BioSpectrum
the business of Bi
24 years of leveraging the business of Bio
www.biospectrumindia.co

How to optimise omnichannel marketing in Indian healthcare?

15 November 2021 | Views | By Dr Chinmaya P Chigateri. Director & CEO, Healthminds Consulting

Omnichannel marketing is emerging as a more potent approach to optimise the marketing efforts across channels and multiple stakeholders



The smartphone along with cheap data has unleashed an Internet revolution in the country. The pandemic has only managed to accelerate the adoption of consumers to the new-age technologies that have changed every aspect of our lives. Whether it is the way we live or eat or shop or even buy medicines, the last 18 months have altered everything.

Digital marketing in healthcare, as with other sectors, is all about having the customer at the centre. The healthcare sector has been undergoing rapid digital transformation to provide enhanced customer experiences. It is best for the pharma sector to have a dedicated digital marketing strategy that would reassure customers during every interaction in their journey with you.

The customer's omnichannel journey in pharma and healthcare is quite complex as traditional marketing and distribution are constantly getting challenged. Today, healthcare providers and patients are empowered with a variety of platforms and touchpoints that meet their needs.

In the dynamic business landscape, pharma marketers continue to face a challenge to communicate and engage with their target audience. The rising number of uncoordinated communication lines, the regularly evolving behavioural influences on consumers, medical professionals, the escalating promotional costs continue to be challenges for the healthcare industry as they try to achieve marketing success.

Omnichannel marketing is emerging as a more potent approach to optimise the marketing efforts across channels and multiple stakeholders but it is not a fly by night approach. It needs a radical shift in the way the needs of multiple stakeholders are integrated while designing the promotional strategies. Omnichannel marketing requires a holistic approach that breaks down internal siloes.

When the promotional spend does not help in communicating the brand message to the target audience, it is a wasted expenditure. It is best to understand what drives customer impact and direct the promotional spend accordingly for optimum results. The new-age technologies provide humongous amounts of data to marketers but it is up to them to glean this data and arrive at meaningful insights. Healthcare providers would need to develop a data strategy that would help them with the real-time insights that would help them take result-oriented action.

Today's empowered and conscious consumers want information at their fingertips so that they can make informed decisions. They seek various channels to satiate their appetite for knowledge when it comes to healthcare content. This thrusts the responsibility on the pharma industry to make accurate knowledge easily accessible to consumers.

The healthcare industry was originally built on personal interactions of the sales representatives with healthcare professionals. Over the last two decades, this expanded to include other communication channels like email, digital, social etc. Multichannel marketing has been based on isolated activations in separate channels with limited coordination among stakeholders. Omnichannel marketing is now replacing multichannel marketing as a more holistic approach that keeps the communication channels open between channels and addresses the needs of multiple stakeholders including patients, healthcare professionals and payers.

Omnichannel marketing can be used prudently by pharma companies in combination with predictive data analytics to decide what to promote or not to promote and how to get the right message across to the target audience. A selective communication approach will ensure that the message reaches the right audience while others are not bombarded with unrelated communication. Specialised teams with a focus on appropriate strategic approach and execution of content can help achieve this objective.

Omnichannel marketing is likely to improve the pharmaceutical customer experience and provide a personalised journey for consumers. To make it a grand success in Indian Healthcare, a culture of optimisation must be built in the organisation so that the approach can be established in phases.