In a world where data proliferates, how can healthcare brands make the best use of it? Omnicom Health Group explains.

The process of gathering and analyzing information on healthcare customers has been vastly transformed by digital and data. Never before have companies been able to view and analyze customers’ detailed digital activities in such depth, providing them with the opportunity to build deeper intelligence and more effective relationships.

There’s no question we have an overwhelming amount of data in our world today but what we really need to solve healthcare communication problems is the right data.

Let us know what you think at technology@omnicomhealthgroup.com
As a starting point it’s essential to get to grips with the overall data landscape. At our current pace there are 2.5 quintillion new bytes of data created each day, spawning entire industries that harness insights around big data.

The US healthcare system alone is expected to generate 2,314 exabytes of data by 2020. This is because our new medical data ecosystem has never been more complex with a variety of health information generated: electronic health records, wearables, insurance claims, genomic data, and environmental data, among others.

Pharmaceutical companies must also navigate their own ecosystem of data that often sits within silos, which include but are not limited to research and development data, clinical information, and marketing and sales data.

Big data was the term du jour several years ago but in this ever-increasing pace of business, the question now is how to make decisions based on the right data. Uber is considered a big data success story because of how it used the small, right data to fulfill its primary business challenge—dispatching cars. Understanding the organization’s primary business objective while also asking what’s contributing to waste can help isolate the right data to use (whether big or small).

To facilitate this, companies that develop a data strategy that includes a checklist to evaluate data quality, a process for managing and communicating data insights, and establishing an agile-ready data infrastructure can avoid “data distress.” Most important, though, it’s about getting started.

**Further Reading**

- Data Never Sleeps 5.0 report
- Harnessing the Power of Data in Health
- You Don’t Need Big Data – You Need the Right Data
The New Customer Journey

We’re all now checking our phones more than 85 times a day so it will come as no surprise that the new customer journey is conducted via mobile—in-social and in-app. Less reliant on traditional website visiting and TV broadcasting, this new journey uses apps such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram alongside personal ones like banking—all demographics are ‘in-app’ for more than 5 hours a day!

In addition, viewer consumption is migrating to over-the-top devices and platforms such as Netflix and Hulu, the former sitting at over 128 million viewers.

These statistics present two challenges to marketers: developing relevant and timely content for the mobile and in-app experiences, and measuring engagements through traditional tools that haven’t kept up with the changing digital world. To address these changes, here are some suggestions to address these evolving demands:

Organize and connect data. The most important thing a company can do today is organize its data or, as we like to put it, “get the data house in order.” This means creating agile technology environments to collect and connect the various data sources, consumption behaviors, and culturally relevant information. Through organized data, we can truly understand patients and healthcare professionals in ways we’ve never been able to before. It allows us to detect consumer behaviors, respond at scale, and connect experiences for our audiences.

Treat social as imperative. As communicators we need to lead our healthcare clients into more purposeful use of social platforms, well beyond tactics and listening. For example, through analyzing the social networks of healthcare professionals, pharma companies can use big data and analytics to identify who will most influence adoption of their drugs. This is a major shift from relying on traditional methods where key opinion leaders were based on the number of papers they published or prescriptions they wrote.
Re-imagine patient journeys. An impactful example of organizing and connecting data is demonstrated in the five-day online journey of a cancer patient. This was uncovered when blinded patient online search topics were connected with vast amounts of online consumer behaviors. In this case the patient journey – from diagnosis, to information/inspiration seeking, to landing on the brand site, to seeking financial aid/loans, to planning her end of life on legacy.com – offers sobering insight. It did, however, provide an opportunity for communications to intervene at certain points in the patient journey and accelerate the connection with life-saving drugs. That is the power of connected data.

A cancer patient’s digital journey.

Further Reading

Forces of Change

Click here for more information

NetPersuasion Infographic

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What Does This Mean for Communication Success?

Great opportunities exist within healthcare to leverage all of this data to better understand both patients and healthcare professionals as people.

This will in turn influence the way we communicate and measure engagement.

These evolving ways of reaching our target audiences effectively means that our definitions of success are also evolving. While standard measures are still valid to review (such as volume of visits to websites or numbers of engagements), the ability to customize communications based on behavioral insights and social nuances that underpin them mean key KPIs must also become nuanced.

New data connections that link activity across the patient journey can enable organizations to track the first input to the key outcomes. By using the patient journey above as an example, organizations can now measure engagements looking at ROI, the results of which can be turned around in days versus years. Using ROI as a key metric, organizations can now identify opportunities to improve outreach at each stage and drive engagements at the right time.

Moreover, measurement is not simply limited to marketing data. When a company identifies the “right” data to leverage and has organized its data to easily access insights, success is now about how to bring the various levers (for example, market access, prescribing, and communications) in concert to achieve positive results.

Like any strategic exercise, defining metrics begins with a plan. Breaking open the data silos and linking data sets give marketers new ways to drive engagement in order to generate better digital experiences with audiences and improve results.

Further Reading

Leading with Next-Generation Key Performance Indicators

PHARMA 3D: Rewriting the Script for Marketing in the Digital Age
Conclusion

Digital and data have opened up a new era of customer intelligence. Online consumer behaviors have revealed a new customer journey as well as the way in which interconnected platforms enable omnichannel presence for brands.

However, it’s no longer just about big data. Companies must ensure they have access to the right data in order to solve their brand or business problem. Breaking open the data silos and linking data sets give healthcare marketers new ways to drive engagement and create better digital experiences.

The best way healthcare communicators can take business advantage of all the data they collect and monitor about customers is by: 1) understanding the business challenge; 2) identifying the data available to an organization; and 3) connecting and measuring the right data sources to reveal new customer journeys and competitive insights.

If you would like to learn more, please contact us at technology@omnicomhealthgroup.com.