ACCOMPLISH MEANINGFUL HCP ENGAGEMENT ONLINE

WWW.

The art of delivering valuable customer journeys aligned to your key messages

EPG HEALTH >>

Struggling to create and demonstrate value for your HCP website?

You're not alone.

Done badly, it will drain resources and cost trust.

Done right, it will achieve a behaviour changing customer experience, and the ability to measure your success.

CONTENTS



WHY IS THIS PAPER IMPORTANT FOR YOU?

Achieving meaningful engagement with healthcare professionals (HCPs) is a major goal for you, correct? It is crucial for supporting HCP decisions and patient outcomes and it allows you to remain the main source of authority on your subject matter.

Websites play a very important role in HCP engagement. They are now rated the number one source of information in clinical practice by HCPs - **96% consider websites important**, and half access them daily via their smartphones.¹ As the most convenient source of medical information, they have become the first port of call.

While HCPs may prefer an independent website to a pharmaceutical one, done in the right way, there is **significant opportunity for pharma to provide value and gain trust** via both their own and third party websites. Digital activities can deliver big returns for companies able to achieve excellence in customer experience, however they can also hamper trust and be a total drain on resources if executed poorly. It is therefore so important to get this right.

But, if you are finding it difficult to deliver and demonstrate online engagement effectiveness, you are not alone! **Providing real value and ROI in a congested content space is a challenge** for most pharmaceutical companies. They often don't know what works, have difficulty executing it or can't measure the outcomes. This may explain why, in 2019, pharma rated websites only their fourth most important channel for delivery.

The top 10 challenges reported by Pharma in relation to HCP websites:



What will you learn?

HCP experience with websites, technologies and devices in their personal lives (for retail and banking etc.) is shifting expectations for interactions in their professional lives. They expect **relevant**, **convenient**, **seamless and personalised content journeys**.

As a digital communication specialist and publisher of an independent HCP website for over 20 years, EPG Health has evolved and adopted new technologies and methodologies to meet the changing digital demands and behaviours of HCPs. Through this paper, our experts on digital, medical and marketing share **valuable insights and best practice** to help you overcome the barriers to achieving digital excellence, and **achieve success aligned to your educational objectives**.

KEY INSIGHT



(EY INSIGHT <mark>—</mark>

HCPs visit weekly:

Independant sites
---72%
Pharma education sites
---23%
Brand websites
---21%



How to:

- 1. Design personalised learning journeys aligned to key educational messages
- 2. Generate valuable content that's optimised for digital consumption
- 3. Integrate multichannel nurture programmes for increased engagement
- 4. Use meaningful metrics to understand, build and sustain engagement

Better communication, not more communication

Successful online communication requires you to provide the right audience with convenient access to relevant content that is easy to consume. That is easier said than done! Lack of know-how or capacity aside, the complexity of digital engagement is real and shouldn't be underestimated. Long gone are the days of putting your content online and hoping HCPs will engage with it, but there is no quick fix for digital engagement excellence.





There are no surprises here - we all value these attributes on any website.

Technology alone is not the solution

Part of the challenge in delivering what HCPs want can be resolved with upgrades to modern technologies and the personalised engagement possibilities that they provide. However, on its own, technology is not the answer. Digital engagement needs to be bespoke for your target audience, message, content, desired actions and so on, all of which require laser focus.

A **clear process,** a **cross functional approach** (medical, marketing and digital) and an **integrated toolset** are all needed to support each step for HCP website excellence. We follow and recommend the following ten steps:



Before preparing any content, it is crucial to carefully define the target digital personas, Key Educational Messages, content requirements, customer journey, discovery experience and KPIs in that order. Read on to find out why and how.

DESIGN PERSONALISED LEARNING JOURNEYS ALIGNED TO KEY EDUCATIONAL MESSAGES

What does success look like?

You will have multiple drivers for your website but ultimately you want to reach as many HCPs as possible and deliver information that will lead to good decisions for better patient outcomes. So how do you do this effectively and how do you know if you are doing so?

Companies that excel at meaningful digital engagement, provide **customer journeys that are timely, relevant, intuitive, personalised (TRIP) and align them to clearly defined Key Educational Messages.** You can achieve this by following the right process to design, prepare, improve and measure the HCP journeys.

What is a personalised HCP journey?

Timely speedy delivery of what's required in the moment

- Relevant contextual information and signposting
- Intuitive easy to use and navigate instinctively

Personalised tailored to specific needs of the individual

Define first, build later

Before work begins on creating your digital platform and content, it is crucial to have cross functional representation and collaboration in scoping your target digital personas, Key Educational Messages, content requirements, customer journey, discovery experience and KPIs in that order. Yes, all of these things! You will need a large white board, open minds and plenty of refreshments. This phase will take days or weeks, not hours!



KEY INSIGHT

Drivers for pharma websites:

89% Increase engagement with key messages 61% Improve disease awareness

84% Build reach 56% Gain audience insights

82% Build trust **47%** Brand awareness

1. Digital personas

When it comes to online engagement, it is important to understand that individual intent, ability and preference differ by channel, device, content type and format. By defining your personas and taking time to scope the variables for each, you can tailor the hierarchy and format of your digital offering.

Ask yourselves:

- Who are they? e.g. Specialist, GP
- What are their educational gaps? e.g. Diagnosis, treatment options
- Why are they looking?
 e.g. Specific patient need or brushing up on knowledge
- Where are they?
 e.g. At work, at home
- How much time do they have? e.g. one minute, ten minutes
- How do they prefer to consume content?
 e.g. Read or watch or listen
- How will they apply new knowledge? e.g.
 Independently or with support

2. Key Educational Messages (KEMs)

Agree the most important learnings aligned to your objectives and the identified educational gaps of your personas. Scope what the message should look like based on the various features of the personas that you have already defined. Note that these should be actionable messages.

Content requirements

Consider what content exists, what needs updating or repurposing and what new content needs to be created in order to house and deliver your KEMs most effectively for each persona, keeping in mind the ease of digital discovery and consumption. See next section for practical advice on content creation.

Journey and site map

How will you position and sequence your KEMs and content with user centric web design that supports ease and personalisation of journey for each persona? Sketch out a bespoke site structure to ensure logical entry points and onward journeys based on personas, content and desired outcomes for KEM consumption.

Discovery experience

Consider what activities and signposting will help your personas find and navigate your digital platform and the content it contains. What keywords, channels and devices will they use and for what reason? Define the activities, functionality and features that will support the journeys that you have designed.

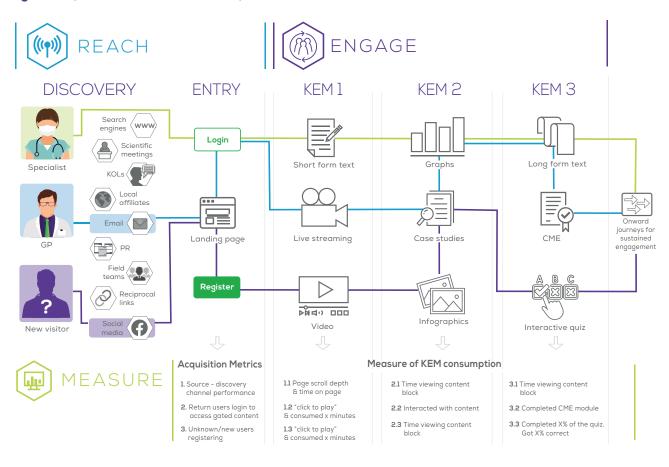
6 KPIs

In order to select the right metrics for measuring the success of your digital activity, you will need to define KPIs aligned to your defined personas, KEMs, content, journeys and discovery experience. Each of these elements will provide important insight to help you understand and improve your HCP engagement.

Briefing document

You will need to create and populate a briefing document for the output of your session, documenting your requirements, rationale and options. This should be appropriate to share with all parties involved in your digital activity, from web developers to marketeers to medical writers, both internal and external. It will provide them with important context and power to exercise informed judgement and deliver excellence in customer experience.

Planning personalised content discovery, journeys and KPIs aligned to your KEMs and customer personas



GENERATE VALUABLE CONTENT THAT'S OPTIMISED FOR DIGITAL CONSUMPTION

Why is it so difficult?

To fulfil the demand of HCPs for medical content *(websites are HCPs' preferred source)*, pharma needs to start prioritising delivery of digital channels *(websites are pharma's fourth choice)*. To do this effectively requires a significant shift in the way that content is created. This shift comes with a number of significant challenges for pharma – providing 'value' through online content is the number one objective but also the number one challenge (for 100%!) for pharma.

While pharma participants in a 2019 study demonstrated good awareness of HCP demands for content (correctly identifying the preferred types and formats), actually **generating and delivering content effectively in the online space, through customer centric content journeys, is the challenge that requires most focus.**

What content is most lacking online?

HCPs say:

"Quick access to papers relevant for me"

"Up-to-date, easy, speedy" "Information is buried in a great amount of text"

"Good graphics"

Increasing engagement with your valuable content may be a very important driver for your website, however, **simply putting it online is a mistake.** It takes website visitors just a few seconds to determine the usefulness of your content. If it's not relevant, intuitive and easy to consume online, they will abandon it. **So carefully plan content for digital consumption specifically.**

To overcome many of the challenges associated with the provision of content online, you need to **first implement the process outlined in the previous section (page 6 to 7); defining digital personas, Key Educational Messages, customer journeys, discovery experience and KPIs.** Only after completing this important exercise should you set about creating the digital content that maps to them. This cannot be overstated.

89%

Pharma say increasing engagement with key content is a very important driver for websites

KEY INSIGH



- 89% search weekly
- 2. Prescribing information **59%** search weekly
- Scientific meeting output 54% search weekly

Pharma's website challenges

100% providing value

96% gaining trust

- 84% content generation
- 76% digital expertise

What is real value?

The best way to ensure your website is of high value for HCPs, and for you, is to make your content discoverable and easy to consume online. With HCPs often sparing only a matter of minutes to grab what they need, there is a very small window in which to capture their interest and get across the key messages that they need.

You may have the most important and valuable new research to share but if you don't get someone to read it, because they can't find it or don't have the time to, then it's failed.

Is it possible to share complex science in such time? If you tailor each step to the HCPs needs, with a personalised digital journey that optimises ease of access and content experience, you can.

Three quarters want bite

Content needs to be:

Current



Relevant

sized & interactive content

20% of content will be **sufficient** for 80% of users, nost of the time.

Make content discoverable and easy to consume

Structure it to cater for time-poor HCPs:

- Explain the benefits. The landing page message should be tightly linked to the unique value and message it has to offer, very focused, nothing superfluous. Let them quickly know why they need to stay on the site rather than go to a competitor's.
- Signpost and guide. Let them see where they have come from and where they are going to. Include precise headlines, navigation aids and few distractions. For example "read this next" or "read more".
- 'Chunk' it. Convert complex scientific concepts into memorable, engaging and digestible bite-sized chunks. Modularise important content using short excerpts in multiple prominent places. Always consider whether the length of the content is proportionate to its value and purpose.

- **Provide choice.** Give the option to read the long-form/ full detail pieces and the possibility to easily download, print or save to read offline later.
- **Optimise for mobile.** Make it quick to search and easy to consume via any device - most doctors search via mobile devices most of the time.
- Focus on discovery. Use SEO best practices, keyword research and internal linking of related content to make sure that content is found and read. Include a useful Search facility.
- Be transparent. 75% of HCPs report 'trusted provider' as having a big influence over their website use. Trust is gained through fair balance and transparency.
- Support independent. Explore credible and trusted alternatives to creating your own content and websites. Independent websites are the preferred source for HCPs with 72% visiting weekly versus 23% for pharma sites.

- **Tell the story.** Use a journalistic style science 'fusion' approach with simple, consistent, effective lexicon and tone to convey key messages that are accurate, concise and clickworthy.
- Create habitual experience. Provide reasons for them to return, such as promoting upcoming, unique content.
- Reduce, reuse, recycle. Don't lift and shift but do adapt and repurpose content for the online journey, each persona, channel and device.
- **Use video.** They are more human, engaging and easily digestible. They can serve as good introductions to grab attention, be used to summarise key learnings and build trust when presented by opinion leaders.
- Update it. 98% of HCPs consider update frequency to be important. Refresh the content regularly, apply insights and course correct.

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INTEGRATE MULTICHANNEL NURTURE PROGRAMMES FOR INCREASED ENGAGEMENT

Long gone is the belief that 'if you build it they will come'. Time, attention and effort is needed to attract the right audience in volume. A multichannel communications plan to promote your HCP educational programme will massively **improve the reach**, **engagement and return on investment**. This may include getting the word out via email, social media, affiliates and reps, scientific meetings and opinion leaders.

However, **92% of pharma survey participants considered multichannel integration to be a challenge**, making it the pharmaceutical industry's third biggest in relation to HCP websites (after providing value and gaining trust). Only 21% had achieved multichannel integration for their websites, with 73% focused on achieving this.

Optimise your customer touchpoints

In the most simplistic terms, multichannel engagement is all about choice. It enables you to cast the net wide and reach the right HCPs, utilising touch points on their terms and providing access to information using their preferred channel.

With approximately 70% being digital native in 2020, it's hardly surprising that HCPs are choosing to access educational content from a variety of online channels. **56% of HCPs follow email links** and **34% of HCPs follow links from social media** through to medical websites each week.

But it's not only digital channels that need our attention when growing an audience for your websites. **HCPs cite scientific meetings as their most important source of information about content available online,** with 64% rating them very important for this purpose. And, while only 16% of HCPs rate pharma representatives as a very important channel of information in clinical practice, **73% are more likely to visit a website after a rep shows them what is available.** All pharma companies have these channels, but not all are using them optimally for the purpose of growing an online audience, instead relying on **banner advert; a tactic which HCPs neither value nor trust.**

Multichannel integration allows you to **create more personalised journeys**; helping HCPs to find your website via their preferred channels and to choose when to visit based on the relevancy of content and messages for them. A multi-touch attribution strategy also allows you to **build data sets that support your wider engagement strategy.** Without this integration, important decisions about product, sales and marketing will be made based on partial data sets

Only **17%** click through from banners

"We need to address the mindset of marketing colleagues and especially their awareness of, and preparedness for, the work needed to do all this multichannel integration. We need to start with sufficient 360 degree planning."

Pharma survey respondent

"There are pockets of people who understand the need to truly integrate websites [for a] cohesive, coherent experience. But the often-times siloed teams within pharma (marketing, sales, analytics, legal/regulatory) prevent this from happening."

Agency survey respondent



92% of respondents reported

multichannel

integration to be a challenge



small changes can have a

big impact.



The power of multichannel integration

- **1. Build reach.** Promote the benefits of your website and incentivise HCPs to visit valuable content.
- **2. Personalisation.** Use the right place, time and message to take HCPs on a relevant journey.
- **3. Consistent messaging.** Increasing exposure to key messages across multiple touch points.
- **4. Measurable insights.** Steer strategy by tracking HCP journeys and what has motivated them.

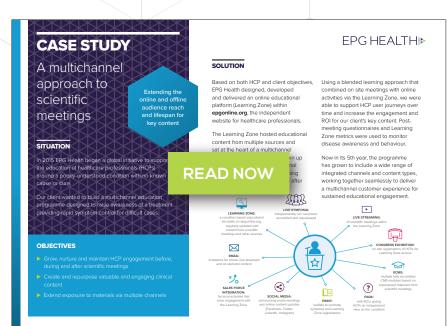
Learn how one pharma company (working with EPG Health) achieved a multichannel approach to extend the life of their scientific meeting output

Find out more about our Multichannel expertise:

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USE MEANINGFUL METRICS TO UNDERSTAND, BUILD AND SUSTAIN ENGAGEMENT

Are you drowning in a sea of data that you struggle to adequately understand or use? You're not alone! While pharma may understand the importance of data for steering digital strategy and individual online activities, ability to demonstrate value, efficacy of content, depth of engagement and quality of view is a real challenge.

So, while a primary advantage of digital activity is the opportunity to collect data, the ability to select, analyse and act on it is not straight forward. The most common mistake is not establishing the right KPIs and metrics for measurement at the planning stage of the digital resource or campaign.

This needs to be overcome, because poor data can be the downfall of a digital programme. Marketers face increasing pressure to prove the ROI, and a team that struggles to analyse their data may not be given authority to act on trends and insights or make further investment decisions to improve outcomes.

What are the measures of success?

The answer is 'it depends'. There is no one size fits all when it comes to success. What "good" looks will vary for each individual website or project. It will also change through the lifetime of the activity, which should be regularly evaluated and optimised to grow and sustain engagement.

Pageviews, sessions and users are metrics commonly used to evaluate website traffic, but without proper context can be meaningless and provide a false sense of effectiveness. Establishing context is a detailed task but allows you to set bespoke KPIs, event tracking and metrics for meaningful insights and an accurate measure of success.

The art of setting KPIs

KPIs and metrics should be defined by, and aligned to, your objectives, target digital personas, Key Educational Messages, content requirements, customer journey and discovery experience. You will therefore need to apply your own rationale based on each of these variables, along with your past experiences and existing data. Only by applying this context can you be sure to collect relevant quality data.

Specific examples might include:

- The number/percentage of target HCPs that watched the KOL video for long enough to consume one key message, two etc.
- A scroll depth and time in a long form article, indicating key message consumption and a good depth of engagement and understanding

In each case, **knowing where the key messages are in the content and being able to put in place event tracking at these points in the journey is very important.** Knowing that one hundred target HCPs consumed the key message is a better measure of success than knowing five hundred people engaged without any indication of whether they were the right people or that they consumed the key message.



Your KPIs should help you to understand:

- Effectiveness of your journey sign-posting
- Number/proportion of key messages consumed
- Depth and quality of key message consumption
- Efficacy of the content (did it get to the right audience with the desired effect)
- Re-engagement rates and journey progression
- Common points of drop off through the desired journey
- Which outbound activity (messages and channels) resulted in best engagement
- Whether your personas engage with the right messages

Harnessing the power of your data

If you know where the key messages are positioned in your digital content, and have the right metrics and KPIs in place, you can:

- Direct HCPs to the next most important or relevant message, taking customers on a personalised onward journey that supports deeper engagement and behaviour change.
- Measure the ROI of the content that houses your key messages, as well as the channels used to access them.
- Be confident about committing resources and making tactical decisions about your website that will improve engagement. For example, editing a video differently so that key messages are surfaced before users typically drop out. Such changes are important for optimisation, and, armed with the right evidence, you don't need to be afraid of investing in change.

"Pharma seems challenged with providing the long-term commitment required to make some projects a success. The person is just happy to get the project out the door, but impatient after three months when adjustments will inevitably be required. Once launched, it never gets revised, updated or improved on. The investment just dies."

Pharma survey respondent



Don't forget qualitative insight

Too often, pharma marketers ignore customer research because it can be messy and expensive. But qualitative data, when combined with quantitative data, can support far more meaningful insight into engagement.

Metrics usually answer the *what* **but not the** *why.* Without qualitative research, you risk creating your own narrative to try to explain the 'why', when there's no data to support it. With some simple online polls and surveys you can learn what your customers think and, critically, the words they use to describe their thoughts. While relying on opinion instead of data can be dangerous, in combination it is useful to steer the design of your website as well as the content it contains.

"Although decisions are often driven by metrics and the mantra of "ROI", pharma can kill collaborative projects in the early stages by overloading them with measurements and proof. Pharma could provide a lot more room for collecting qualitative feedback (i.e. do doctors like it) before requiring hard measures"

Agency survey respondent

THE BLUEPRINT FOR MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT

"Meaningful" engagement means something different for HCPs than it does for pharma. For pharma, it means knowing that the target audience consumes your information, values it and acts on it. For HCPs, meaningful engagement means that you provide what they need, where, when and how they want it.

To successfully achieve the pharma definition of meaningful engagement, requires fulfillment of the HCP definition also. In the most basic terms, this means it's imperative to **make it easy for a HCP to find and consume your website content.** However, it is not that easy to deliver 'easy'! Take a look at the many clinical websites available online and you'll quickly see that there is much room for improvement.

Making this happen requires meticulous planning and process.

Key takeaways:

- Know your audience and the different demands, preferences and behaviours of each persona
- Be clear on your key educational messages and focus on amplifying them in the content, with salient points front and centre
- Repurpose and create content specifically for digital consumption, that means interesting in format, easy for the HCP to scan on any device, quick to determine the relevance for them, with the option to digest highlights or detail
- Architect intuitive customer journeys that concierge HCPs through the key educational messages in a logical order while catering to personal preference or need
- Don't neglect to integrate other channels with your digital offering, for multichannel touchpoints that support reach and engagement
- Align KPIs to the key educational message so you can be sure how they are consumed as a measure of meaningful engagement
- Ensure ongoing commitment. Meaningful engagement starts with the team and often requires a significant amount of change management. Don't give up or neglect the ongoing requirements of your digital activity - build evolution into your strategy.
- Stay up to date on the technology and methods of enhancing customer engagement. Forward thinking companies are investing in enterprise technologies and digital best practices which offer cost effective HCP engagement and continue to evolve. If you don't have the capability to develop it, you will need to work with partners who do.

"It is too time consuming for our personnel to manage production of an effective online property linked to any educational or promotional campaign. We're looking to specialized partners able to provide not just tech but mainly strategic and marketing support."

Pharma survey response

About EPG Health & Medthority

When it comes to HCP digital engagement, EPG Health knows what success looks like and delivers it via an advanced digital platform **(Medthority)**, an integrated toolset and specialists in digital design, content, journeys and communications.

If you are planning future digital activity or think that your existing resources are not hitting the mark, we can help and relieve your team of the burden.

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medthority

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About the research

All research data contained in this paper comes from a study conducted by EPG Health. Published in 2019, the 'Evolving Role of HCPs' report provides insight from over 300 HCPs and pharma survey respondents on 80+ questions. These help you better understand the digital behaviour and needs of healthcare professionals as well as benchmark your efforts against your peers.

DOWNLOAD THE RESEARCH





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