



Want Deeper Physician Engagement?

PROVIDE VALUE BEYOND THE PILL.

As a marketer, customer-centricity and relevance are a powerful one-two punch if your goal is to ensure a truly deeper physician engagement. Here are two quick stories that truly illustrate the point.

At a recent ePharma Summit meeting, a respected cardiologist — participating in a panel discussion — was asked for one example of a digital communication that he had received from pharma that was most valuable to him and his practice. After several seconds of silence, he sheepishly acknowledged that he could not think of one. As he reflected on this, he took the opportunity to make a plea to pharma marketers in the audience to offer less overt drug promotion and more ways for pharma companies to meaningfully insert themselves into the lives of physicians and patients alike.

The second story, told by a digital agency CEO, makes the point with even more clarity. A physician was too busy to meet with the five sales reps camped out in his waiting room, but agreed to sign for all their sample drops. The office manager collected the signature devices and gave them to the doctor along with a piece of literature from one of the reps. She felt that the doctor would find it interesting.

Well, the physician did take a few minutes to talk to that one rep, who delivered her message in the allotted time, thanked the doctor and went on her way, having just completed a successful detail.

More Than Just a Product Pitch

What made that rep stand out from all the others? It turns out that she had something of real value to offer. It wasn't simply a brand pitch; it was a coupon for a new iPhone blood glucose monitor, produced by the rep's company, which was perfect for many of his patients, saved them a lot of money and helped to promote better outcomes. It also was equipped to share pertinent data with the physician.

Clearly, this is a good example of a company and a rep who understand the notion of “value beyond the pill.” Several companies are embracing this new way of thinking and have begun to reposition themselves as providers of “health solutions” rather than solely marketing drugs or devices. The brand is viewed as a valued partner with every creative asset that drives physicians to live events, patient education and adherence programs, online counseling, formulary assistance and audience development.

Building a Sustainable Advantage

From a marketing perspective, this partnership broadens the brand's value proposition in meaningful ways so the brand team can build sustainable marketplace advantages that are hard to replicate. It is pharma's version of content marketing, which is gaining importance as part of an overall marketing strategy because it helps attract, engage and retain a clearly defined audience by providing relevant and timely information.

However, not every rep will have an opportunity to show off her value-added wares as in the example above, nor are many busy physicians perusing a brand team's product portal to see what goodies are in store for them or their patients. The good news: There is a solution to this access problem.

A Platform for Engagement

In addition to product portals, brands and their valued digital assets need to be where many of their target physicians go every single morning — to their email inbox to read their specialty-specific and editorially rich eNewsBriefings. These are provided by BulletinHealthcare in partnership with 24 leading medical associations (including ASCO, ACC, AMA and other prestigious groups) as well as a unique partnership with the Cleveland Clinic. More than 600,000 physicians and other HCPs

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have access to this resource as a valued member benefit.

The high readership of these eNewsBriefings is testimony to the communication platform's scalability (including your target audience), credibility (physicians trust it/spend time with it) and easy access (optimized for viewing on all mobile devices and desktop computers). Such high readership is also assurance that your “value beyond the pill” programs (brand digital assets) are truly accessed by as many targeted and relevant physicians as possible.

And from the perspective of pure physician engagement, isn't that the ultimate goal for your brand? **PV**

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