



IMPIRICUS

OMNICHANNEL EVOLUTION **WHITE PAPER**

SMS is Becoming a Must Have in Omnichannel Activation to Help Amplify and Connect Other Resources

Exploring the Current State and Potential of Direct Messaging

This white paper will review the evolution in omnichannel practices with external data portraying the shifts across all communication channels

Emerging HCP Communication Channels Challenge Pharma's Marketing Playbook

SMS is not a new concept, but its popularity has exploded in recent years as a result of the growth of mobile devices and the ubiquity of text messaging. The use of SMS has been growing steadily since 2010, when there were an estimated 6 trillion SMS messages sent globally. As an incumbent feature of every smartphone, there is no dependence on the user to have to access a specific app, become a member of a specific service, they are all by default eligible for messaging.

Experienced digital marketers know that distribution of messaging is a challenge, but the greater challenge is to get the customer to pay attention. SMS messages have a high open rate, with 98% of texts being opened and read within three minutes of being received. For these reasons, SMS is becoming a must-have in omnichannel activation to help amplify and connect other resources.

The Benefits of SMS for HCP Marketing

Pharma marketers have many communication needs beyond driving the brand

SMS is becoming a must-have in omnichannel activation to help amplify and connect other resources. SMS provides a channel for engaging customers that complements and reinforces other channels such as email, social media, and push notifications.

SMS also has the advantage of being highly personal and immediate. Unlike other channels, SMS allows businesses to reach customers directly on their mobile devices with a message that is short and to the point.

This makes SMS an ideal tool for promoting events, resources, and other time-sensitive offers. In addition, SMS can be used to deliver reminders, confirmations, and other important information.

Important situations that benefit from fast, efficient, and engaged distribution include:

- Label updates
- Medical congress events
- Availability of samples
- Patient access programs
- Medical Affairs Requests
- Formulary Updates
- Product educational events
- Geo-specific announcements
- And many more

Connecting the Omnichannel Dots

\$97.2B

**Top 10 Pharma
Spent on
Marketing in 2021**

According to America's
Health Insurance Plans
(AHIP)

SMS is a must-have in any omnichannel activation strategy. It helps amplify and connect other resources, making it an essential part of any campaign. SMS can be used to reach out to customers at key touchpoints in their journey, providing a valuable channel for engagement. It can also be used to drive traffic to other channels such as your website or app. SMS is an effective way to reach your target audience and should be included in your omnichannel strategy.

Over the last several years, pharma marketing budgets have increased their spend on digital channels. The pandemic accelerated this trend. Marketing teams were tasked with finding ways to engage providers while sales forces were sidelined.

66%

**Marketing
Budget on Digital**

For 2020, per Trinity Life
Sciences

20,000

**Drugs Approved
for Marketing by
FDA**

FDA, November 2021

Not surprisingly, the countless brands, messages, and programs create overwhelm for health care providers. Regardless of the message and promotional activity of a singular brand, doctors face a daily barrage of offers from the biopharmaceutical industry and beyond.

Listening to the Voice of the Customer

According to Statista, as of May 2022, the total number of professionally active physicians in the United States amounted to 1,073,616. According to the CDC, over 860 million medications are prescribed each year. Clearly, providers have frequent needs to access accurate information on the pharmaceuticals that they manage in their practices.

Dr. Bhatia, Dermatologist in Atlanta, GA USA:

“The tasks required of physicians, PA's, and NP's are becoming increasingly time consuming and complex. At the same, there is so much innovation in pharma, and our need for up-to-date knowledge of the innovations grows. This creates an opportunity for a system which can deliver this information at the point of care in a frictionless manner with actionable steps.”

At the time of greatest need for your brand and its cadre of resources, the intention is to ensure that providers have what they need, when they need it. Often, pharma brands offer websites, proprietary portals, 800 numbers, and field personnel to be available to their physicians and staff. While the generous offering of these assets is well-intended, it requires the health care professional to locate, activate, and extract the information required.

Knowing that life as a busy provider requires interacting with hundreds or even thousands of medical products and medicines, this situation is characterized simply by Chicago-based oncology Dr. Firozi: "I just want one place to go to access all resources."

Right Message on the Right Channel

70%

**Physicians Want
Educational
Resources**

PM360, Skeptical HCPs – How to
Win Them Over

About 70% of physicians agree it is crucial that brands provide educational resources rooted in clinical trials and scientific information to gain their trust – and trust is crucial to establish a good relationship with HCPs. So, to stay relevant with HCPs, pharma companies must provide the proper information that shows why there is a genuine need for their brand.

86% of physicians use their smartphones to access digital resources for professional purposes, but 41% don't visit pharma websites more often because it takes too much time to find the information they need. Brands need to create the easy-to-consume communication bites that HCPs are looking for.

86%

**Physicians Use
Smartphones to
Access Resources**

PM360, Skeptical HCPs – How to
Win Them Over

How to Build an Omnichannel Activation Campaign with SMS

As an essential component of any omnichannel activation strategy, SMS should be included in all stages of planning and execution. According to the stage of the customer journey, you can either lead customers from other channels or bring additional traffic and information to other parts of your campaign.

Lead-to-Sales Connection

One way to use SMS in your omnichannel activation strategy is to lead customers from other channels, such as email or push notifications, to encourage them to complete a sales-driving action such as purchasing, signing up, or downloading information.

Testing and Optimization

Of course, any component of an activation campaign should be thoroughly tested before being deployed widely. Using SMS for testing allows you to gather feedback from customers without having to open other channels, which the customer may not be active on. For example, there are several HCP-only social media and news communities. Performing message testing or market research inside those gated communities creates both bias and limitations to reach.

Leverage Established, Trusted Communities

Organizations that have trusted relationships with health care providers, such as Impiricus, are interacting via SMS with many of your customers already. Through a carefully vetted process, companies like Impiricus may provide a way for brands to offer their messages, resources, and alerts through this established network. This method enables pharma companies to execute efficiently and compliantly by using an established network and distribution model.

Summary

The World Has Changed

While HCPs have changed their communication and engagement preferences, they still value credible, timely, and actionable content to help them deliver patient care. Pharma marketing strategies and tactics need to align to the content and channels to capture the HCP's attention.

HCPs Seek Efficiency

HCPs are working in increasingly complex conditions, are overrun with promotional efforts, and desire instant access to the resources they need. Brand communications that enable ease-of-access with the potential of interactivity is an immediate opportunity to provide value.

Pharma Seeks Impact

Despite massive investments by certain pharma brands, many campaigns lack clarity in impact, customer value, and brand growth. Exploring emerging channels such as SMS offer flexibility, speed, and measurable outcomes.

Reach out to Impiricus at info@Impiricus.com to learn about the future of HCP Engagement

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