

Discover 4 ways to market healthcare brands in a Covid-19 world

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Covid-19 has brought unprecedented global change. Here, Cingulate Marketing and Advertising shares four ways in which healthcare brands can respond to changes in the needs and expectations of healthcare professionals, patients and consumers.



2020 is proving to be a transformative year. It will not only be remembered as the year of the Covid-19 pandemic, but also as the year which heralded a massive paradigm shift.

Healthcare marketers have already begun observing the changing needs of healthcare professionals (HCPs) and patients. These target audiences expect the companies that provide their products and services to demonstrate their commitment to the communities they serve by “doing good”.

Cingulate shares four strategies that can help healthcare marketers adapt to this shift.

Reshape your brand voice

Your target market has either been in lockdown or on the healthcare frontlines. Either way, HCPs, patients and consumers are feeling stressed and vulnerable. Your brand communication needs to adopt an empathetic and collaborative tone, demonstrating that “we’re all in this together.”

Ensure your communication is sincere, positive and consistent. Publish the same message across all your communication channels, from digital platforms (eDetailing, eLearning) to websites, to blogs and to social media pages, radio, TV and print.

Keep communicating. Don’t go “completely dark” and stop the information flow. Healthcare professionals and patients want to know what actions your brand and company are taking to make a positive contribution to society during the pandemic; measures that are taken to continuously protect your staff and how to obtain essential disease/product information. Considerable amounts of money are spent in developing, launching and establishing a brand – and that investment can only be secured by keeping your brand top of mind with your various customers.

Get in there first with practical solutions

Now is the time to conduct social media monitoring, market research and obtain “in field” intelligence to identify the needs of your HCPs and patients. This will help you provide a solution to those needs.

Use patient portals to communicate what you're doing to help patients manage their disease or illness better.

Discovery Health has identified a desire by Covid-19 patients to quarantine away from their families, to prevent the spread of the infection. In response, Discovery has teamed up with Capital Hotels and Apartments, and is offering its members the opportunity to self-isolate in a Capital apartment with access to medical facilities, at a 60% discount off the normal fee. This out-of-the box thinking gets noticed by both customers and prospects.

Up your digital and e-Commerce capabilities

Satya Nadella, CEO of Microsoft, commented in May: "We've seen two years' worth of digital transformation in two months". Prior to Covid-19, digital transformation was already beginning to make significant inroads in the healthcare industry. Covid-19 has fast tracked this development.

Use remote e-Detailing and e-Learning to educate HCPs about your brand and to facilitate their Continuous Professional Development (CPD) platform needs. Personalise digital communication so that it retains the human touch. Ensure your sales force continues to make regular personal contact with your HCPs via a short telephone call or video conferencing, to check in and ensure that they are comfortable with using any digital tools you've provided and discuss ways you can add value to their practice.

To reach HCPs and patients, post helpful and practical tips related to your product and disease on websites, blogs and social media platforms. Consider a chatbot on your website to facilitate online conversations with HCPs and patients, and service their needs whilst they are on your site.

With the accelerated growth of online shopping during the pandemic, some pharmaceutical companies are considering adding e-Commerce facilities to their websites so that consumers can buy directly from them.

Evolve your brand purpose for societal impact

People want to see companies actively making a positive contribution to a world in need.

The British American Tobacco (BAT) company has been getting some bad press over the past year. Their considerable investment in vaping products, positioned as a safer alternative to cigarettes, backfired when it was reported that some users of the products succumbed to illness. This has resulted in poor press for the new product category.

BAT now has an opportunity to turn its image around and redeem itself. It had previously acquired a Kentucky based biotech subsidiary. Via this plant, it is now working on a possible Coronavirus vaccine using tobacco plants. If testing goes well and with the right partners, it envisages manufacturing between one and three million doses of its vaccine per week. In addition, it's stated that its Covid-19 activities are "entirely-not-for-profit."

To successfully navigate the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond, stay close to your healthcare professionals and patients and be responsive to their evolving needs. Remain fluid in your marketing approach and embrace change.

Contact us today via www.cingulate.co.za as we would enjoy the prospect of meeting with you to assist you and your brand to stay relevant in a Covid-19 world.

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