

## How digital can liberate pharma sales

The digital revolution has forever changed sales and marketing for the pharmaceutical industry. Not so long ago the universal means of communication was a face-to-face meeting using a paper detail aid. Now, thanks to technology, we've not only digitized the detailing materials but the physical meeting too - with remote presentations now becoming increasingly commonplace.

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### It's about how you use technology

In an era where the pharma industry has faced declining return-on-investment (ROI) for its commercial activities, such cost-efficient digital tools appear to have arrived just in time. Indeed, many champions both within the industry and outside have been heralding novel technologies like the iPad as the saviour of pharma sales.

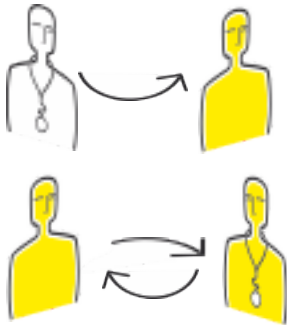
Unfortunately, the solution does not solely lie with the technology itself, but rather in how it is used to engage with customers. Used in the right way, true digital closed-loop marketing (CLM) allows far more personalized interaction and greater freedom to engage in a way that delivers value on both sides. Yet it's rare to see the true potential of technology being realized. For many companies, digital has simply been embraced as a way to control both internal sales forces and the messages that are imparted to physicians. To get the real benefits we need to update our communication strategy as we update our technology, and that means understanding the difference between a 'push' and a 'pull'.

Push-marketing is where messages are centrally controlled and imparted to the customer, irrespective of their personal preferences. So there is no regard to the

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customer's desire for the message, its relevance, their belief in it, or in which channels they would like to receive it.

In traditional terms, this is the prime-time TV advert that shouts its message out to everyone caught watching. In terms of life science communication, it's an iPad is being used as a detail aid for a didactic approach around one message to many physicians. This not only misses out on the potential advantages of technology but it is potentially even detrimental to the relationship, as customers feel disengaged from the process.



- A push communication is what I want you to know
- While a pull communication is understanding what you need to know and then providing that.

### **Everybody wins with pull-marketing**

Pull-marketing, in contrast, seeks to first understand the individual customer and then adapt delivery of the message to make it more relevant. Rather than the customer feeling they are being shouted at, the result is that they are part of a mutually beneficial conversation - what they hear is of interest to them and what is imparted is a useful marketing message for the company.

In fact, matching digital technology with a pull marketing strategy benefits everyone in the commercial value chain:

- The sales person is able to better understand the physician, by recording information about their preferences and adapting future conversations to make them more relevant.
- The physician feels valued, as the engagement is of a much more personalized level, providing exactly what they need in an efficient manner.
- Marketing is able to ensure that a centrally developed and coordinated campaign for a new product is efficiently implemented, by adapting the specific message nuances and means of delivery to each customer.
- Information technology personnel see internal stakeholders championing their systems (and usage increase) as they see the benefit of implementing such feedback loops.
- Senior managers experience increased market share with equivalent, or reduced spend, due to the increased efficiency and effectiveness of engagement, thus delivering that all-important improved return-on-investment around commercial activities.

### **Good relationships drive successful business**

Suddenly, rather than a system controlled and inhibited by technology, we instead observe one that is energized and empowered through the freedom to engage with customers in a way that delivers both commercial benefit internally and improved customer experience externally.

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Each time we engage a customer in our communication we improve our understanding of his or her needs and can therefore become even more relevant. The result from the customer's point of view is a continuously improving service in which both the content and how it is delivered becomes an ever-closer fit with their individual requirements.

At this level, digital CLM can deliver far more than ROI for the pharmaceutical industry's commercial activities; it can actually improve the relationship between the field force and the physician, driving better customer access not only for current brands, but also with a carryover effect for future products, as corporate reputation is enhanced with healthcare providers.

With the right technology and the right approach, everybody wins.

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**agnitio**

Agnitio helps life science companies generate effective relationships with medical professionals. The provider of the leading pull marketing software platform for the pharmaceutical and medical device industries, Agnitio's system is already implemented in more than 45 countries and 25 languages - and used by major pharmaceutical and medical device companies including: Allergan, AMGEN, Bayer, Grunenthal, and Roche.  
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