

By Taren Grom

Advertising Agencies

We asked C-suite executives throughout the healthcare advertising arena to provide their insights on what the biggest opportunities for innovation are, what are the biggest barriers, and identify a recent innovation that is improving the process.



KEN BEGASSE
Founder, CEO
Concentric Health
Experience

Opportunities: Designing with the end-user in mind has long been a staple in hardware and software development,

and the future of healthcare solutions will leverage these principles to create intuitive and integrated programs. Positively impacting an individual's health experience is no longer achieved through one distinct touchpoint, but through an ever-multiplying collection of interactions that are inherently individualized. Big data is promising for identifying macro trends, however insight from small data exchange will become our most trusted tool for building innovative solutions that meaningfully impact individual health.

Barriers: What remains constant, by the nature of the human condition is fear. We're in a turbulent time in healthcare, and too many in our industry have a deep-seated fear of an environment that we cannot control. Yet, those who succeed will not be the ones who look for something solid from the past to grasp; those who succeed will be the ones who embrace change and address its every nuance. Every aspect — from research, analytics to promotional and brand strategy to organizational acumen — should be human-centered. Innovation will stall if those in our industry continue to cling to such pervasive fear of change and find comfort within the uncharted.



MATT GIEGERICH
Chairman and CEO
Ogilvy
CommonHealth

Opportunities: The greatest opportunity for innovation lies in the intelligent application of data, so that all marketing content — in all its many channels and

forms — becomes individually and contextually relevant in real time.

Barriers: The biggest barrier is RALAD — regulatory and legal anxiety disorder.



FORREST KING
Partner,
Global Creative
Director
JUICE Pharma
Worldwide

Opportunities: The greatest opportunity for branding innovation in pharma advertising lies

in the notion of the transmedia brand. Ad agencies and marketers need to reinvent the construct for the creative foundation of a brand campaign. Believe it or not, pharma brands are still stuck/trapped in the single medium paradigm: "Can my brand fit on a concept board?" or "Can the idea be summed up in a single word or phrase?" These are good directional questions but they leave a brand handicapped when a customer throws a curve ball at the brand that doesn't fit nicely with the positioning or the core messages. Transmedia brands may need to have a brand heading, but need to be free to reach the destination with some open interpretation along the way.

Barriers: The greatest barrier to innovation is not medical and legal teams. They have their hands full just keeping the rest of us within the guard rails.

The greatest barrier to creative innovation is our history. It's too hard, too time consuming, and too expensive to imagine tomorrow; perhaps because of the "imagined" roadblocks so many of us already believe to be true. We are comfortable with history, with the tried and true. There is great comfort in building the brand, developing the core messaging, and wrapping the brand in a creative concept in our customary way.

For too long we have choked the life out of brands and campaigns with our rule books and best practices. The greatest opportunity to burst through this barrier lies in the reality that we are living in the era of the transmedia brand. Brands need

more freedom and a less rigid definition of branding consistency. A roadmap can't possibly lead to innovation; only great creatively minded people can lead the way.

Many of the bold and aggressive ideas never make it past the first discussion at the agency or with the client. The most interesting marketing innovations are usually in the discard pile of ideas because of that one single tiny-minded person in the room who didn't "get it."

By the way, innovation does not come pre-packaged and proven with metrics. Today our industry is obsessed with near-term metrics. We only want innovation on the back of someone else who was willing to invest the money, to go first, and to prove the outcomes. Almost no one wants to go first right now, so innovation will have to remain on hold for those who aren't ready to take the plunge.



JOE KUTCHA
CEO
GA Communication
Group

Opportunities: The greatest opportunity for innovation is not a specific technology or platform, it is the thinking and ideas offered. Services, ideas, and remuneration options must be as diverse as the vast and rapidly evolving landscape we work within. As the healthcare industry is shifting from treating symptoms to delivering outcomes, and businesses are morphing from product manufacturers to health services and health software providers agencies and marketing departments must innovate on their value and role to expand from being campaign-driven to driving business transformation.

Barriers: The biggest barrier is uncertainty. Everyone is aware of the need to innovate, everyone talks about the need to innovate, but it seems that too many people are waiting for permission, whether it be from the FDA, from the payers, or from some new set of rules or regs. It seems "the rules" in our industry are changing dramatically. And this is a good thing; it opens up a wide swath

for different approaches, different perspectives, and different thinking. I don't think innovation is about breaking rules as much as it will be about redefining what tomorrow's rules will become before they are even crafted.



JENNIFER MATTHEWS
Managing Partner
The CementBloc

Opportunities: Clearly, the integration of technology continues to drive innovation in healthcare communi-

cations, as it has for some time now. What is very exciting and poised to have a huge impact across stakeholders is the use of electronic health records as a vehicle for engagement directly at the point of care. There's been a lot of discussion regarding the challenges with electronic health records, including the fragmentation of platforms and regulatory hurdles. We expect that consolidation will occur in the relatively near term and that forward-leaning marketers will seize opportunities to provide relevant clinical information to physicians in the appropriate context. Importantly, this path will not be an overtly promotional one and will require a mindset shift from brand-centric benefits messaging to clinical information and education for physicians as well as their patients.

Barriers: It's easy to assign blame to the highly regulated nature of the healthcare industry, but the greatest barrier is really a risk-adverse mindset at the corporate, team, and/or individual level. That is the surest way to ensure that new thinking isn't brought to the table or supported once it is. There are many examples of innovation in other regulated verticals (eg, financial services, energy), so it's not an excuse. We need to be appropriate and fol-

low FDA guidance; however, establishing open environments where new ideas are prized and rewarded is the first step.



ED MITZEN
Owner
Fingerprint

Opportunities: It would seem to me that the ability for agencies to help pharmaceutical clients truly engage with their customers

represents the greatest opportunity for innovation.

"Marketing" will continue to be a dying term, as advertising agencies strive to disintermediate marketing between manufacturers and customers. Technology via the Web, social media, eCRM, etc. will allow companies to build true relationships and dialogue with those who value the content they have to provide.

Barriers: The resistance of MLR review teams to allow relevant, educational content to transpire between manufacturers and customers will remain the biggest barrier. I recognize that the fear of fines and sanctions drives conservative behavior, but manufacturers also have a moral obligation to communicate relevant product and disease-specific information to those using/considering using their products.

CHARLENE PROUNIS
CEO
Flashpoint Medica

Opportunities: The time has come for agencies to take the lead on the big data movement and begin to integrate what agencies do best — understanding customers' insights, with the wealth of medical



claims data, prescription, online behavior, viewing/channel habits, that we have available today to better understand, reach, and engage physicians. For example, we can cross-reference medical claims data to identify doctors who

treat a high number of patient types with low number of patient starts, develop a target list, assess online behaviors, then list match with digital platform commercial sits and create appropriate messaging to encourage higher diagnosis or testing/treatment for an effective nonpersonal promotional initiative.

The agency of tomorrow will have a strong analytics department, think "Chief Data Officer," who will be able to apply data analytics into customizing how and when we reach the customer along with what we should say, the behavioral segmentation approach.

Barriers: Too often we hear "regulatory constraints," but it's actually more about having a champion and culture that embraces change within your company. The companies that are innovating have put structures in place and created an environment to support digital engagement across platforms. You may see titles beyond the typical Chief Innovation Officer to roles such as Chief Engagement Officer, Chief Technology Officer, and Community Manager, who listen and react to content posted and provide the insights to the marketers of what customers actually think and do. Next up is a champion, someone who wants to do something different and has the energy to see it through. There will be battles along the way, but getting key stakeholders such as regulatory experts on board by educating them on what's out there, and what you are looking to do, is a key first step. **PV**

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