Veeva
Business Consulting

FIELD-LED CUSTOMER JOURNEYS IN LIFE SCIENCES
A Blueprint for Making It Happen

1 ## The imperative of integrated customer engagement planning

It's never been more important to deliver a seamless customer experience — and in today's era, this requires teams to plan, design, execute, and track customer journeys across physical and digital channels, at scale. Over the past five years, competition has become fiercer, markets are increasingly complex, and healthcare professionals (HCPs) continue to demand engagement on their terms. In this context, being able to orchestrate business-driven, customer-centric journeys is a strategic imperative.

Biopharma companies have most of the pieces in place but often struggle to connect their systems, data, processes, and people. Without these key enablers, it is not feasible to offer customers personalized, informative, and impactful experiences in a scalable way.

Integrated customer engagement planning will lead to enhanced business results, as well as other leading-indicator benefits:

- Improved CX through the execution of one holistic customer engagement plan
- Better HCP activation and conversion
- More granular measurement of journeys, their impact, and what works (and what doesn't)
- Higher-quality data to enable AI
- Empowered field teams to deliver personalized experiences
- Improved field user experience (UX) through one easy, integrated solution
- Greater RoI from technology investments

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CAMPAIGNS AND JOURNEYS?

Campaign management refers to the planning, design, execution, and analysis of a marketing initiative, often focused on a product launch or event. Campaigns tend to be brand-centric and push information to HCPs, are planned in batches at the audience or segment level, and are linear and discrete.

Customer journey orchestration takes more of a strategic approach to drive behavioral change among HCPs. Continuous engagement is more fluid, responsive, and personal as it is driven by customer needs and behaviors. The approach centers more on touchpoints and message delivery than time-boxed activity.

	Campaigns		Journeys
Focus	Brand-centric	→	Customer-centric
Customer	Segment-driven	→	Segment-of-one
Purpose	Achieve a tactical objective	→	Progress up a ladder of adoption (LoA)
Planning	Batch-oriented	→	Continuous
Execution	Linear and discrete	→	Responsive and fluid
Measures	Channel activity-driven	→	Message & touchpoint

Overcoming existing barriers

Biopharma companies continue to invest heavily in improving how they go to market and engage with HCPs. This comes in many forms: optimizing channel usage, investing in modular content, enhancing content effectiveness, capturing better HCP insights to drive greater personalization of content and messaging, and automation to increase responsiveness. However, despite best efforts, there are three significant barriers to overcome **[Figure 1]**.

True customer journey orchestration will remain out of reach unless these challenges are addressed directly and holistically. Each issue can be overcome with a new end-to-end approach, supported by the right technology, processes, skills, behaviors, and performance measures. Equally, finding the right balance between human intelligence and technology will be critical, so that journeys can be adapted to customer needs. It all starts with a fresh lens on where investment, focus, and effort are being directed today.

FIGURE 1 – KEY INDUSTRY CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT CHALLENGES

Barrier	Root Causes
Ineffective, fragmented customer engagement planning processes	• Sales, marketing, and medical plans remain separate • Most field engagement is not driven by journeys but instead by a traditional MCCP approach • Marketing journeys are not translated into practical field-level plans with sales buy-in • Limited/no measurement of journeys resulting in 'flying blind'
AI missing high-quality input data and strategy to succeed; scalable use cases still unclear	• Marketing automation tools limited in ability to orchestrate all field activity • Marketing automation rules are complex to set up and maintain • Overreliance on poor-quality, fragmented data, reducing the effectiveness of next best action (NBA) • 'Black box' nature of plans/actions are not always trusted and accepted by field teams
Field teams not empowered and set up for success	• Field teams treated more as an execution channel vs. strategic asset • Fragmented technology solutions impact field experience and create execution friction • Traditional ways of working prevail – competing plans, poor visibility, misaligned incentives • Insights not surfaced to field teams in a way that means they can take timely action

Focus investment in the right places

Traditionally, marketing teams in biopharma lead the design of customer-centric journeys, while sales drives field activity through a cycle planning process to ensure top prospects are regularly seen. This approach usually means that a single customer plan doesn't exist, which results in sales, marketing, and medical functions operating in relative isolation.

For instance, sales focuses on personal, field-led channels and marketing on digital channels (such as web/portal, mass email, and social), while increasingly relying on marketing automation to enable personalization. Add medical into the mix, which follows yet another process, and the result is fragmented journeys that fail to deliver impact.

To reassess your current approach, we recommend asking yourself the following questions:

a) What proportion of your overall customer touchpoints is driven by **marketing automation**?

b) How **many HCPs regularly visit** your portal/web and are they **identifiable**?

c) Does **mass email** have more or less impact than field-led email?

d) Does activity attainment or **touchpoint and message delivery** drive field planning?

e) How many **suggestions/NBAs** are sent to field teams and how many do they act upon?

In our experience, most biopharma companies tend to answer a) Less than 10%, b) Very few, c) Less impact, d) Activity attainment, and e) Lots, but few are actioned.

SHIFT FROM TRADITIONAL MASS EMAIL CAMPAIGNS TO FIELD−LED, PERSONALIZED EMAILS

Through Recommended Email (available functionality in Veeva CRM), pre-approved email drafts or scheduled emails are delivered directly to field reps, enabling them to send highly targeted and compliant messages. This centralized approach, combined with automated email capabilities, allows reps to modify, reschedule, or send emails as they are to HCPs, optimizing efficiency while driving higher open and click-through rates.
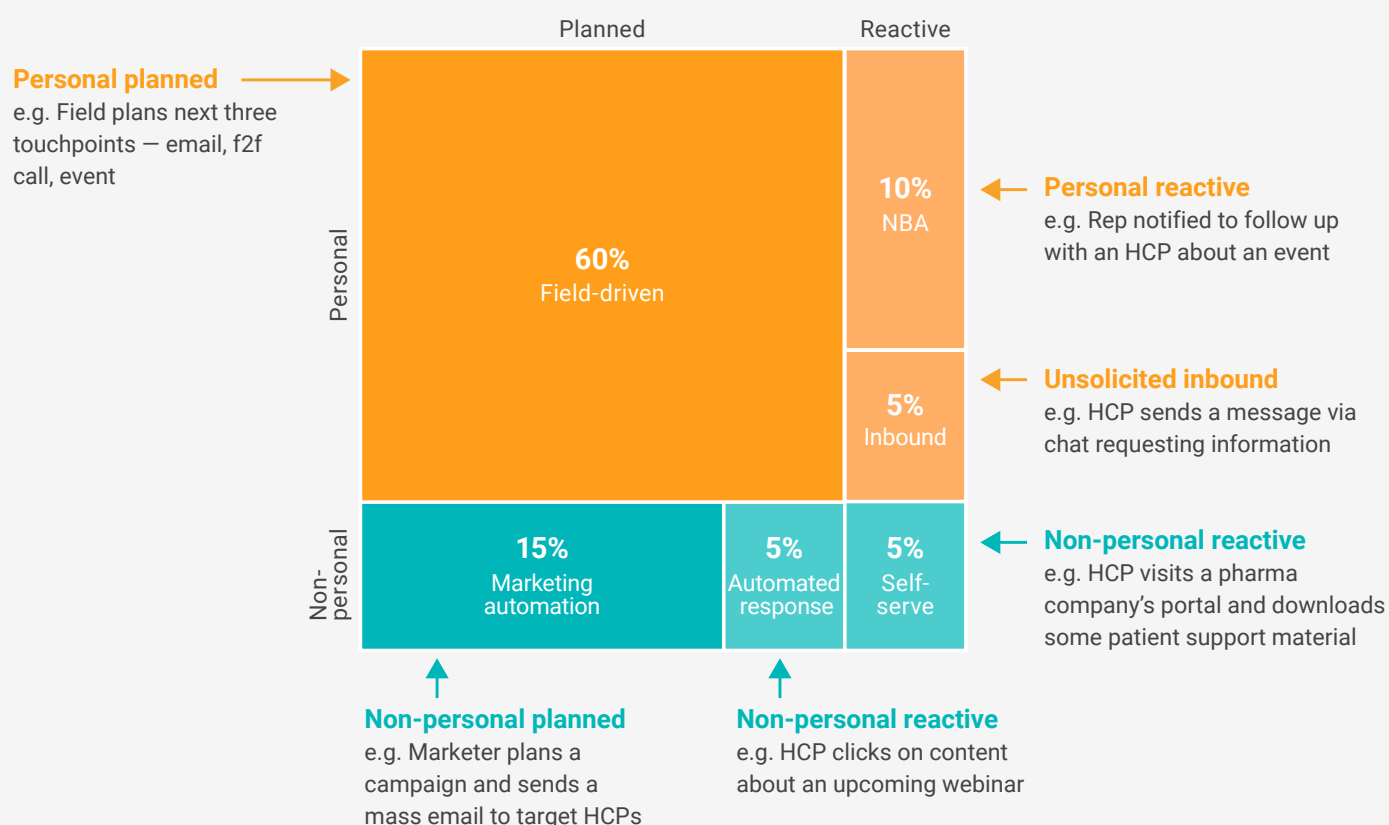
Vault CRM Campaign Manager, available in late 2024, will enable field teams to orchestrate personal and non-personal engagement with complete visibility across all HCP touchpoints. Embedded in Vault CRM, sales and marketing will work alongside one another by sharing the same customer data and using the same approved content for consistent and compliant messaging across channels.

It is normal for sales and marketing to focus on planning for only those channels within their remit but doing so leaves significant value on the table. In **Figure 2**, Veeva analysis indicates that most of the engagement volume a biopharma company has with its HCPs can be classified as 'Personal planned' (the orange box). Veeva Pulse data shows there are 600m+ personal interactions with HCPs annually. While marketing automation and NBA have important roles to play, they are typically lower in volume (for now) and delivered via less impactful channels (than personal, for example). It is essential to get the most out of personal interactions, as they can have a higher impact.

Biopharma companies can drive significant business value and improve the customer experience by finding a better balance of investment across this matrix, including introducing marketing-led journeys to personal-planned engagement. The data generated can greatly improve the effectiveness of marketing automation and NBA, but a lot of valuable insight is left untapped today (see 'The journey to AI-driven orchestration').

FIGURE 2 − TYPICAL CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT MIX TODAY

Personal planned
e.g. Field plans next three touchpoints — email, f2f call, event

	Planned	Reactive
Personal	**60%** Field-driven	**10%** NBA / **5%** Inbound
Non-personal	**15%** Marketing automation	**5%** Automated response / **5%** Self-serve

Personal reactive
e.g. Rep notified to follow up with an HCP about an event

Unsolicited inbound
e.g. HCP sends a message via chat requesting information

Non-personal reactive
e.g. HCP visits a pharma company's portal and downloads some patient support material

Non-personal planned
e.g. Marketer plans a campaign and sends a mass email to target HCPs

Non-personal reactive
e.g. HCP clicks on content about an upcoming webinar

Right ambition

Across our industry, companies are experimenting with AI, which is encouraging. Some biopharma companies are already exploring its potential with AI-powered customer orchestration. Core to this is the idea that pre-determined journeys are not set. With the right data, AI-driven algorithms can identify a customer and their current 'state' and quickly model the next best action by using a rich database of insights that pulls data from multiple sources – all in real time. The algorithm would recommend the next touchpoint and content, and then trigger the engagement, either through the field or other channels.

Reality check

While the ambition is right, the reality is that AI will take many years to mature and deliver value. The biggest challenge to address is that there still isn't enough quality and varied data to make AI orchestration effective. For example, companies have been investing in NBA for many years, but most are still only able to make basic suggestions, which subsequently have low acceptance rates by field teams.

Garbage in, garbage out

AI is only as good as the data it is built upon. Without quality and connected data, underpinned by connected systems, it is difficult for algorithms to work out what to optimize for and make effective recommendations. Good progress is underway in the U.S. through access to HCP-level prescribing data, but this model is not proving scalable outside the U.S.
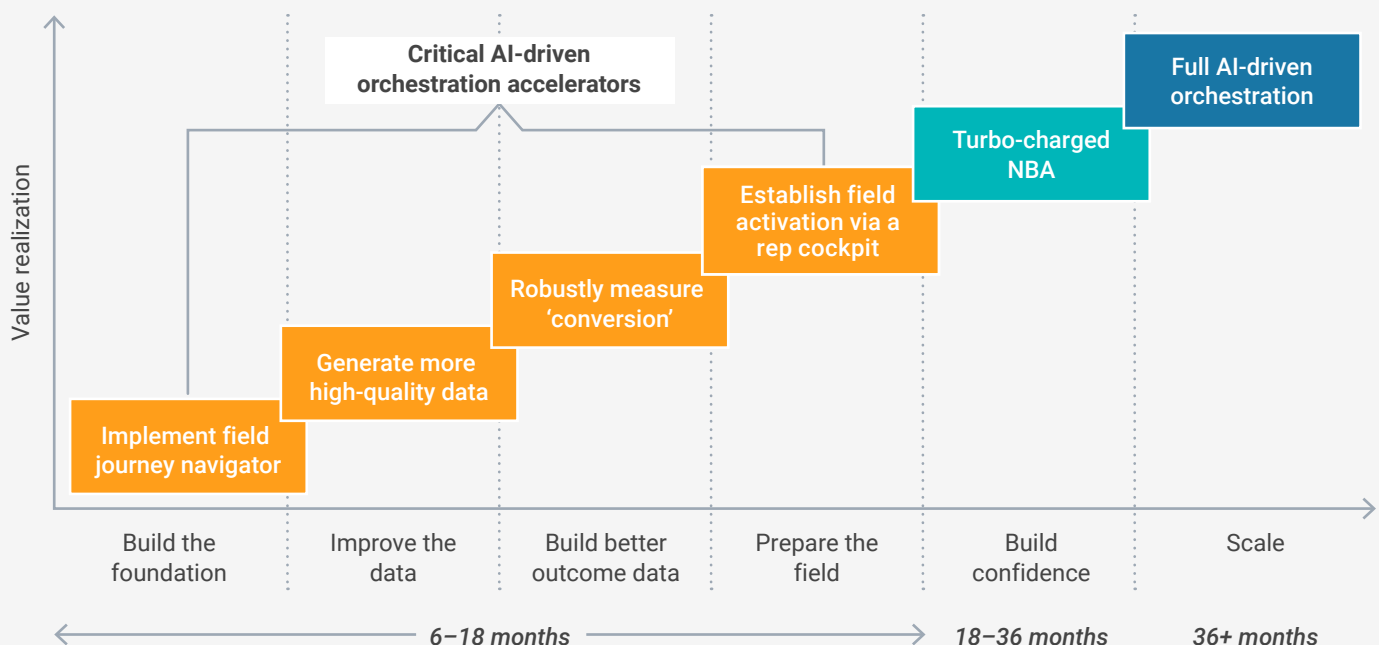
It's not just about the data

Data is one critical element to drive valuable recommendations. Activating field teams to take the right actions also requires tailored content that accounts for field capacity. Field teams need to feel that AI adds tangible value to accept recommendations. All these challenges need to be addressed if AI-driven orchestration is to become a scalable reality.

Accelerating the route to AI

To unlock long-term value, your teams will need to learn from AI pilot successes and then scale across the organization.

Don't lose sight of operational excellence: for instance, if your team's experimentation with AI hasn't yielded the hoped-for operational improvements, it's worth evaluating whether to keep investing.

Start by designing pre-defined journeys to prepare for the road ahead (see figure below), as this introduces better data into the system and can help establish more robust outcome measures when done in the right way (for example, ladder of adoption progression). Pay attention to core processes and role requirements, and introduce the right partners for AI modeling. Then, equip the field with the right tools, processes, and behaviors to succeed. This is the foundation you need to turbo-charge NBA and accelerate the journey to full AI-driven orchestration.

Value realization

Critical AI-driven orchestration accelerators

Implement field journey navigator

Generate more high-quality data

Robustly measure 'conversion'

Establish field activation via a rep cockpit

Turbo-charged NBA

Full AI-driven orchestration

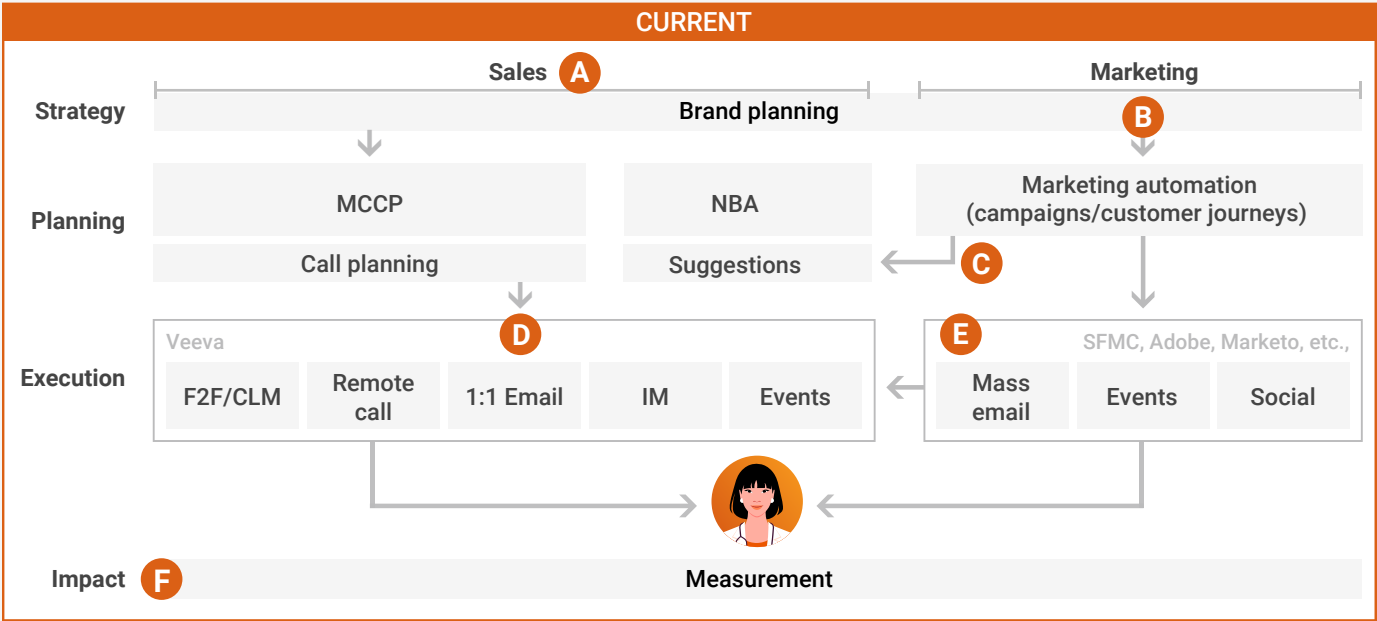| Build the foundation | Improve the data | Build better outcome data | Prepare the field | Build confidence | Scale |

6–18 months · 18–36 months · 36+ months
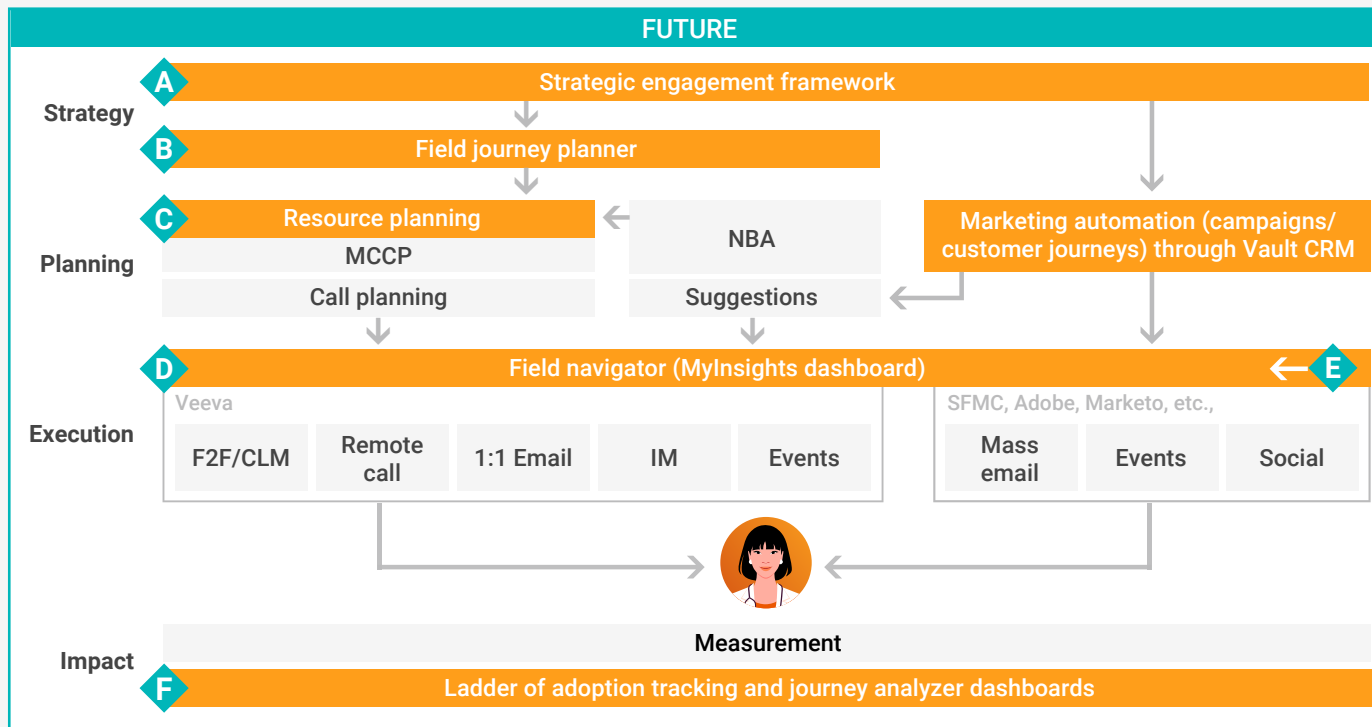
A new blueprint for execution

To realize the full potential of customer journey orchestration, biopharma companies need a new approach that challenges traditional ways of working, silos, and mindsets **[Figure 3]**. Although a significant change, it is more evolution than revolution. To unlock this opportunity, the current process needs an infusion of targeted solutions, each of which helps address historical barriers.

FIGURE 3 − CURRENT AND FUTURE BLUEPRINTS FOR CUSTOMER JOURNEY ORCHESTRATION

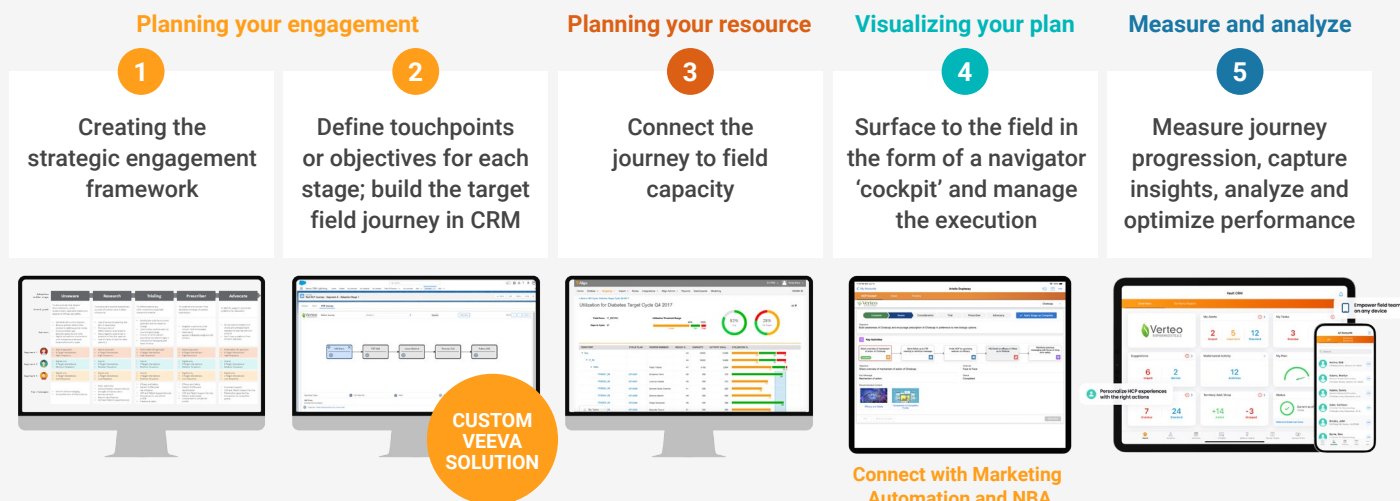|	FROM		TO	
Strategy	**A** Separate sales and marketing plans	→	**A**	Sales, marketing, and medical plans based off one common strategic customer engagement framework
	B Journeys mainly focused on mass email and web channels	→	**B**	Field journey planner enables journey planning for field channels as well
Planning	**C** NBA used to trigger some field activity with no consideration for field capacity/MCCP	→	**C**	Field journeys get translated into pragmatic cycle plans that factor in segmentation and targeting (including capacity for executing NBA)
Execution	**D** Field team activity driven by MCCP target setting	→	**D**	Field teams are armed with territory and call planning tools via a 'Field Navigator' to allow them to navigate journeys
	E Activity of other teams and other channels shown on timeline view in CRM	→	**E**	Field teams get full visibility of all planned and historic interactions within the context of the HCP's target journey
Impact	**F** Measurement focused on MCCP attainment	→	**F**	Ladders of adoption/journey conversion is tracked based on interactions, message delivery; field feedback and progress analyzed, and further actions triggered

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FUTURE

Strategy	**A** Strategic engagement framework		
	B Field journey planner		
Planning	**C** Resource planning	NBA	Marketing automation (campaigns/ customer journeys) through Vault CRM
	MCCP		
	Call planning	Suggestions	
Execution	**D** Field navigator (MyInsights dashboard) **E**		
	Veeva		SFMC, Adobe, Marketo, etc.,
	F2F/CLM	Remote call	1:1 Email	IM	Events	Mass email	Events	Social
Impact	Measurement		
	F Ladder of adoption tracking and journey analyzer dashboards		

4

A new approach to customer journey orchestration

Naturally, technology is a critical enabler in this future model, but it is insufficient on its own. There are five steps to overcoming muscle memory and embedding this new approach, which span adapting your processes and ways of working; introducing new performance measures; and evolving the skills and mindsets of sales, marketing, and medical **[Figure 4]**.

FIGURE 4 – FIVE STEPS TO SCALABLE CUSTOMER JOURNEY ORCHESTRATION

Planning your engagement		Planning your resource	Visualizing your plan	Measure and analyze
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Creating the strategic engagement framework	Define touchpoints or objectives for each stage; build the target field journey in CRM	Connect the journey to field capacity	Surface to the field in the form of a navigator 'cockpit' and manage the execution	Measure journey progression, capture insights, analyze and optimize performance
	CUSTOM VEEVA SOLUTION		Connect with Marketing Automation and NBA	

STEP 1

Create the strategic customer engagement framework

Start with a strategic customer engagement framework that spans sales, marketing, and medical. This framework should guide how these teams design journeys for each customer segment, based on progress up a ladder of adoption or influence. For each stage of the journey, define a series of objectives, messages, and content that should guide the field to engage in a personalized way reflecting both brand strategy and HCP needs.

Having a common framework is essential to align field-led journeys with marketing campaigns and automation journeys. For simplicity and execution efficiency, avoid the trap of trying to plan one integrated journey across field and digital. Field planning is different: complex and costly, it will be inefficient to try and design sub-journeys that are automatically triggered for field teams to execute. An approach that provides end-to-end visibility, while leaving some discretion to highly skilled and knowledgeable field teams, will be more effective. Over time, as data quality improves, AI may be able to orchestrate more of the journey, but this is a long way off today.

A common framework ensures consistency across field-led and marketing automation journeys while avoiding the complexity, sophistication, and cost of designing one journey for all stakeholders.

STEP 2

Build the journey in CRM

Once the framework is ready, it's easier to design and codify the journeys into CRM using a user-friendly visual tool (e.g., a custom Veeva configuration), and tailor for different products, adoption ladder stages, and HCP segments. This addresses the recurring problem that most marketing outputs stay in PowerPoint (or similar formats) and lack influence over field activity.

If the framework is in CRM, the underlying data can be utilized to guide and optimize field planning. It becomes easier to track journeys and significantly enriches the available insights. For this to be feasible, it's critical to have one common data model across all brands and markets to account for different ways of working and difficulties in measuring effectiveness.

STEP 3

Translate journeys into field-level plans

Effective digital engagement acknowledges that field teams have finite capacity, factors in prioritization, and facilitates advanced planning so daily and weekly schedules can be created. For example, commercial field teams in the U.K. might only be able to see a particular HCP three times per year. It's critical to factor these types of real-world constraints into individual HCP journey plans.

Setting up field cycle plans is predominantly a data-driven exercise. But if journeys are already defined, all that data exists in the system. This data can be leveraged and supplemented with some prioritization criteria and field capacity data to simplify the cycle planning process. The output is a realistic plan for a field team member for their territory going into the next cycle, which recommends the appropriate journey for each HCP based on where they are in the adoption ladder, their value segment, and the next step of the journey. Field teams need an opportunity to provide feedback on this process and include their qualitative knowledge, before locking in a plan that they are comfortable with and is ready for execution.

THE NAVIGATOR SHOULD BE MUCH MORE THAN A DASHBOARD

When companies leverage Veeva MyInsights (a workflow tool), their field teams can view insights and plans, schedule calls, and trigger remote calls/emails that are already populated with the relevant target objectives/messages, suggested channel, and content linked and ready to use — all of which is defined in the field journey planner.

It's now possible to integrate activity from sales and other non-Veeva channels into the same journey in MyInsights, leading to full cross-functional journey orchestration.

STEP 4

Enable field planning via a user-friendly navigator 'cockpit'

At this stage, journeys are planned at the HCP level and locked into field teams' cycle plans. Provide field teams with all the insight and direction required to plan and schedule engagement, and then execute the journeys. They need a single, go-to place to plan their activity and calls — almost like the navigation cockpit of a plane. For complete visibility, it is important that non-field-driven interactions are also surfaced on the HCP timeline. Suggestions/NBAs can then trigger field-led marketing activity.

STEP 5

Measure and analyze

A key benefit of this new approach is the ability to measure and analyze journeys at a granular level so that you can continuously optimize the customer experience. Field teams can use the navigator 'cockpit' to track individual customer journey progress and access territory views on journey status and progression. This enables tailored engagement, both within and between cycles. Field teams find it easier to pick up the next touchpoint with an HCP when journeys are tracked automatically in this way.

Introducing more robustness and objectivity when measuring ladders of adoption could result in more impactful measurement. Data captured from these activities can be combined with field feedback and other data sources to track customers' level of adoption, ensuring a clearer lens on their status than relying on self-reporting alone. Finally, data captured can also be used to trigger marketing automation, which ensures marketing journeys are joined up without the need for integration.
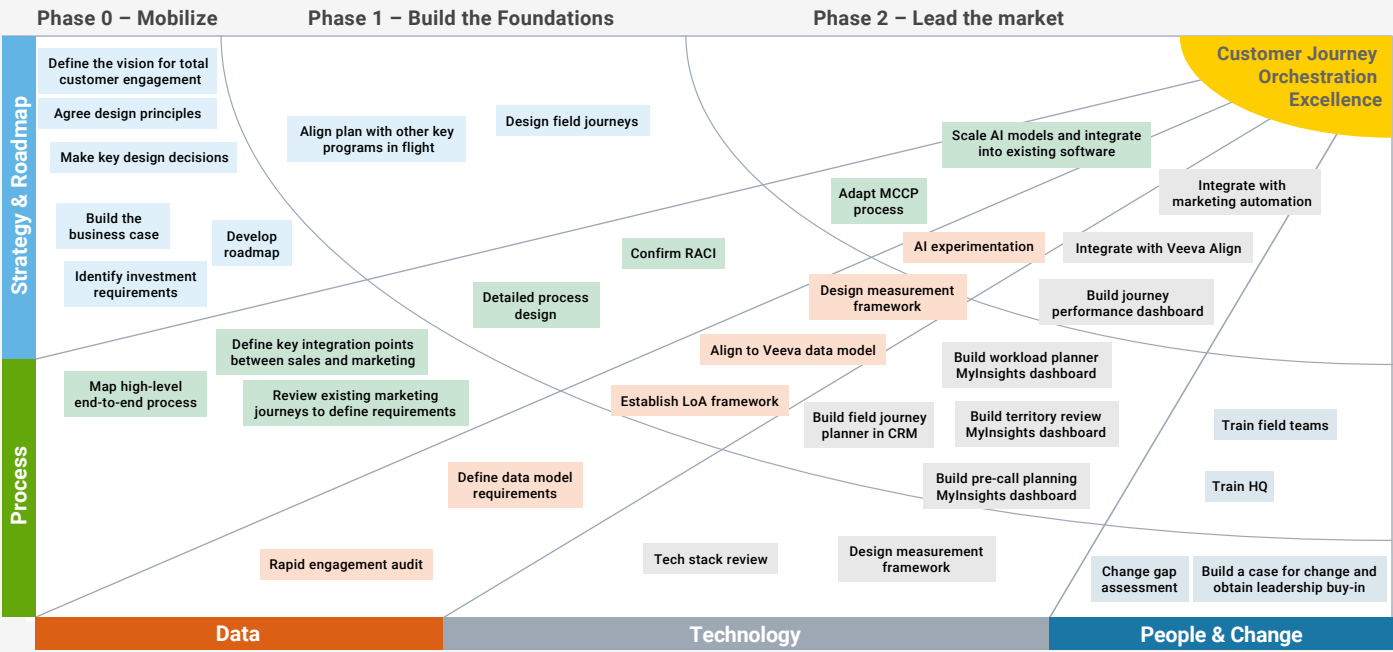
Making it happen

It's time to accelerate the transition to this new model. Execution is what matters most, requiring a shift from strategy and capability building to scalable execution and value realization. Fortunately, most biopharma companies have 90% of the pieces in place to enable this today, but it is time to translate the vision and strategy into practice, get the organizational blueprint right, and then drive lasting change.

The roadmap to customer journey orchestration leadership **[Figure 5]** needs a clear direction and set of accelerators to mobilize (Phase 0), followed by embedding the right foundations (Phase 1), before

accelerating to market leadership (Phase 2). With the right dedicated focus and leadership alignment, biopharma companies can be up and running within four to six months.

By combining marketing's omnichannel engagement expertise, sales' experience with field management and capacity planning, and field's unique customer insight, biopharma companies can capture significant value from their omnichannel engagement. This will provide a more personalized experience for their customers — and deliver tangible in-year business value.

FIGURE 5 – ROADMAP FOR FIELD-DRIVEN CUSTOMER JOURNEY ORCHESTRATION EXCELLENCE

Key Takeaways

10 DESIGN PRINCIPLES OF JOURNEY ORCHESTRATION EXCELLENCE

1. **Shift the focus to touchpoints, messages, and content** – Rather than channel activity

2. **Don't be too prescriptive** – Trust and empower your field force to know their customers and take the lead on delivering a personalized experience

3. **Use marketing automation and NBA as accelerators** – Balance investment in these areas and use them to help accelerate journey progression with relevant actions

4. **Improve robustness of ladder of adoption measurement** – Moving beyond self-reporting ensures that the right messages are delivered to the right customers at the right time

5. **Plan for cycles, not events** – Cycles are well understood by the field while events can be integrated within the planning cadence

6. **Enable customer prioritization within journeys** – Align with sales on segmentation to be used with journeys and leave personas to guide content choice

7. **Factor in capacity** – Even the perfect engagement plan will be ignored by field teams if it's not realistic within their existing sales cycle

8. **Enhance the field team experience** – Providing visibility is insufficient without considering the UX design of your solution

9. **Systematically measure journeys** - Shift journeys from PowerPoint and design them based on data within CRM

10. **Make it scalable and cost-effective** – The most advanced approach will have limited impact if isolated to a few brands or markets

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Authors

Aaron Bean
VP, Business Consulting Lead Europe
aaron.bean@veeva.com

Gareth Allott
Principal, Business Consulting
gareth.allott@veeva.com

Sam Prince
Senior Consultant, Business Consulting
sam.prince@veeva.com

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