



David Paragamian
Chief Executive Officer, Health Monitor Network

PHARMA MARKETING POST PANDEMIC: **Why omnichannel is the only channel**

Just a few years ago, I had the privilege of attending a senior executive retreat with one of the big 5 global agency holding companies, where that network's Chief Creative Officer provocatively stated: "if your client still has a Chief Digital Officer in 2018, they are officially a dinosaur." The point being – marketing is not both offline and online. Integrated digital fluency had become a mandatory for marketers, not an option or an expertise limited to one person or one department.

Well, I believe it is time to put away another over-used part of the marketing buzzword bingo collection, "omnichannel." We all get it. The need for a seamless integration of ALL marketing communications and tactics that support a given brand. And, like that chief creative officer I heard a few years ago, I believe that those agencies, clients, and brand teams that are over-using the omnichannel nomenclature are likely behind. Here's why...

- Healthcare professionals (HCPs) are also consumers, and patients today are also their own ambassadors of clinical self-care. We know that HCPs take off the white coat role at home and see our brand communications just like their patients do, and we have ample evidence that more and more patients "do their homework" and come to the office prepared regarding their long-term health issues and treatment. In short, broadcast television spots reach patients – but also HCPs too. In office media that is directed at patients is also seen by HCPs– with even *greater* frequency. This linkage of audiences requires that brand communications be consistent across every touchpoint.

- Patients have a platform to praise, or take down, brands. Because we are ALL now authors and publishers in our individual social media networks, patients now have a voice and platform to either extoll a brand's best points, or – beware – the opportunity to tear it down. So, if brand promises are not kept, if for example, a patient assistance program is NOT easily accessible, or an online nurse ambassador is not available as promised, an unhappy patient will make sure that moment of not delivering on national brand promise gets flagged publicly. Therefore, consistency of execution everywhere matters. Said differently, all it takes is one bag of cold french fries in the drive thru to ruin years of brand building equity. Pharma marketers take note.
- True omnichannel also means embracing the new. There was a time when pharma brands could launch with a tried and true formula of F2F rep activity, KOL education, and national linear tv and get results. The breadth of channels has multiplied and requires brands and agencies to embrace new pathways, to test new vehicles, and to allow for some portion of marketing dollars to be spent on those things that may make them uncomfortable – eg, what hasn't been done before.

We all know there is comfort in the tried and true. But, launching pharma brands has evolved dramatically. The days of the silo'd leads by channel are gone. True omnichannel marketing is really just marketing. Now.

Attending Digital Pharma East in October?

Check out our panel WHY OMNI-CHANNEL IS OVER

[Click here](https://digitalpharmaeast.com/digitalpharmaeastcom/live-agenda) to learn more or go to: digitalpharmaeast.com/digitalpharmaeastcom/live-agenda