Medical Information (MI) – Call for urgent automation to provide agile personalised information at global scale

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Medical information (MI) is a critical way for HCPs to receive accurate, balanced, and up to date information on a company's products. MI is often the face of the company for most HCPs and is likely an important driver of perceptions of a company "beyond the pill". While there have been incremental changes to MI delivery over time (e.g. self-search options on the web, delivery of responses by email), the overall workflow from query to response has remained relatively unchanged. In our view, the delivery of MI has not kept up with the times the way that other industries have re-deigned their service offerings. The current way of working is dependent on mainly manual processes and high-skilled talent, the latter being in limited supply. We believe the time is opportune to incorporate contemporary technologies and customer experience principles to re-think the standard for delivery of MI services.

As the industry readies itself for the release of therapies for Covid-19 and the anticipated spike in requests for product information, front-line functions like MI will need to be responsive for not only immediate information needs, but also provide a stellar customer experience.

We propose a prioritized roadmap which focuses first on improving operational efficiencies. This is followed by delivering a truly omnichannel experience for customers. Finally, we believe that transformation of the content management approach itself needs to be re-designed to become more responsive and judicious with the limited bandwidth of highly qualified MI specialists.

1. **IMPROVE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES** - MI in most organizations is mostly a human-driven exercise. Through an analysis of several large and mid- size pharma companies, there is an **opportunity to potentially automate query intake and fulfillment of 60-70% of the queries** through well designed self-service. This recognizes that all queries do not require the same degree of specialized talent to fulfill. Effective self-service and automation can drastically reduce dependency on manual effort and re-direct specialized skills to complex queries and for customers where a personal interaction would be more appropriate.

2. **SEAMLESS OMNICHANNEL CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT** – A responsive MI service recognizes diversity in how HCPs prefer to search and receive information, and is respectful of their unique workflows and preferences. Customers today expect an omnichannel experience which remembers past interactions and moves the dialogue forward. We believe an effective omnichannel experience will incorporate the following key elements:

   a) An **easily findable entry point** that allows the customer to initiate their interaction with MI

   b) An **"Intelligent Two-way Triage" engine** that recognizes emotive needs behind queries and facilitates seamless upgrade to a personal human intervention when needed

c) An **"Intelligent Search"** engine that can quickly connect a customer to relevant content against their specific queries without the guesswork required for keyword matching

3. **MEDICAL CONTENT MANAGEMENT -** HCPs require accurate information in a timely manner to make the best decisions that help their patients. This means that largely manual processes to monitor and update content will be insufficient to meet increasing volumes of content. In our experience, a modern approach to curation of content should include the following capabilities:

a) Deconstruction of Standard Response Documents to characterize relationships between sources of truth and responses provided to customers

b) Automation of pushing updates across local market responses (prescribing information, new evidence to be incorporated)

c) Current translation approaches with a pathway towards automation

d) Automation of consistency and style checks

e) Meaningful and consistent indexing and auto-tagging to allow for rapid search for contextually relevant information against specific queries

While the journey to creating a personalized yet global-scale MI service is daunting, we present a realistic point of view on the transformation journey which starts at aligning with business objectives and empowering local/regional MI business units before scaling up core capabilities internally.

Our experience is that organizations that invest sufficient time in building the foundational elements before scaling out will be the ones that will reap more benefits – an Agile approach to building and leveraging on quick wins.

Finally, we believe that the ultimate goal of modernizing MI practices is to remove clutter, distractions that lead to inefficiencies, so that what meets the HCP is a supportive system to address their queries and empower a meaningful experience to every HCP–patient interaction.

Conclusion

We believe the key drivers for making Medical Information function digitally agile are:

- An expectation for immediate access for information
- A personalized service which is respectful of preferences and workflow
- Seamless access to qualified staff where self-search resources are insufficient

A top view of the next generation MI service based on interactions with MI leaders will look like this -

- Provide an efficient self-service interface for customers who wish to receive information this way

- Content is available over a diversity of modern channels and in a channel-appropriate format

- Provide a personalized and seamless omnichannel ability to connect to relevant and accurate content, or access assisted resolution of the query

- Reduce overall query resolution time

Equally important is a ramp up of internal capabilities to accomplish the following:

- Scale modern channel capabilities to create more equitable access to MI services across geographies

- Reduce manual effort and timelines for routine updates and creation of net-new content for standard responses

- Analytic capability to rapidly adapt to customer preferences – effective content and channels