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Resolute

Stop talking and listen
to the numbers

Marketers need to filter out the unnecessary digital discussions and focus on the evidence

The trouble with working in the digital marketing field is that it encourages people to talk, incessantly. Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, forums and blogs are ablaze with the new and fashionable. When they are not making out their 140 characters on the latest app, the digerati are filling the pages of marketing journals and talking at conferences.

Marketers need to be fairly wily to be able to filter out the unnecessary from the useful, and a great rule of thumb is that all opinion should be banished.

Local and international digital projects have recently demonstrated a trend for strategy conversations to begin with a fevered discussion about mobile apps. When asked the deeply insightful question “Why?,” the influence of pharma peer pressure shines through. With no data to tell us about an uncovered customer need or any data demonstrating potential uptake, these tactics are more for the marketer than the customer.

Measuring attitudes

Everything we do in digital marketing needs to be evidence based. What do you know right now about your own website performance? Which pages are the most popular? How many visitors are actually a quality lead? How many of you are getting to the point where you are able to identify them as a new or return customer?

Numbers have never been so accessible or transparent. Marketers should demand excellence from all digital touch points and numbers used to hold those involved to account. Numbers cut through the sales patter and the fashionable, numbers enable a brand to prioritise budget, highlight an audience’s reaction and, most of all, demonstrate success.

All digital marketing is a live market research experiment. As a marketer you have the ability like never before to measure the attitudes and needs of your customers. You can know what your audience needs today and react accordingly. This is the crux of our problem. Pharma

marketing approaches digital as if it a traditional channel of 20 years ago: think it, build it, get it signed off and let it go out to the market, forget it.

Healthcare professionals are no different from any busy professional. They are time poor, above-average income and more digitally aware than the norm. They have access to and use digital channels for professional and personal reasons, and know how to separate the two.

Individual groups and specialities have varying degrees of digital acceptance and this is the starting point for your digital exploration; what do your specific customers need to do their jobs better, and what do you have to help them achieve this?

In pharma you want your customer’s time and attention. You’re not selling the product directly; you’re looking to persuade, to influence, to engage so that a customer is motivated to go further through the sales cycle and use their influence effectively. To get this valuable commodity from your audience you need to trade something with them in return. All that we have is a currency called ‘value’. If we created something we know will be useful to our customers, they will trade their time and attention. Marketers need to abandon their traditional push mentality and use the numbers to build digital assets that are of true value and pull success to them.

So next time you are being propositioned to try a new tactic or listening to another speaker at another digital conference, ask yourself if you have been convinced by their numbers or their opinion.

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