Come Across: The Newsletter

Issue 3

Across Health. What's New?

At Across Health, things have not been standing still. Over the summer period, we extended the number of consultants from 23 to 29, strengthening our fast-growing Dutch office (Wouter Hylarides), our consumer healthcare business (Sigrid Vander Eeckt), our CRM Centre of Excellence (Jan Keuppens), our strategy team (Lisa Nahf) and our change management/PR 2.0 footprint (Catherine Weyne, Uzma Lodhi). We also started a new practice in the field of connected healthcare – see below and recently launched our new website. Go have a look at www.a-cross.com and let us know your thoughts!

After a strong start of our commercial country operations in the US and Netherlands, we are actively looking at establishing new operating units in other key countries over the coming 12 months. These will allow us to fully deliver A-Z international project management, from inception at the EMEA/WW level through to local implementation support.

In this newsletter, you will find as usual a combination of key trends, and insights into some of our recent projects.

Best regards,

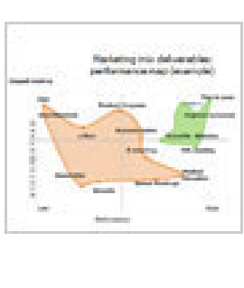
Fonny Schenck
Managing Director
Across Health

Connected healthcare - One of the key drivers for change in the patient area is the Internet, which not only opens up a never-seen depth and breadth of high-quality medical information for consumers ("consumerism"), but at the same time enables patients to reach other patients ... Read more >>

Buzz monitoring and Healthcare - As more and more people are flocking to social media like Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, blogs etc to share opinions and experiences around many things - including health and medicine - the 'power of the crowds' is increasing... Read more >>

Closed-loop marketing through structured data capture of customer attitudes and objections - a key element to become more customer centric - More than ever, pharmaceutical companies are launching 'new' services to overcome sales force access ... Read more >>

Going Mobile - Mobile communications is becoming an increasingly attractive field, shown in the strong growth of mobile spending in other industries. The main reason for this is the rapid penetration in the last few years of full-blown, user-friendly multimedia smartphones. ... Read more >>



Across Health's Marketing Mix Assessment - In comparison to the time-tested product-centric approach using traditional (mainly print) channels and the sales force, the new communication opportunities for pharma business leaders have grown ... Read more >>

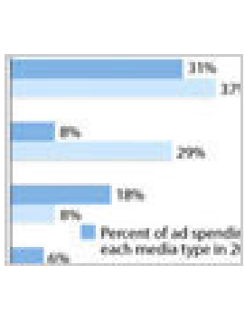
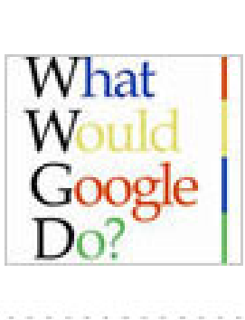


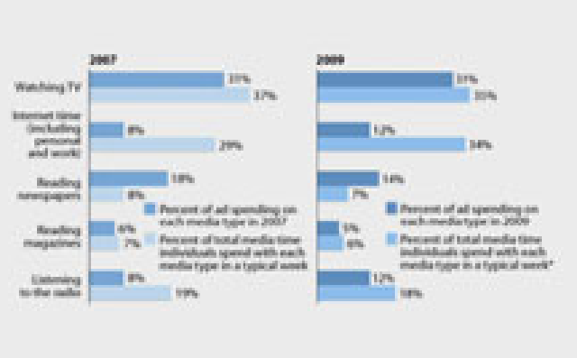
Chart of the month - Where are your customers? And where is your budget? - This chart compares where the eyeballs are (light blue bars) vs where the budget is spent (dark blue). Importantly, it does not take into account any quality/impact differences between channels ... Read more >>



What Would Google Do? (Jeff Jarvis) - A must-read that dares to ask, and actually answers, maybe the most pressing question of today concerning business and life: What Would Google Do? In WWGD? Jeff Jarvis, founding editor of Entertainment Weekly, blogging pioneer ... Read more >>

Chart of the Month

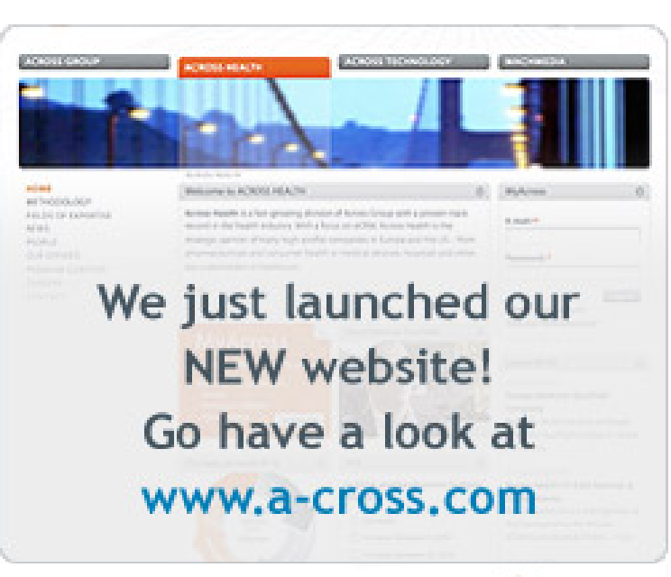
In a typical week, how many hours do you spend doing each of the following?



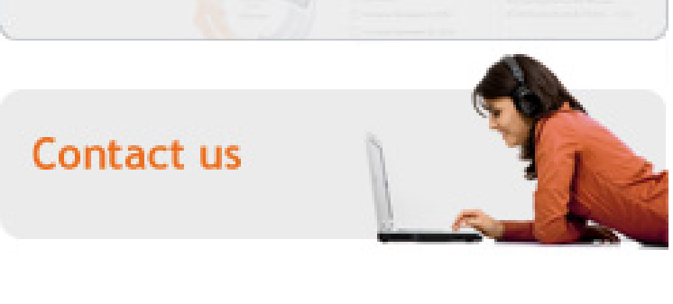
Go to chart >>

Archives

>> June 2009
>> May 2009



We just launched our NEW website!
Go have a look at
www.a-cross.com



Contact us

Connected Healthcare

One of the key drivers for change in the patient area is the Internet, which not only opens up a never-seen depth and breadth of high-quality medical information for consumers ("consumerism"), but at the same time enables patients to reach other patients and stakeholders in a simple and cost-effective way (web 2.0), not only in terms of communications, but also in true connectivity, through opening up "patient transactions" to other different healthcare stakeholders, aka "patient records".

For decades, different stakeholders have been trying to align and standardize patient records, mostly with limited or no success. Even pharma got involved quite heavily in this space about 10 years ago, with the acquisition of pharmacy benefit management systems in the US - leading to multibillion write-offs and complete divestiture a few years later.

Today, the convergence of powerful, ubiquitous and low-cost web 2.0 technologies and the empowered consumer open up unique health connectivity opportunities for payers, providers, prescribers, patients, technology players... and pharma. Indeed, several players are taking this scattered landscape to the next stage. Obama has called for a much faster digitization of health records (with a budget of over 30 billion USD). Leading software, hardware or mobile players like Google, Microsoft, Cisco and Vodafone, in addition to leading insurers have already entered the scene of personal health records in the US and are eyeing Europe. In Europe itself, the EU is pushing for and supporting innovation. At the country level, some countries are taking a leadership role, like Denmark. Other countries have spent a huge amount in this space, without much to show for it. In yet other countries, the evolution is more scattered, and these "pockets of excellence" have not been translated into countrywide, let alone Paneuropean innovation.

To illustrate the power of new web technologies, sometimes combined with genetics, in this space, a whole range of patient connectivity platforms and initiatives have come to the market, including www.patientslikeme.com (which is partnering with UCB), www.lamsight.org, www.23andme.com and, in Europe, www.decode.com.

This evolution poses several key questions to pharma: What are some of the best practices out there? (How) can new web technologies change this space completely? What are the key threats and opportunities in the space of (personal) health records -today and 3, 10 years from now? What kind of win-win partnerships should be sought? What is the legal and regulatory framework? And most of all, (when) should pharma enter this space? Is it better to be a first-mover... or a fast second?

Across Health has recently set up a connected health practice, which aims to help pharmaceutical companies address these questions.

Written by Fonny Schenck

For more information about this article, please contact Fonny Schenck

Profile Fonny Schenck

TOP

Buzz monitoring and Healthcare

As more and more people are flocking to social media like Facebook, Linkedin, Twitter, blogs etc to share opinions and experiences around many things - including health and medicine - the 'power of the crowds' is increasing. As a result, pharma marketers and communication experts should obtain insights into user-generated content or word-of-mouth. In fact it is critical to a brand's reputation management.

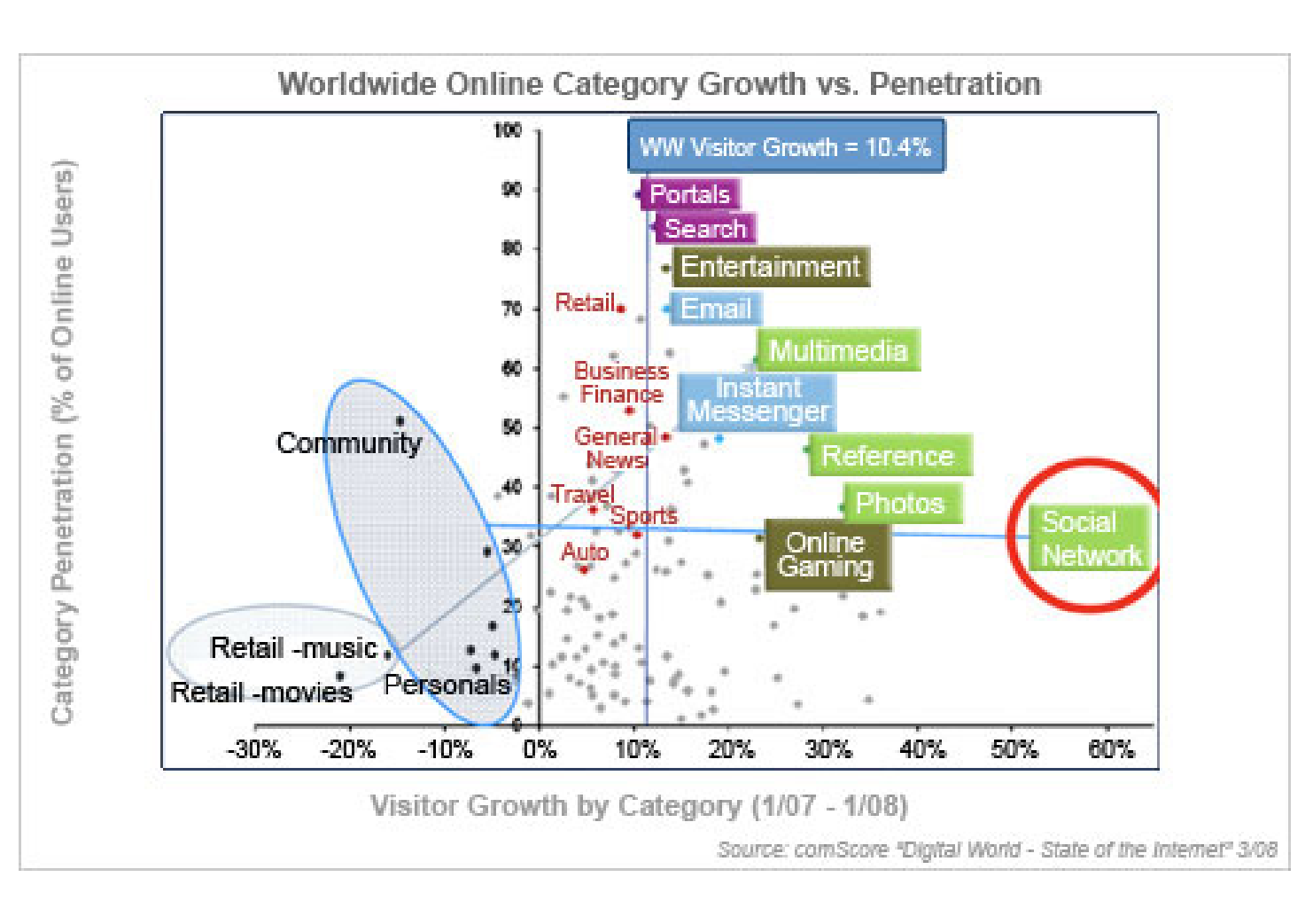
Listening and monitoring the internet is the first step to identify which topics are discussed in relation to your brand. What is the buzz on your brand in internet forums, blogs and social networks? More importantly, what is the sentiment about your brand or disease area?

As a first for the pharma industry, Across Health has created a unique partnership with Attentio, a leading European Social Media Intelligence player with a 5 year track record. Attentio also works for blue-chip multinationals like Microsoft, Samsung, Disney, Philips, Opel, etc.

As a result of our partnership, we can now easily create ongoing buzz monitoring or listening programs, while benefiting from the experience gained in other industries. At the same time, we have come up with a solution that addresses the potential issue of adverse event reporting. Our reports provide real-time insights like:

- Measurement for online Brand Reputation and Campaign measurement
- Competitive intelligence and consumer insights (identifying weaknesses and opportunities)
- Engagement opportunities (new trends or negative and positive sentiments)

As eminently described in Groundswell, Forrester's book on social media, buzz monitoring is only the first step (listening) on the social media roadmap. Indeed, many other and often more advanced opportunities exist to leverage the opportunities of social media. Across Health can help you to start listening to your customers, putting these insights into actionable outcomes and helping you identify other opportunities in the social media space.



Source: comScore "Digital World - State of the Internet" 3/08

Written by Wouter Hylarides

For more information about this article, please contact Edwin de Fouw

Profile Edwin de Fouw

TOP

Closed-loop marketing through structured data capture of customer attitudes and objections - a key element to become more customer centric

More than ever, pharmaceutical companies are launching 'new' services to overcome sales force access and cost issues: internet-based programs, medical education events, account management programs, customer satisfaction surveys etc.. Although these new initiatives are needed, most of these educational and marketing initiatives are suboptimal, as they often are not integrated into the overall mix and into sales force activity at the customer level, and continue to be "one message fits all".

However, each physician can be at a different level of the adoption curve due to different attitudinal drivers, and, as a consequence, his needs for information and service will be different. Moving physicians quickly up the buying ladder through adequate objection handling is a must…but in most organizations, the objection handling process is completely owned by the sales force and is not being shared with other customer-facing groups in a systematic and actionable way, effectively preventing a coordinated cross-channel approach.

More than ever before, in the beleaguered pharmaceutical industry, the dynamic between sales and marketing should be such that marketers receive customer feedback from the sales people and on the flip side, sales reps obtain valuable differentiated materials and/or messages from marketing to help them handle these objections.

Objections provide a key source of customer information. Your best representatives have been leveraging this information intuitively forever. However, if tailored medical and marketing initiatives could be aligned with your customer objections, you will increase your customer impact and effectiveness substantially.

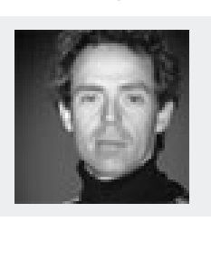
One of the key tactics is the concept of structured customer intelligence. Here are some steps to take into account:

- Define the product-related objections that physicians might have to prescribing your drug.
- Collect these through the sales force in a predefined structured way using the CRM system.
- Analyze and communicate to all stakeholders on a regular basis key trends, and develop actions and tailored marketing materials that will address the most important objections.
- Assess the impact of the tailored marketing materials using the appropriate KPIs defined at the beginning of the program.
- Share best practices to further optimize this dimension of closed-loop marketing.

Although today's technology allows you to do all of this, implementation appears to be very challenging. The initial resistance at the sales force level is understandable, as they may see it as yet another useless and time-wasting data-entry black hole devised by marketing. Therefore, such a project can only work if all stakeholders realize what's in it for them and marketing commits to providing relevant feedback and tailored materials to sales.

Physicians will increasingly want companies to respond to their specific issues and "remember who they are". Leaving customer intelligence purely in the hands of sales people is suboptimal. All customer- facing stakeholders should understand and act on the objections physicians have and on what "makes them tick." By starting to experiment with structured customer intelligence, companies can begin making the move from "1-to-many" communications to "1-to-segment" or even "1-to-1" approaches, also in the marketing and medical environment.

Written by Bernard Depaepe



For more information about this article, please contact Bernard Depaepe

Profile Bernard Depaepe

TOP

Going Mobile

Mobile communications is becoming an increasingly attractive field, shown in the strong growth of mobile spending in other industries. The main reason for this is the rapid penetration in the last few years of full-blown, user-friendly multimedia smartphones.

However, our 2009 emarketing survey demonstrated that in Pharma, mobile marketing is the least-used tool in the new-channel armamentarium in Europe (only 10% adoption). Nevertheless, the potential in pharma is huge. Today, already more than half of the US physicians think their mobile device has become essential for their professional practice. And that's not only because it makes them reachable 24/7. As their mobile device is always at their fingertips, most healthcare professionals prefer using their smartphone over their computer or paper to look up drug or treatment information on the fly, often during patient interactions. In addition, multimedia content like online CME and video is gaining traction rapidly. But even for healthcare professionals who do not have a multimedia device, there are plenty of applications around. Just to name one: have you ever thought of sending doctors a reminder via SMS 1 hour before the start of an online broadcast?

Instant ECG
Thorax Muscles
Skull

However, the big challenges and opportunities for mobile communications lie in the camp of patients and caregivers. It was only recently that LifeScan announced an application on the iPhone that could connect with a blood glucose meter. This allows diabetes patients to keep track of their blood sugar levels, manage them better and even send the results directly to their doctor. Over the last few months, more and more widgets and applications are being developed for mobile, with self-assessment and compliance tools, and short, interactive educational programs leading the way.

While our 2009 emarketing survey shows only a small increase in mobile spending for 2010, Across Health believes the time has come to take this medium seriously and start developing a mobile strategy and selected pilots. Just imagine what mobile could do for your products!

Written by Christophe Brock

For more information about this article, please contact Beverly Smet

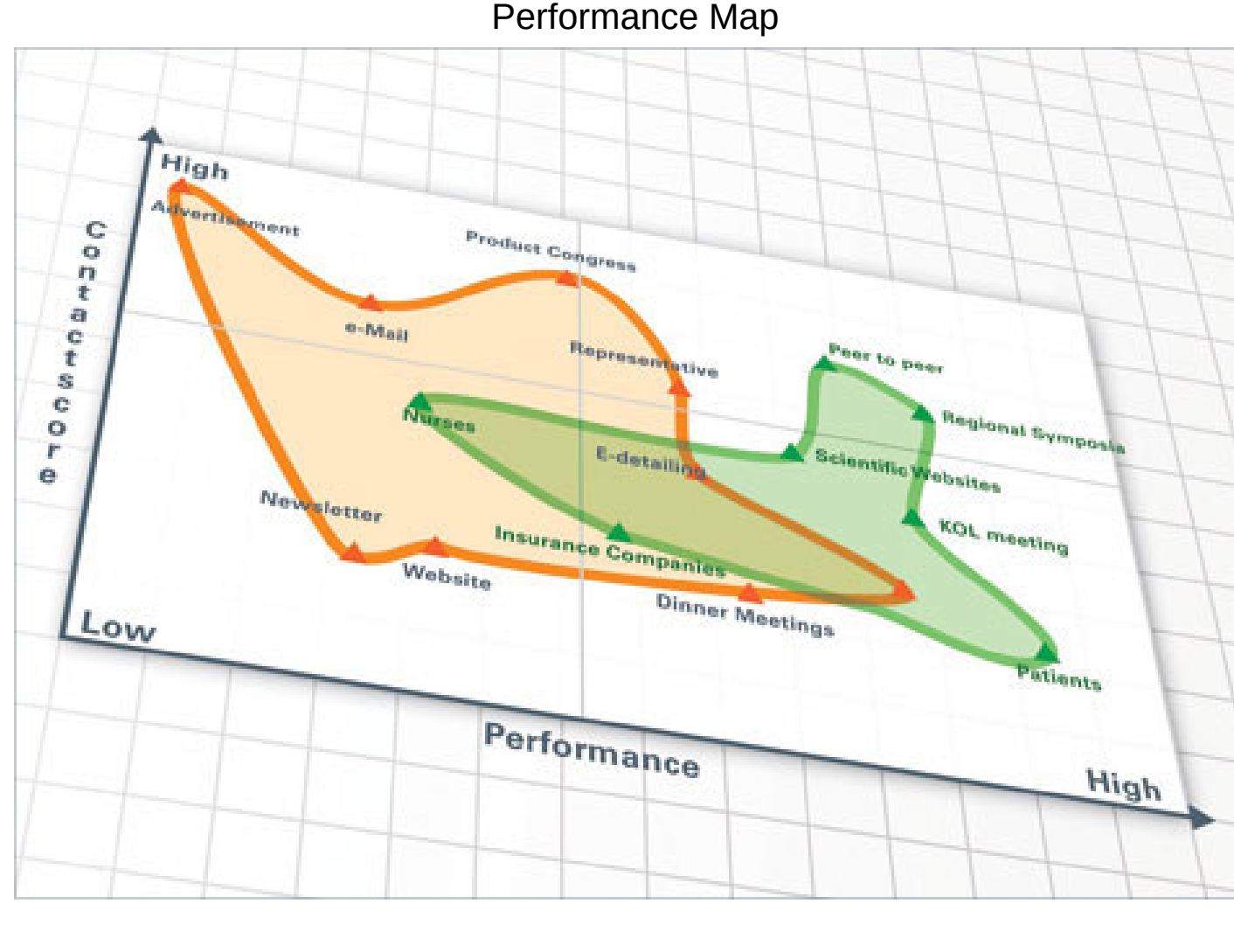
Profile Beverly Smet

TOP

Across Health's Marketing Mix Assessment

In comparison to the time-tested product-centric approach using traditional (mainly print) channels and the sales force, the new communication opportunities for pharma business leaders have grown substantially…often creating uncertainty and/or resistance to change.

Performance Map



New and empowered stakeholders, peer-to-peer influence, medical education, differentiated messaging, new channels, channel preference,… Everybody has heard about these new opportunities. But (how) do you optimize your customer-facing programmes? It is certainly far less straightforward than 10 years ago. Indeed, the old channels have proven their value, and although their importance is diminishing, are new channels a safe bet?

Increased customer centricity is the starting point of this journey. Data gathered through Across Health's unique online Marketing Mix Assessment have clearly shown that investment levels, channel focus and effects are not always aligned with customer expectations or perceptions. This holds for all channels: offline as well as online, pharma-owned channels as well as independent channels, promotional and educational ones.

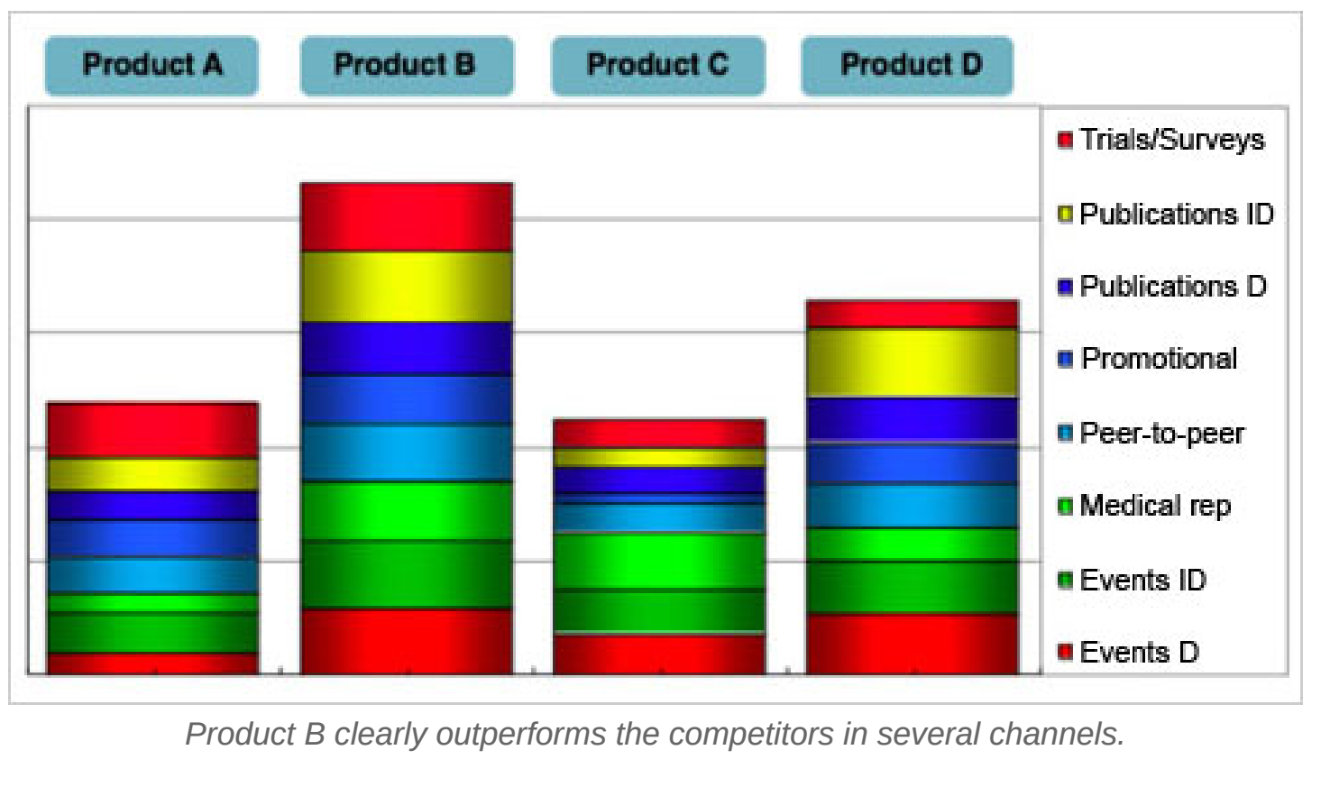
Measuring how customers perceive and experience the different communication channels is an important step in becoming more customer-centric. At the same time, it allows pharma decision makers to focus the budget on projects and channels that truly resonate with the audience. Furthermore, important new opportunities will be identified and strengths and weaknesses of the competition are highlighted by means of intuitive and actionable maps.

The marketing mix assessment offers a way out of the traditional: "no one ever got fired for investing in sales force, some advertising, dinner meetings and a congress" thinking. Indeed, the Marketing Mix Assessment gives rise to a fundamental rethink of the size and allocation of marketing, sales and medical budgets. In addition, the assessment can also be used to monitor the implementation and performance of the revised marketing mix over time.

In summary, customer centricity can only be increased if we measure what clients value and perceive and adapt our mix accordingly: a traditional F2F-heavy, push-only approach is clearly a thing of the past!

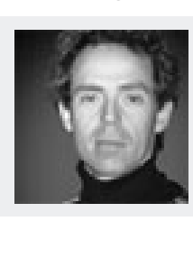
NOTE: Of course, the marketing mix assessment is only a step (albeit an important one) on the journey towards customer centricity. How do we organize for customer focus? How do we create more glue between sales, marketing and medical? What kind of processes do we need to introduce/change? How do we go about new customer groups? What is the role of eHealth and CRM technology in this space? How do we assess whether we are on the right track? All of these questions and more will need to be covered throughout the customer-centric journey…

Visibility analysis: how does your product perform?
The performance per channel quantified.



Product B clearly outperforms the competitors in several channels.

Written by Edwin de Fouw



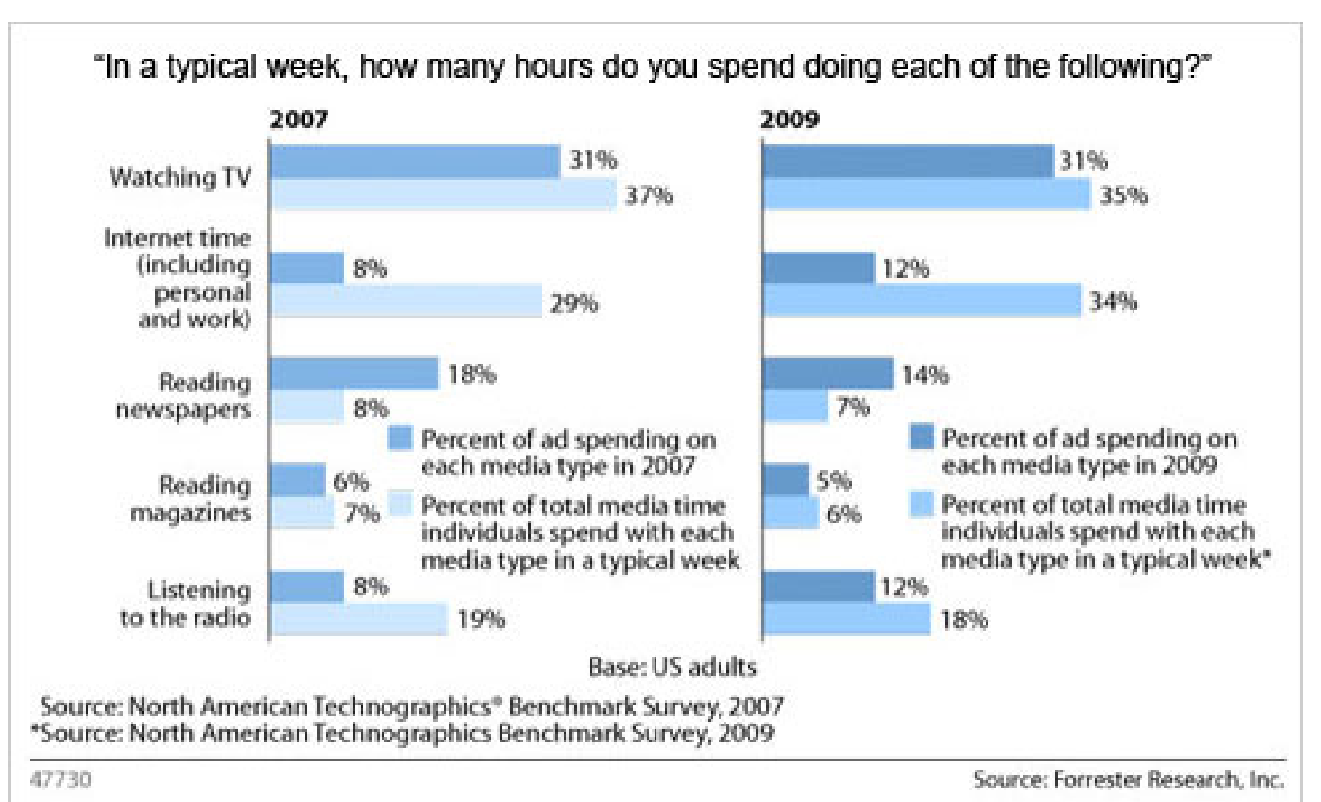
For more information about this article, please contact Bernard Depaepe

Profile Bernard Depaepe

TOP

Chart of the month - Where are your customers? And where is your budget?

This chart compares where the eyeballs are (light blue bars) vs where the budget is spent (dark blue). Importantly, it does not take into account any quality/impact differences between channels, but just looks at the quantitative side.



Source: North American Technographics® Benchmark Survey, 2007
*Source: North American Technographics Benchmark Survey, 2009
Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

The key message is that the budgets spent on some channels are aligned with their relative importance (TV, magazines), while other channels still get a disproportionately high budget (newspapers), and other ones get a smaller piece of the cake (radio, but also and more importantly, the Internet). You can also see that over time, budgets are creeping towards the optimum (newspapers are down vs 2007 and radio and Internet are up)… although it takes a long time for companies to adjust their marketing mix in a significant way. Indeed, after so many years, the opportunity for internet innovators continues to be huge…

Applying this chart to pharma will yield great food for thought…watch this space!

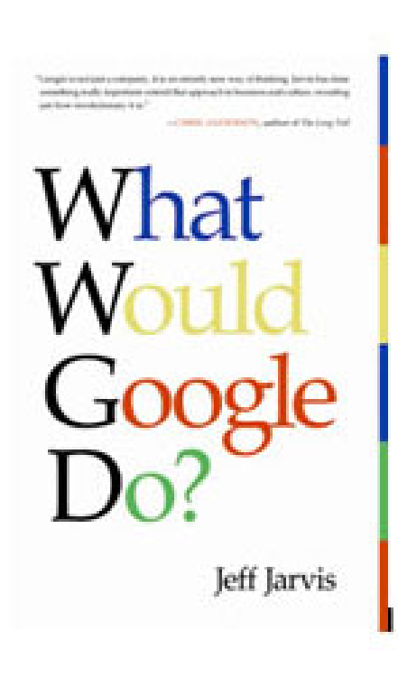
Written by Fonny Schenck

For more information about this article, please contact Fonny Schenck

Profile Fonny Schenck

TOP

What Would Google Do? (Jeff Jarvis)



A must-read that dares to ask, and actually answers, maybe the most pressing question of today concerning business and life: What Would Google Do?

In WWGD? Jeff Jarvis, founding editor of Entertainment Weekly, blogging pioneer and full-time (online) media guru lists forty clear and straightforward rules to manage your company and/or simply live your life by, based on the factors which have made Google the fastest-growing company in history; a clear-cut example being: "Do what you do best, link to the rest!" A credo which is applicable for niche bloggers, mainstream media sites, and anyone in any business. "Do what you do best, outsource the rest!"

By challenging his readers with visionary, imaginative, and above all practical examples, he sheds new light on how everyone and everything – from corporations to governments, nations to individuals – must evolve on the Internet (: Google) era. The result is a well-written, entertaining, mind-opening book that, in the end, is not about Google. It's about the fascinating times we live in, and how all of us should adapt to a new mindset to strive for success in business, and everyday life. Someday soon they will be using WWGD? as a textbook for business scholars.

Written by Kenneth Peeters

For more information about this article, please contact Kenneth Peeters

Profile Kenneth Peeters

TOP

Send to a friend | Share your ideas | Unsubscribe