

Experience Design (Xd) and Analytics Transform Pharma Physician Communication

By Jamie Peck, Managing Director, iON

Life sciences is a data-driven market, from clinical data to real-world evidence. Healthcare systems, HCPs, advocacy groups, and patients seek relevant, credible, and actionable information to inform decision-making. Traditionally, content was found in a few well-defined places or channels in journals, at conferences, from a sales representative, or through online research. However, healthcare content is now dispersed in more places and accessed from more devices for more use cases than ever. With the proliferation of content and digital pathways to content, the life sciences industry has struggled to keep pace. The ability to be innovative on the marketing side of the business is not at par with that on the research and product development side.

Life sciences has arguably been the very model for innovation. The industry has effectively “cured” HIV, and Hep C is now in the rear-view mirror. At the same time, from immuno-oncology (I-O) to CAR-T, the industry is achieving even more incredible advancements in cancer therapy.

The simple fact is that the federation of contextual, relevant content has been instrumental in driving these recent innovations both at the bench and in the market. A recent study by George Chressantis (Ph.D.) of Temple University states “limits placed on the flow of relevant medical information from any channel will affect physician decision-making, unless that physician can easily replace that lost information through another channel”. Lack of sales representative access in most cases is ubiquitous. As marketers and purveyors of critical information, how do we make, as Dr. Chressantis puts it, such decision-making content easily findable, consumable, and effective. How do we make sure that shutting of a previously critical conduit of information like the rep doesn’t impact clinical innovation in the future? We need to provide the information historically provided by reps in easily consumable, relevant channels.

Furthermore, expectations for pharmaceutical digital experiences are heavily influenced by customer experiences outside the industry. Well-designed customer experiences enabled and optimized through marketing technology and intelligence are setting high expectations for healthcare. If companies like Netflix, Uber, Amazon, or Apple can deliver highly personalized, targeted, and contextual experiences, then the life sciences industry should be able to do so too.

The full adoption of marketing technologies to deliver world-class customer experiences is still part of an ongoing transformation for the industry. Adopting technology requires changing the operation model and agency rosters. Today’s lead agency needs to be proficient not only in strategy and creative aspects but also in data and technology. **This will be a shift from creative campaigns and production to Experience Design (Xd) and Analytics.** They will need to tag and deploy content in automated and integrated technology-enabled experiences that drive a material impact on customer behavior and brand utilization. Through data and analytics these experiences can be continuously optimized.

These technology-enabled brand experiences require a different approach to strategy and creative design. What once was a static customer view is now a more complex communication challenge. This requires deeper insights into the customer journey to inform a dynamic, personalized experience design across an ever-expanding digital ecosystem. Content creation also changes from developing emails or

website manuscripts to creative content in a modular fashion that can be deployed by marketing technology in “chunks” and also be easily reused and repurposed.

This shift is crucial to enable fully integrated and personalized content delivery across ever-evolving digital channels. The digital healthcare journey is complex, requiring pharma companies to manage traditional and digital channels in an integrated and coherent way. Marketers must identify what the customer needs at each engagement when they’re making decisions, seeking information, or hoping to engage. The full adoption and use of marketing technology will drive actionable data to inform marketing automation and ultimately marketing intelligence to orchestrate customer experiences.

If we agree with what Dr. Chressantis says, i.e., to make decision-making content easily findable, consumable, and effective, then the industry needs new partners that can help drive digital transformation through innovation in the commercial operations model.