

SUPPLEMENT TO
MedAdNews



**GUIDE TO
PHARMACEUTICAL
MARKETING
AND INTERACTIVE
SERVICES**

JUNE 2011

old, and its sales force productivity has dramatically increased as a result.

Companies are discovering there is value in finding and relating to influencers – be they low- or non-prescribing physicians in an account or other stakeholders (administrators, leaders within medical societies, pharmacists, and clinicians) who interact with high-prescribers. Developing an expanded view of “the customer” that also includes non-prescribing customers and accounts involves:

- Measuring relationships – not activities – within the network of healthcare delivery (to map these relationships and profile individuals, the account manager needs to penetrate the account thoroughly, and the company must provide a repository for this information that is easy to query)

- Segmenting non-prescribing stakeholders to focus on relationships that will lead to improved access over time
- Using knowledge of this regional network to establish new and unique contracting strategies
- Using knowledge of this regional network to have differentiating customer interactions
- Realigning sales and account teams to maximize influence networks that span multiple geographies

One company that realized it needed a more complete view of the account ecosystem collected key profiling data at the customer level, aggregated it to the account level, and combined it with prescription volume data to quantify the influence value of each individual in the system. Within three months, the company identified more than

13,000 new key non- or low-prescribing influencers, and close to 90 percent of the customer base contained key influencer information. The company then adopted an account-based sales approach, and realized a 14 percent increase in revenue.

By carefully coordinating commercial activities and understanding, and adjusting to, the role that managed care plays in product utilization, pharmaceutical companies can ensure that their investment in the field force yields optimal results. Once companies address the organizational/motivational factors that currently hinder a unified approach across the commercial teams (a not insignificant challenge), they can apply their combined analytical resources to guide sales segmentation, deployment, pull-through, and messaging strategies.

Defining a REAL social engagement framework

By Prodeep Bose, senior VP, multichannel strategy, The CementBloc

Is social marketing different from traditional marketing? Can a brand really have a social identity and if so, how? To delve into these questions, consider three basic ideas that almost every marketer today is confronted with: the premise that social marketing is a participatory model with the customer as a stakeholder who shapes the brand; the implications that the theory and practice of top-down brand building that evolved during the pre-social media era needs an overhaul; and enabling the customer viewpoint by integrating new and emerging disciplines into a branding process that overlays brand and customer centrality.

The premise

There are a finite number of actions but seemingly infinite motivations – social marketing is a way of empowering them. Developing a social marketing mindset requires fundamentally changing one’s orientation to branding from a unified vision of brand identity to one that is multidimensional in its approach to customer interest areas, channel preferences, and points of influence. In doing so, a brand must identify the objectives for each social engagement – is it designed to develop a one-to-one marketing database, to educate on specific topics through peer viewpoints, to develop a broad awareness of a specific data point, or to mine insights about attitudinal and behavioral motivations? Once objectives are defined, it’s a matter of applying rational selection criteria, such as target profiling, in order to arrive at specific platforms and marketing mechanics to accomplish these objectives. So why can’t we do all this through a good old-fashioned ad?

Good advertising and marketing has always had the ability to transform product information into brand narrative. Brands today, however, are faced with a situation where this narrative has multiple authors – and the most influential voice is often the customers’. The challenge for every brand then is to understand how best to shape this narrative in a context where customers are far more likely to be influenced by opinions served up by their peers than by information originating from the brand. This democratization of informa-

tion dissemination means that what people think and say about a product or service is far more ubiquitous and persuasive than an ad. *De facto*, every product or service company is now also in the content business. And for a brand to not respond to this dynamic is self-defeating.

CDC alerts, NIH studies, clinical trial data, and Sanjay Gupta’s blog are all getting retweeted, linked to, posted on, and “dugg.” The rosuvastatin study called the JUPITER trial on prevention of arterial thickening was being discussed on YouTube by physicians within days of the data being released and long before the brand had a chance to develop any rich media assets. The explosion of these fragments of information on social platforms puts extraordinary demands on a brand to respond with immediacy if it wants to stay engaged with its customers. So how does a brand begin to model a social engagement framework, and to what end?

The implications

There are four key REAL opportunities for social engagement with customers: relationship marketing, education, awareness, and listening.

If relationship marketing is all about communications, services, and offers based on specific needs by stages in the customer journey, then social relationship marketing is about connecting this customer to a network of people who can support them through their journey. It may be a nurse on Skype, another patient to serve as a mentor, or a product support specialist who works through coverage and co-pay benefits.

Education on social networks in the healthcare space is primarily structured around case-based discussions, and the ability of a brand to emulate this peer-based learning mechanism is key. Opinion polls, treatment options, and structured surveys attached to case presentations are all low-risk, regulatory-friendly approaches to engaging and educating peer groups through a case-based format.

Awareness means the broad dissemination

of a specific fragment of information. Tweets from the CDC, and industry wires announcing new drugs, indications, and clinical finding summaries are all designed for short, specific, and immediate dissemination. A socially savvy company or brand must absorb the importance of playing the role of a value-added information service enabler.

The ability of a brand to be relevant is directly proportional to its understanding of customer interests and opinions. Whether through Web scraping (a common practice of automating the process of mining topics, opinions, and attitudes as expressed on the Web) or qualitative monitoring (through surveys and focus groups), listening is critical to understanding the customers’ information-scape – where the brand must build its house.

The deeper and more multifaceted the understanding of customer profiles, the better are the chances of a brand truly being relevant and engaged with its customers to form relationships. The more purposeful a brand’s social educational platform (coming together to solve for a bigger issue than what the product offers), the more effective is its ability to educate customers and differentiate from competitors. The more visible a brand, through constant value-added services that are immediate and offer specific information (even and especially when it means party content and services), the more aware is the customer of the brand. And the more iterative (not just at product launch) and refined (having a multilayered view of customer attitudes, behavior, and influence) the listening process, the greater is the chance the brand has of staying relevant to customer needs.

Enabling the customer viewpoint

To build a marketing organization that understands and values customer centrality, a new set of capabilities needs to be employed. Much like the ellipse with its two focal points helped shape modern astronomy, the explosion of the customer voice has confronted marketers with the need for a new brand model – one that gravitates around both the brand and the customers’ spheres of influence. At the CementBloc, that translates into developing a finely orchestrated convergent branding process with cross disciplinary teams that counterbalance the two focal points.

In bringing to life this convergence of the brand and the customer lies a process that must connect the left brain with the right, inspiration with observation, and skill with authenticity. Building great brands isn’t that different from making great movies after all, just that customers need to like the movie before buying the ticket.

