automatically links them to a Website, video, or other content.

"The codes use a common activity — camera phone picture-taking — and leverages it to connect consumers to brands," Mr. Dumenigo says. "Many major brands have used them overseas: Apple, Northwest, Nike, Sony, and Coca-Cola. With Apple, consumers at the Tokyo Line Shibuya Station were greeted by a massive wall of Apple Nano cut-outs sporting QR codes with special directions for downloading themed wallpapers. Currently, 2D barcode technology is getting a big push in the United States by Google, Sprint, CitySearch, and Continental Airlines. Until recently, most mobile phone owners would have to download an application to use a 2D scanner, but several handset makers now preload them on their phones. The iPhone and other smartphones are now making it easier to download applications, too."

A PERSONAL MOBILE CONNECTION

Our experts all agree that the mobile phone is the most personal and direct connection a marketer can have with a consumer, and this provides a great opportunity to present value and utility with mobile phones.

"Capabilities such as maps and location-based services, mobile Web applications, and ubiquitous Internet connectivity create an unparalleled level of immediacy," Mr. Dumenigo says.

The other factor that makes mobile marketing an attractive alternative to many traditional promotional programs is the ability to measure reach and impact.

"Because of the personal nature of mobile devices, marketing campaigns can be targeted to clinicians by specialty, region, or another demographic, thereby making the message more relevant to the clinician and increasing readership for the message sponsor," Mr. Kleine says.

Mobile applications also provide pharmaceutical marketers with access to extensive reporting data, whether it's by GPS location, by demographic, by time of day, or by campaign.

"These data can be tracked by the use of coupons or other purchase-related activity, i.e., ordering a brochure, click-to-call," Mr. Dumenigo adds.

There are many factors that make mobile marketing a good use of technology for pharmaceutical companies our experts say; one being where the physician makes his or her decisions. With this information literally in-hand, clinicians are now able to save time and make better decisions at the point of care.

"And best of all, clinicians are welcoming these types of communications — a far cry from some of the more traditional advertising methods that were considered 'tried and true' for many years," Mr. Kleine says. ♦

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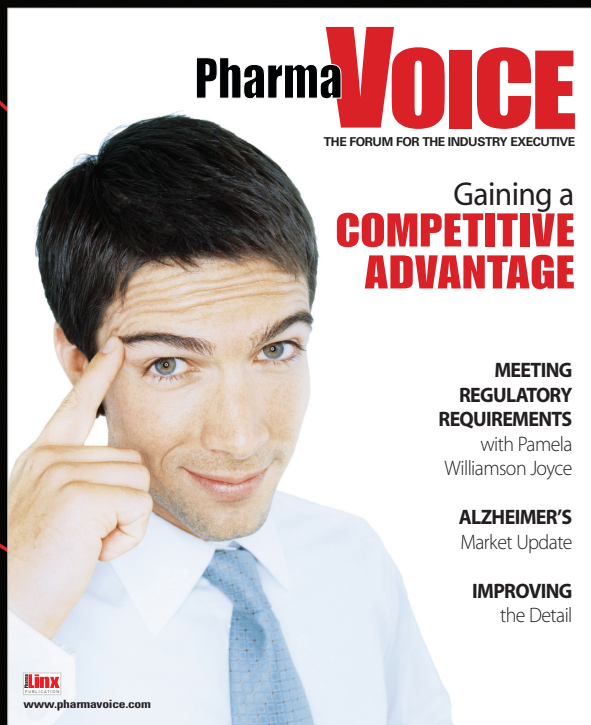
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