The need to collaborate quickly and easily with colleagues and agencies to deliver compliant content to markets across the globe is more pressing than ever; and the explosion of digital and social media alongside the increasing globalization of campaigns is forcing pharmaceutical companies to be more agile and more responsive. Managing accuracy and compliance of content communicated to patients, stakeholders, and customers alike has become more complex. Promotional teams must work smarter and faster; having a software solution in place to facilitate gains at each step of the process cycle is absolutely paramount in driving quality, and realizing ROI in the embedded resources of the end product.

By implementing a totally integrated content compliance and digital asset management solution into marketing workflows, life sciences companies will maximize the time and resource embedded in marketing campaigns. This will facilitate the alignment of marketing with medical, legal, and regulatory (MLR) teams to deliver content to market quickly, accurately, and in a way that is easily transferable for reuse in multiple global geographies, each with unique compliance requirements.

**Reaching audiences globally**
As the potential audience and client base grows daily with technological advancement and the subsequent expansion of the connected landscape, companies must learn to adapt and effectively manage their digital programs to achieve global distribution. This is increasingly important as the complexities and challenges of digital programs become an ever-more dominant aspect of the marketing mix, where marketers should embrace every tool available to deliver content to market in a compliant and time-efficient way.

In order to capitalize on this huge market potential, pharma marketers must learn new skills and adapt an alternative way of thinking in order to manage the three key challenges of the digital revolution: quality control in a global market, compliance accuracy, and delivery to market timeframes. Marketers can do this by raising the priority of an integrated digital strategy to the very core of their marketing and overall business objectives. Knowing the right tools and methods for communicating with new and wide audiences is not always
straightforward given the plethora of multifaceted social and digital platforms that are emerging. It is such that the explosion in rich digital material and channels is now beginning to displace traditional marketing methodologies, such as face-to-face salesforce contact and print advertising, and is shifting the very way in which integrated sales and marketing campaigns are delivered.

This generality can be seen as a key challenge, and those leading the industry’s advancement into the digital world must learn to realign their perception and become “digitally native” if they are to fully capitalize on the benefits of today’s connected marketplace. To explain this more fully, it is perhaps best to compare against today’s generation, born in an era where digital and mobile technology are totally ingrained into the psyche, and the real and digital worlds are blurred as one and the same. It is simply part of life, rather than a new tool to be added into the mix.

The impact of this can be seen especially within the life sciences sector—an industry giant that has been slow to break the chains of tradition, and has been somewhat unwilling in its uptake of digital technology when compared against other core global market sectors. Yet the pharma giants of today have a very important role to play, and an even more important message to communicate, as the makers of the world’s drugs and medical products. The responsibility is on the sector to adapt quickly to the digital age and communicate as effectiveness with audiences about the drugs and healthcare products they are making for them.

This is why the role of the marketing teams within the life sciences industry is so dynamic and complex. Programs and campaigns are almost unrecognizable from those of a decade ago, and communications messages must be managed in a totally new way. The digital world demands that marketers learn to embrace a two-way dialogue with their clients, and talk directly with them via public platforms.

Modern methods for managing the review of digital assets
Digital content and its accuracy are now key priorities for life science companies. The digital content revolution combines with the increasing globalization of marketing campaigns to drive acceptance and uptake. This is embedded with the added pressure of regulatory compliance that looms constantly in the background of all marketing campaigns where accurate drug information is paramount.

Healthcare providers can only achieve compliance accuracy within an acceptable timeframe if they work to achieve end-to-end collaborative working during promotional content planning, review, and approval. If misaligned, time embedded in developing digital marketing materials can quickly escalate to damaging levels, impacting both ROI and the overall content quality.

By using a content compliance system, every interaction with an item—including user, actions, comments, and versions—is automatically recorded and available to view at any
time. This visibility helps to promote efficiency throughout the internal documentation review process, and will assist teams in easily tracking documents throughout the review process while viewing all user actions, comments, and item versions. The time saved in delivering these applications through review and approval in an efficient manner will deliver ROI for any company, and allow the marketing team to focus on results and real patient healthcare outcomes.

To that end, a content compliance and digital asset management software solution can assist in realizing greater collaboration between a marketing taskforce, by providing a secure access platform that allows team members to communicate openly about compliance objectives and concerns. Through improved clarity and open dialogue, any comments can be addressed and a resolution found in a timely fashion.

Campaign planning is equally impacted by collaboration, and through the use of this type of software, teams located around the world are presented with a single access point where timelines can be created and campaign planning materials can be written, collated, and saved for all to see. It is this unified platform that will allow a taskforce to collaborate effectively despite location, and work efficiently within the same arena.

User profiles can be created and assigned to set jobs, so that each team member can plan their workload, but, more importantly, colleagues can see the demands on the combined resource and plan around potential bottlenecks in the delivery program. This is essential in resource assignment and overall workload planning against objectives and deadlines.

Dynamic content review

Dynamic content is becoming the lifeblood of modern marketing—with content types such as HTML5, video, images, website content, app, and social media materials all becoming more common and immediate. Having the essential tools in place to efficiently manage this kind of client-facing promotional asset through review and approval is paramount.

Whereas traditionally marketers will have used screen grabs or static image files to comment on dynamic content, today’s compliance software platforms allow for marketers to upload packaged files containing live video or web platforms that MLR reviewers can then review in a familiar and functional interface. This review suite will allow users to comment against readily available guidance documents, leaving comments and notation where required for the development team to pick up. This kind of functionality allows for smooth review transition of working digital assets, given that total clarity is provided for all team members to see and quickly pick up on.

The added value can be found post-storyboarding and development; the final asset can be reviewed in its entirety and commented on with clarity. Users will then be able to access and download comment summary reports from the route map audit trail, to be satisfied that all pages and issues have been addressed fully by the MLR review team. These will detail
all of the comments that will have been made on the asset in question, for total clarity and collaborative working.

**Video uploading and transcoding**

Video content is emerging into the marketing environment at a rapid pace, as the shift from written content towards visuals and interactives becomes more prominent. Therefore, the range of video formats that marketers are dealing with has widened, now often including everything from MP4, WMV, AVI, MKV, MPG, MPEG, FLV, and MOV.

For marketing and MLR teams, it is important to transcode all these common formats into an easily reviewable and compressed format—leading to swift review times. Reviewers will then be able make video review processes smooth and efficient, and will be able to add comments at any point during the video. When doing so, the video will pause, also leaving a time stamp in the timeline bar to show the rest of the review team the precise point at which a comment has been made. These can then be navigated and addressed at a later stage.

By streamlining video formatting and working to a single method each time, video review and approval will quickly become a smooth and routine part of the marketing lifecycle rather than a pain-point.

**E-certification**

Although content accuracy is the central objective, a key concern during review and approval is to have certification signed and stamped in the fastest possible timeframe, reducing time and resource embedded in the job. When dealing with digital assets, a digital asset management system can help to combine content in review with easy access to the required e-certificate, so reviewers can jump to check for requirements and add signatures when a section of the review has been completed.

Modern software platforms can streamline this process for improved user experience, adding simplicity to the overall digital asset management process.

**Benchmarking**

An efficient way of measuring improvement in project delivery is by implementing a system of benchmarking against a number of key performance indicators (KPIs). These metrics can be monitored over time, so teams can measure the impact of their learnings from previous work.

At project conception stages, it is crucial that all parties share and understand business priorities and work with each other to establish KPIs for delivery, as well as review and approval timeframes.

Project status data should be collated and measured at defined intervals, where the team is actively engaged with finding areas for improvement, and where they arise, conducting a deep-dive analysis to look into better process efficiency.
Marketers should, therefore, focus their benchmarking on a number of key areas. The first is the time it commonly takes to develop, review, approve and, deliver a document to market. An established baseline here will give specific improvement targets for future work. Secondly, the number of iterations it takes to push the document through this process. Even if a job moves quickly but takes multiple rounds of review and approval, the embedded cost and resource it takes to deliver the material is increased. Lastly, evaluating global re-use capability can uncover potential for cost savings with recreation and agency spend.

Ideally, companies should not just seek to reduce cycle time, but also reduce the number of cycles that content undergoes before delivery to market. Finally, companies should aim to measure the percentage of sharing, from region to region and across departments, repurposing content where possible and, therefore, making savings when volume of sharing is higher.

The value of using benchmarking is that it facilitates more informed analysis of the effectiveness of the team, giving vital insights into ROI and, where required, areas for making improvements in delivery timeframes. By deploying compliance software systems, it is possible to access this data automatically from within the system, allowing users to track data anonymously against industry standards to provide a best practice benchmark.

**Future alignment is critical**

The relevance of digital marketing is only set to grow. The potential benefits of rich digital content and social media are enormous—empowering patients to take control of the treatment of their disease, enabling the pharmaceutical and healthcare industries to have direct relationships with their customer, and ultimately improving health outcomes.

It is clear that companies need to ensure they make big gains in their use of digital positioning to maximize their outreach and engagement programs by delivering material consistently across multiple channels while staying within regulatory guidelines. With this, comes the need to navigate the complexities of digital materials and communication, including more complex planning, content, and accelerated approvals.

Through building a greater understanding of the digital environment, application areas, and the marketplace, companies can put in place the systems necessary for aligning digital marketing with their overarching business objectives and begin to deliver appropriate, modern communications to their audiences via greater processes efficiency.

Cloud software systems that incorporate digital asset management solutions provide a step change in digital pharmaceutical marketing. They offer the marketer a method to simplify and accelerate critical time-to-market processes, comply with regulation, improve productivity and efficiency, and ultimately be more creative in their marketing strategies.

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