



Unifying Pharma Events Management

Delivering compliant and effective events within the customer journey



Executive Summary

It is a widespread industry assumption that rep access to healthcare professionals (HCPs) is still muted compared to the pre-pandemic era. Analysis of 600 million annual HCP-rep interactions globally proves this is not true. HCP access is back, but interactions are becoming more selective and increasingly virtual. Global HCP access has climbed from the pandemic-era low of 20% to 60%, and more than half of accessible HCPs now prefer to meet through video and in-person channels.¹

Beyond the decline of traditional in-person office access, the consumerization of technology is driving demand for a more coordinated customer experience that extends across all channels. Digitally-native physicians expect information to be on-demand for fast, easy, convenient access anywhere, anytime. Data from each customer touchpoint must build upon the last, so life sciences companies can deliver a coordinated multichannel experience that's consistent and personalized. Together, these trends are moving toward a hybrid model of virtual and physical events that need to be fully integrated into a holistic engagement strategy.

Traditionally, companies faced significant barriers to adopting digital capabilities and orchestrating interactions. They have been limited by horizontal technology that does not allow for globally harmonized processes across functions and channels. Whether physical or virtual, events have traditionally been managed with multiple disparate tools. This fragmentation has made it difficult to capture data from online interactions and marry it with insights from other solutions and activity channels. To plan and execute more effective events and create the right mix of event types, companies now require a unified approach that brings events out of their silo and incorporates them into a complete customer view **[Figure 1]**.



Figure 1: GSK integrates its global events strategy with the customer journey ([watch video](#))

¹ [Veeva Pulse Field Trends Report 2022](#)

Evolving pharma events in a digital healthcare landscape

Multiple individuals from life sciences teams across commercial, medical, and market access interact with the same customers, often using different communication channels. This lack of coordination increases the complexity of tracking and managing the quantity and level of interactions.

As HCPs become more selective about how and when they engage with pharma companies, events are increasingly the most meaningful touchpoints in the customer journey. 72% of pharmaceutical marketers regard events as the best way to educate and nurture deep customer relationships.²

However, within life sciences organizations, an “event” can mean different things depending on the role. There are speaker programs, consulting, training, symposia, and more on the commercial side. On the medical side, events range from investigator meetings to advisory boards and committees. Each event type has a different purpose and a separate budget. But there is frequent event crossover for participants, creating compelling reasons for a complete view of all events across the organization.

The most severe consequence of an incomplete view of your customers across events is the possibility of non-compliance with regulatory requirements. Risks such as non-adherence to a Corporate Integrity Agreement, exceeding experts’ internal spending cap, and inaccurate transparency reporting cannot be taken lightly. Companies are required by transparency reporting to record the transfers of value for events, not only in some of the world’s largest markets — the U.S., E.U., Japan, and Australia — but also by local regulations in countries like France and Slovakia. Failure to meet reporting requirements can be costly. While inadvertent omissions can carry minor penalties, companies knowingly violating the reporting requirements face significant monetary fines and reputational damage.

Transparency regulations³ and a growing need for virtual and hybrid execution mean it is increasingly urgent to streamline the end-to-end process, integrate events with other engagement channels, coordinate brand messages, scientific education, and stakeholder engagement activities, and ensure reporting accuracy.



“Event planning has spanned a variety of formats, adapting to newer ways in which customers choose to interact. As we have adapted to flexible event styles, we rely on Veeva CRM Events Management to ensure compliance and deliver a complete view from start to finish, creating more relevant and thoughtful experiences.”

Peter Kimble, CRM Director, Kyowa Kirin International

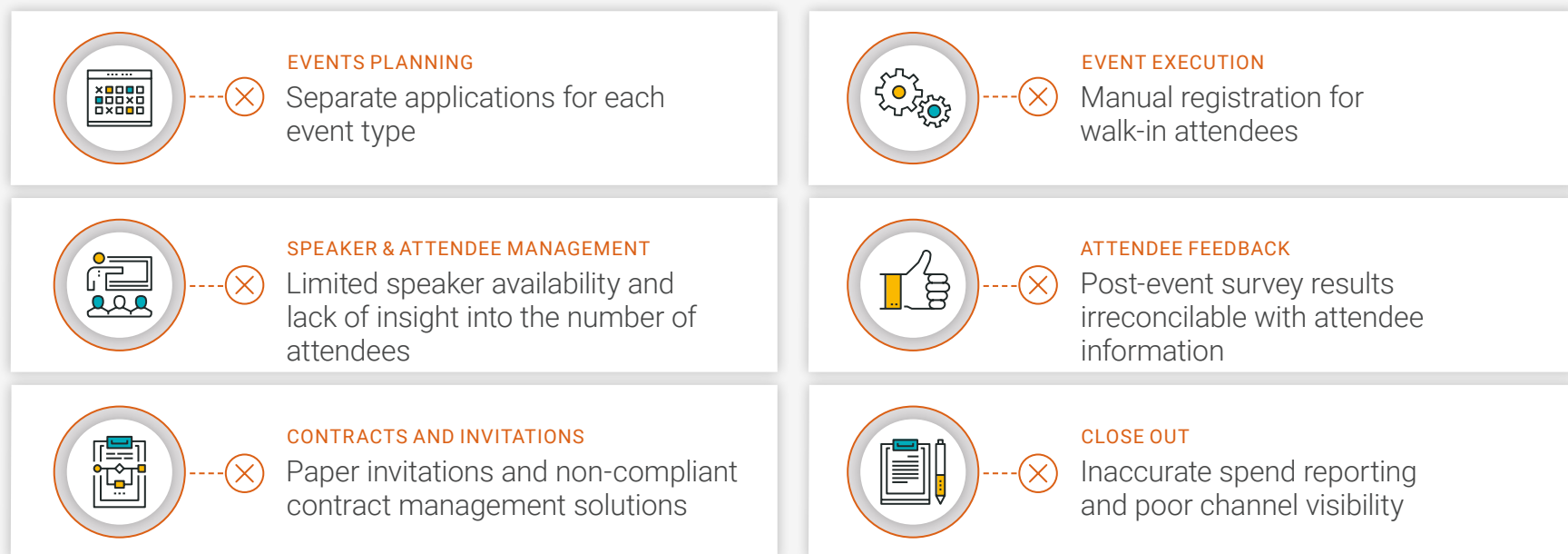
² A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Cvent, February 2021

³ For example, the Sunshine Act in the U.S. and European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA) rules in Europe.

The pitfalls of disconnected events

Life sciences companies are held back by a lack of standardized processes to streamline the planning, execution, and administration of events [Figure 2]. There are too many handoffs and duplications of tasks along the event management journey, posing additional compliance and operational efficiency challenges.

Figure 2: Symptoms of siloed events



With multiple systems, partners, and processes to manage the event lifecycle, it becomes challenging to maintain proactive, end-to-end transparency. Using various platforms requires additional work to aggregate event data across partners, geographies, speakers, and attendees. With data dispersed across external sources, life sciences companies find it nearly impossible to mine the rich insights they might otherwise gain. They are missing a valuable opportunity to improve event productivity and HCP engagement.

The lack of platform integration leaves unanswered questions. Without a consolidated view of HCP engagement, there is no real-time accounting of how often a speaker has been used across events, how much money is left in a department's event budget, or which available speakers are best matched with a particular therapeutic area and audience. This shortcoming hinders operational efficiency. Even more importantly, without real-time visibility across all interactions to calculate the total transfer of value, the company is at risk of regulatory non-compliance.

Finally, companies need help to administer the content for events in a manner that balances their business objectives and attendees' needs within the regulatory requirements.

A single view of all engagement activity drives greater execution and compliance

A unified approach brings together data sources that are updated in real-time for event administration and speaker expert management. This approach ensures life sciences companies get the most out of their platform investments.


To achieve a complete view of your customers across all interactions, the application should be pre-integrated with your customer relationship management (CRM) software to serve as a CRM extension. From beginning to end, all event information should be captured in the CRM system and combined with customer profiles, giving companies visibility into the impact of their messaging and aggregate spend. For commercial teams, gaining immediate insight into event details in their workflow helps them better understand which content and activities would effectively engage HCPs in future interactions.

Having a single solution improves efficiency and compliance for the events channel by providing:

- 01 Simplified technology**
One platform covering all event types with pre-built integrations, unifying compliance tools and company applications to streamline the end-to-end process.
- 02 360° customer view**
Seamless integration with your CRM brings a single view of the customer's activity across all events and channels.
- 03 Global to local compliance**
Ensure country-specific regulatory requirements are covered, while maintaining global process standards.

Event data is most powerful when integrated with channel activity data, so insights can be tied back to individual HCPs. Connecting these activities and effectively sharing these insights with the stakeholders who need to know, will help personalize the next interaction, whether an event, speaker program, or one-to-one meeting, to deliver a truly omnichannel customer journey. Only then can your commercial team determine the business impact your events have on the strategic outcomes of the brand [Figure 3].

Figure 3: Integrated events have measurable business impact

EVENT PREPARATION STAGE	OBJECTIVE(S)	EVENT DATA TO EMBED INTO CRM	BUSINESS IMPACT
 EVENT PLANNING	Identify and plan the right event type based on customer needs, preferences, and objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date & Time • Location • HCO • Speaker • Topic • Brand 	Boost HCP engagement and improve brand perception with relevant speakers and topics/content that generate interest

EVENT PREPARATION STAGE**OBJECTIVE(S)****EVENT DATA TO EMBED
INTO CRM****BUSINESS IMPACT****SPEAKER MANAGEMENT
& CONTENT STRATEGY**

- Secure high-impact speakers
- Link events with the broader content strategy

- Contract
- Screening
- FMV
- Training
- Content consumption
- Q&A
- Chat

Track which formats are most effective (e.g., Q&As, fireside chats, webinars) and design more personal, targeted experiences that are likely to succeed

**AUDIENCE TARGETING**

- Understand your audience to target the right attendees based on the event format and topic
- Improve retention and attendance over time

- Invitees
- RSVPs
- Registrations
- Reminders

Define effective event promotion to target the right audience and drive registrations

**EVENT EXECUTION**

- Deliver high-impact events that add value to your customers
- Capture high-quality insights from all event types (live, virtual, hybrid) to enhance your overall customer engagement strategy

- Attendees
- Consent
- Disclosure
- No-shows
- Walk-ins

Execute the perfect event, whether in-person, virtual, or a combination of both

EVENT PREPARATION STAGE**OBJECTIVE(S)****EVENT DATA TO EMBED
INTO CRM****BUSINESS IMPACT****ATTENDEE FEEDBACK**

Ensure that events deliver value to customers (e.g., educational exchange, clinical transfer of knowledge)

- Surveys
- Polling

Integrate data into follow-up activities (e.g., brand strategy) and future events

**CLOSE OUT & REPORTING**

- Reconcile global reporting and Transfer of Value
- Reduce risk of errors

- Attestations
- Expenses
- Follow-up

- Faster and harmonized reporting
- Reduced compliance risks
- One single interface for both global and local event requirements, workflows

Boehringer Ingelheim: Event data fuels global customer insights

With more than 50,000 employees, Boehringer Ingelheim is one of the world's largest pharmaceutical organizations, renowned for developing innovative treatments.

Given its size, harmonization across its 88 regional offices is critical to the commercial team's operational efficiency and success. However, regional teams lacked a global, integrated event solution and were accustomed to using their own separate solutions. This resulted in a fragmented landscape, without a standard planning process or consistent reporting.

The team decided to roll out [Veeva Vault CRM Events Management](#) across 77 countries over three years, providing local teams with a technology solution that is fully integrated with their CRM and is both secure and compliant.

Instead of constant back and forth over email to propose events and share bits of information slowly over time, Boehringer Ingelheim streamlined event planning across the company. Event organizers now use Vault CRM Events Management to reserve dates, manage invitations, plan budgets, get approvals, and more, while meeting regional regulatory requirements.

Using the deep insights available in its new event solution, Boehringer Ingelheim can also deliver the right mix of in-person, virtual, and hybrid events. While face-to-face meetings previously dominated event schedules, the company currently offers about 80% of its total events as virtual offerings.

Outcomes with Veeva CRM Events Management

Rolled out new events platform in 77 countries over three years

Delivered up to 80% of total events as virtual offerings

Gained deeper insight into customer journey and preferences

Conclusion

Traditional event and speaker program management has siloed critical functions, leading to compliance challenges and an uncoordinated HCP experience.

With the advent of new commercial models and innovations in enabling technologies, life sciences companies can make omnichannel engagement viable for their customers and consider event activities within the wider mix of HCP engagement channels. As a result, HCPs have better access to the information they need, enabling deeper connections between pharma and healthcare.



“Our global events strategy is centered around meeting HCPs and scientific leaders where they are, requiring a flexible virtual and in-person approach. By gaining a complete view of insights across how experts engage, Veeva Vault CRM Events Management helps us adapt to learning preferences to deliver relevant omnichannel experiences that support better patient outcomes.”

Dave Yates, Global Product Director, GSK

Companies that adopt a streamlined, efficient approach to managing the event lifecycle will have total visibility across all events, optimize speaker utilization, and maintain compliance in all global markets. By integrating events into the overall engagement strategy, information from each customer touchpoint builds upon the last interaction. Pharma companies can combine data from all event types with insights from other activity channels – face-to-face visits, virtual meetings, phone calls – to gain complete visibility into field activities and results, which they can use to personalize interactions. This integrated view of all customer activities and affinities makes it easier to plan omnichannel campaigns and execute more effective events across the right mix of event types.

Discover how to streamline the end-to-end events process globally, from planning to closeout and reporting, in this [interactive demo](#) for Veeva Vault CRM Events Management

About us

Veeva is the global leader in cloud software for the life sciences industry. Committed to innovation, product excellence, and customer success, Veeva serves more than 1,100 customers, ranging from the world's largest pharmaceutical companies to emerging biotechs. As a Public Benefit Corporation, Veeva is committed to balancing the interests of all stakeholders, including customers, employees, shareholders, and the industries it serves. For more information, visit veeva.com/eu