



A Joint Whitepaper from:



# The Future of Digital, Interactive Detailing: From “Wow” to “What Now?”

## I-OPENING TECHNOLOGY

The iPad arrived at the perfect time - when the pharmaceutical industry was in the midst of devising and adopting new sales models. However, the iPad's exciting presentation capabilities have actually been a bit of a distraction along the way to higher-level engagement with the physician.

The breakthrough that the iPad represents is not merely a matter of new software applications or novel hardware; the iPad should be appreciated as a platform for a powerful sales experience.

*Today, the rep visit needs to be reframed as the conveyance of value—value for the doctor on behalf of the patient and for the practice as a business concern. The iPad delivers more potential paths to value, always on display and instantly accessible.*

## INTRODUCTION

In the two years since the debut of the Apple iPad®, the pharmaceutical industry has embraced the device with gusto. Currently, 18 of the top 20 global pharmaceutical companies have furnished all or part of their field forces with the iPad, and the remaining two will have adopted it by the end of 2012. Just in the last 18 months, Veeva Systems has helped over 30 organisations move to the iPad with its cloud-based Customer Relationship Management/Closed Loop Marketing solution designed for the device; and Eagle Productivity is currently working with 24 companies to introduce the device to the field force.

This uncharacteristically rapid adoption is understandable considering what the industry needed and what the iPad delivers. Pharmacos were desperately seeking a way into physicians' offices, hearts and minds. And along came the iPad with all of its beauty and grace. It is, by all accounts, the “perfect device” for supporting one-on-one interactions with physicians (who themselves are enamoured with the technology). Very early pharmaceutical adopters of the iPad have reported improved access, more face time and stronger engagement with physicians through rich multi-media presentations.

Yet, how long can the technology captivate physicians? When every rep is presenting eye-popping graphics, animation and video, won't such displays become white noise? Once the novelty wears off, will physicians revert to restricting access, and will companies once again be struggling to capture their attention?

What companies have achieved with the iPad to date is impressive. But it's now time to look beyond using the device to simply create “eye candy.” Pharmacos now must consider how to make full use of digital, interactive detailing to deliver value to the physician and accomplish their business goals cost effectively. It's time to fully integrate the power of the iPad into the sales process by developing enriched, creative content... by better integrating sales and marketing... and by providing higher-level skills training to the field force.

What's been achieved to date is just the beginning of what is possible. Now that the technological dust is settling, *companies have an opportunity to rethink what an iPad-toting sales force might accomplish.*

### MIND THE GAP

Educators and marketers have long been frustrated by the gap between knowledge and behaviour. Presenting people with the facts does not necessarily motivate them to change their behaviour. (Consider, for example, that people who have persistent weight problems tend to be the most knowledgeable about weight loss.)

One way of closing the knowledge-behaviour gap is to provide learners – in this case, physicians – with an experience that involves multiple senses and sensibilities.

When the learning experience is tactile as well as visual, when it involves emotions as well as cognition, and when it requires active participation (such as through problem-solving or decision making), recall is dramatically improved, and behaviour is more likely to change.

The iPad, of course, supports such experiential learning. In a year-long experiment in a California middle school, a test group of students participated in a comprehensive program for teaching Algebra on the iPad. They were “more motivated, more attentive in class, and more engaged with Algebra content” than students using textbooks. And, yes, their test scores were markedly improved.<sup>2</sup>

### HOW IS THE REP’S ROLE CHANGING?

Between 2005 and 2010, pharmacos experienced diminishing returns from their ever-escalating investment in the field force, and during this time, they trimmed their ranks by about 10% on average. As companies have had to fight for face time with physicians and explore other marketing avenues, the role of the pharmaceutical sales rep has been in transition. Gone are the days when manufacturers could hope to win the battle for physician attention and loyalty by sending in an affable and knowledgeable sales person to deliver a prepared message.

The solution, as companies have realised, is to help their reps build lasting relationships with customers by delivering information of value – that is, information that is relevant to the physician in the moment. Reps must be keenly aware of customers’ needs and able to read their reactions during the call... a skill that good reps have always had. It is this ability that separates the rep from all other channels of communication and a large part of the reason that investment in the sales force endures.

Along with being intuitive, the rep also needs to be adaptive and allow the call to flow in a way that accommodates the physician’s expressed interests. And now that the physician’s expectations have been raised by digital media, the rep must also make the experience a rich and interactive one. Additionally, the rep needs to interpret the physician’s reaction, providing feedback on the success of the message and on what the next point of contact should be.

All told, the requirements of a modern-day pharmaceutical sales rep are much greater and deeper than they once were, and the traditional tools that reps relied on to do their jobs are no longer sufficient. Against this backdrop, the iPad has become a veritable lifeline, offering not only the means to capture the physician’s attention, but the fluidity to hold it.

### HOW TODAY’S REPS ARE LEVERAGING IPADS

Without protracted analysis or trial, many pharmacos have seized upon the iPad as their tool of choice for digital, interactive detailing. And in the space of two years, they’ve turned to a number of applications to capitalise on their hardware investment. Most companies today are using applications designed for the iPad to display or provide:

- Static screens that are always current and more visually appealing than their paper equivalents (Refreshed electronic content can be sent out to the field with the push of a button.);
- Motion graphics, i.e., graphs that build automatically or animations of the product at work;
- PDFs like clinical results and dosing instructions in full detail;

- Instant formulary status – which plans cover which medicines, etc.;
- Connectivity to additional subject matter – the rep can check a box and have information sent, or forward links to the physician;
- A new level of participation – reps can ask a few survey questions and check boxes based on the physician’s response; and
- CRM functions for reps, such as call planning and scheduling, call reporting, sample management and territory analysis.

In terms of using the power of the device to present information in an arresting format, the industry has been quite progressive amongst peer industries. In fact, pharmaceutical ad agencies have already been creating the types of vibrant, interactive material on the iPad that so excited publishers early this year when Apple introduced iTextbooks. And, they’ve managed to do this without the benefit of the authoring tools now available to textbook creators from Apple.

While it’s premature to obtain published performance statistics on the impact that digital detailing with iPads has had on pharmaceutical sales, the initial feedback is very positive. Reps’ enthusiastic reports indicate that they can cover many times the amount of information in their one to three minutes with the physician. And customers have demonstrated better recall of the main message as well as a higher regard for the rep who delivered the message. Indeed, industry pundits throughout Europe, the U.S. and Asia widely report positive results of the iPad’s initial impact on sales and corporate image.

However, the boost that comes purely from the sleek device’s “front-end” presentation capabilities may not be sustainable. The “wow” factor, while very real for the moment, has the potential to eventually wear off. Fortunately, technology providers, anticipating continued growth in enterprise-wide use of the iPad, are investing heavily in applications that will make the iPad much more than just a pretty face. Innovative platforms are already turning the iPad into a powerful device that companies and their users will want to commit to long term.

## THE PROMISE OF IPAD-ENABLED, INTERACTIVE DETAILING

When pharmacos have fully leveraged all of the advantages of digital, interactive detailing via the iPad, physicians will not only enjoy the sales call, but will derive value that cannot be found through any other channel. The company will have achieved its messaging goals, and the rep will be welcomed back. How will this happen?

## WHY ALL THE FUSS?

iPads have exploded onto the pharma scene; already, penetration among the top tier global companies is nearly complete. The industry appreciates that the iPad:

- Is popular with physicians; according to Manhattan Research, 26% of physicians in the EU own iPads themselves and another 40% intend to purchase one in the next six months<sup>1</sup>
- Gives companies a new avenue for creating a marketing advantage
- Surpasses the capabilities of earlier tablet PC’s which were successful in increasing sales productivity
- Has cachet with reps and can support retention
- Is relatively inexpensive



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### HIGH TIME FOR CLM

Originally, as far back as the 1990's, Closed Loop Marketing (CLM) referred to the practice of constantly measuring and analysing the results of sales and marketing initiatives and then using that feedback to adapt one's marketing approach. Such a loop could help marketers be more effective in meeting customers' needs.

When the pharmaceutical industry first began using tablet PCs for digital detailing, it was thought that the device would support CLM by electronically conveying feedback on exactly what was shared with physicians (what screens were shown in what order, for instance) and how physicians responded.

Few, if any companies actually made that vision a reality, however, and the term CLM has since been used more loosely to refer to digital, interactive detailing itself.

If companies are to achieve their goal of having reps show up with something of value for the physician each and every time, they must finally adopt CLM as a marketing strategy - not merely as a technological concept.

*The Sales Exchange of the Future.* Because technology has enabled bi-directional communications between sales and marketing, sales will be guided by the organisation's collective understanding of that customer. Pharmacos will group HCPs into “micro-segments” using more sophisticated segmentation that accounts for each customer's unique needs and responses across all channels.

The rep's call plan will thus be created based on prescriptive guidance about the particular physician's behaviours and preferences and with insight derived from all other interactions the company has had with the individual. So, in addition to having standard background information on the physician and his practice, the rep will, for example, be aware of more up-to-the minute information such as: any reimbursement issue the physician is facing, the concerns he has expressed about a particular treatment protocol or health outcome, and any interactions he has had with the company's portal last week after receiving a direct mail piece.

So, the rep's call can pick up where the company's previous interaction (in any channel) with the prescriber left off, and the rep will be expected to share highly targeted information.

During the call, the rep will be able to access resources throughout the organisation to answer the physician's questions or fulfil his requests on the spot. Not only will the rep have current versions of sales aids and clinical updates at his fingertips, but he will also be able to call upon medical affairs, clinical teams and marketing staff for real-time reinforcement as needed. With such support at hand, the rep will be empowered to help the physician with his specific concerns related to his practice and patients immediately.

Overall, the call will be elevated from a canned spiel presented to a passive listener to a relevant experience in which both parties are active participants. The physician will be invited to touch the iPad screen to choose the day's area of interest. The rep will be viewed as a trusted consultant who has arrived with the ability to give the physician a “guided tour” toward the answers he needs.

*Behind the Scenes.* To empower the rep in this way, the back end of the iPad environment will need to be fully developed with the right applications, interfaces and supporting internal processes. The sales and marketing functions will need to be more closely aligned, just for starters.

With the right foundation of customer intelligence from across channels, the marketing department can better segment physicians and develop approaches (to be executed through the sales force and other channels) that address the physician's needs – on the physician's own terms.

To be truly prepared for the type of call envisioned above in which the rep delivers value to physicians every time, reps will need at-a-glance retrieval of information in the company's CRM system, including:

- The physician's prescribing history;

- The practice profile;
- A recap of the physician's earlier questions and issues;
- An update on what has transpired since the last call – including contact made with the physician through other channels; and
- An expansive view of different direct and indirect influencers.

The rep will also need on-demand access to materials and resources that specifically address the physician's information needs.

To allow the organisation to continually anticipate what will best serve the physician, the rep must have a convenient way to "close the loop" with marketing. In fact, this will be the greatest enduring value of the iPad-enabled rep: capturing insights about the physician's behaviours, preferences and needs so that they can be matched with what is delivered via any channel.

Ultimately, the rep will capture insights that will inform a true, multichannel marketing strategy. The messaging and timing of other promotional channels will be more relevant, and both personal and non-personal channels will be able to build upon one another. In one simple example of this, a company could, for instance, allow reps to specify which physicians should receive which marketing pieces/channels/campaigns.

The technology to enable this understanding of the customer and feedback on interactions across channels exists today, of course, with integrated CRM and CLM systems designed for the iPad. But technology alone is not the solution. To exploit this capability, companies must openly accept that sales and marketing are part of the same equation and must support one another in the relentless pursuit of getting the right information to the right customer in the right way.

## WHAT TRAINING DO REPS NEED FOR THIS NEW ENVIRONMENT?

Training reps to be effective at digital, interactive detailing is not just about showing them which buttons to push on their iPad. It's about giving them the skills to use their device in a different kind of interaction with physicians. It's about helping sales people become guides who can usher physicians to the information they want. It's about the human factor – not the electronic factor – in the sales equation. Training for iPad-enhanced sales calls should encompass three areas:

- **Staging.** Everything from how to greet the customer, to how to introduce the device smoothly and how to physically position it for an optimal exchange. (Remember, the call should be a hands-on experience for the physician.)

## BUILD ON NATIVE INTELLIGENCE

Getting reps "up to speed" on the iPad, while necessary, is not as time-consuming as it is for other hardware devices. This is the case for two reasons:

- Most reps are now "digital natives," meaning that they have been interacting with digital technology all their lives, and
- The device itself and the best applications designed for it are very easy to use.

The emphasis of training, therefore, should be on how to use the device as a tool in a new type of sales exchange. This means more skills training than technology training.



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### LEVERAGE THE SALES MANAGER

Most companies have completely overlooked the need to develop Sales Managers for their role in this new environment. Sales Managers have the potential, of course, to create significant revenue lift, but at the moment, few have been given the training they need to properly coach reps who are conducting digital, interactive detailing.

- **Navigation.** Reps need to know how to access the right content instantly and how to adapt the flow of the interaction to accommodate the physician’s interests. In a short time, reps can become familiar with the device and the interface.
- **Interaction.** The bulk of training time should be spent coaching reps on how to respond to opportunities that arise during calls and, similarly, how to cope with unexpected setbacks. The best way for reps to internalise these lessons is to practice them (in order to close the knowledge-behaviour gap). These practice sessions are, ideally, not overly scripted role plays, but carefully constructed situations that model the give and take of real-life scenarios.

This type of training should be delivered in face-to-face sessions (unlike technology training, which can be done in virtual sessions or via self-guided modules).

### HOW TO MAXIMISE AN IPAD INVESTMENT NOW

Simply equipping the sales force with the iPad is not sufficient to improve sales effectiveness. To gain a competitive advantage, you must make the following strategic changes to your selling model:

- Adopt an outside/in view of customers’ needs and preferences. This means accepting that the best approaches for reaching physicians will be those that are effortless and pleasant for the physician and that offer something of value. (The rep is an important part of the equation, but don’t dismiss other, supplemental areas of engagement such as social media.)
- Combine the creativity that’s been directed toward alternative channels with the tried-and-true channel of the sales force. Instruct your creative agency to always have the iPad in mind when considering strategic options, and ask, “Are we taking advantage of everything we can do with the digital detail?”
- Move quickly. Be open to experimentation, and even be willing to re-try past approaches, given that so many rules have changed. Certainly, using cloud-based systems supports rapid deployments and frequent experimentation.
- Focus on keeping digital content fresh and innovative so as to continually captivate the audience. Again, storing material in the cloud makes it easy to push out new content to the field.
- Optimise business practices to support the field force with the right tools and processes. Reps need better information about each customer’s particular needs, and they can flourish with collaboration tools that allow



them to share information and ideas with one another and with marketing teams.

- Align sales and marketing functions so that they agree on the goals for the sales force and how they can use the iPad to help them meet their mutual objectives.
- Finally, challenge yourself to find ways to develop and spread best sales practices quickly within your organisation.

## CONCLUSION

Adopting new work habits and sales styles is a process. It may begin with the breakthrough technology of the iPad, but it certainly doesn't end there. Few – if any – pharmaceutical companies today have fully exploited the new sales capacity offered by the iPad. Yet the strategic shift has begun, and the story will undoubtedly be different within a few short years.

The iPad offers a new platform for understanding and engaging customers. With the right vision, training and supporting processes, the industry can have its own breakthrough in connecting with customers as never before.

### Sources

1. Manhattan Research press release, February 14, 2012.
2. "Results of a Yearlong Algebra Pilot in Riverside, CA," Houghton Mifflin.

## MEET THE AUTHORS

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Founded in 1988, Eagle is a privately held company with offices located in Rochester, New York and Frankfurt, Germany.

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