

A photograph of three healthcare professionals in a laboratory or clinical setting. On the left, a woman in blue scrubs with a stethoscope around her neck looks at a tablet. In the center, a man in a white lab coat over a blue shirt and tie also looks at the tablet. On the right, a woman in a white lab coat holds the tablet and points at the screen. The background shows a modern, brightly lit lab with glass partitions and ceiling lights.

Simple not easy:

3 Fundamentals of data-driven Pharma marketing

How to keep consumers and healthcare providers
best informed with relevant engagement

acxiom.

Why is data-driven marketing still hard?

Why is data-driven marketing still hard in Pharma?

Marketers have talked about data-driven marketing for decades. But it's still a challenge for most. The key question: why?

We partnered with Savanta, whose researchers interviewed senior marketers, data influencers and decision-makers on the state of data-driven marketing across industries including Pharma, Retail, Consumer Packaged Goods, Travel, Entertainment, Sports, Auto, Financial Services, and Insurance. We asked executives at business-to-consumer (B2C) and business-to-business (B2B) companies, working online and offline (and both), about their challenges, priorities and use of data. We sliced and diced the data in many ways, and we drilled into what the research has to say about the Pharma industry. The bottom line: The world has changed, and data matters more than ever.

The results of our survey on the state of Pharma data-driven marketing came back loud and clear. Data Matters.

96%

of marketers and data influencers agreed the data they hold on their customers is important.

91%

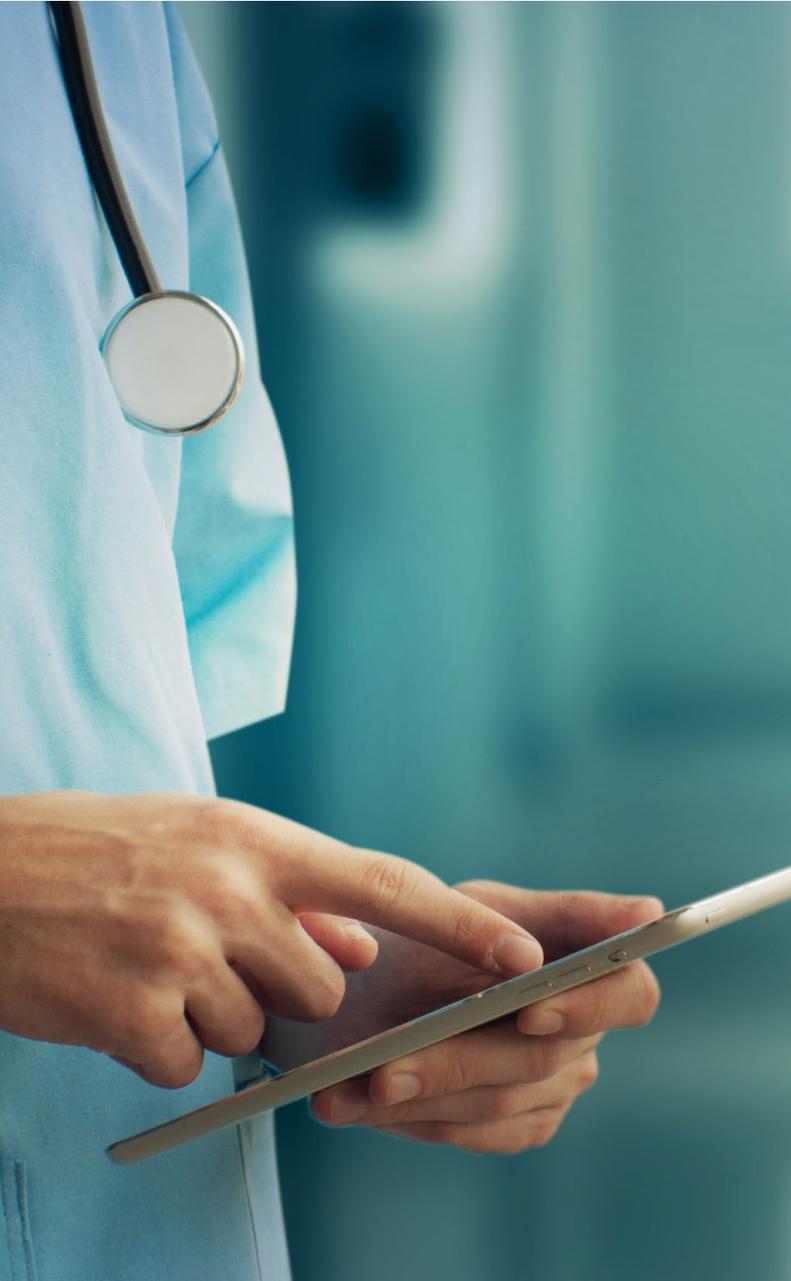
said businesses that capitalize on data are more likely to be successful.

89%

of senior managers recognize it as a key investment area.

89%

believe their business couldn't operate without data.



Data matters. That's hardly surprising when we consider the trends and research.

As the healthcare industry continues to evolve and transform, Pharma brands are navigating many challenges. Patients are now exposed to more messages as related to their health than ever. From deciding which doctors to visit, the hospitals they use, insurance plans they select, to the drugs they are taking, consumers want a personalized healthcare experience that is more meaningful to them as patient and consumer to make informed healthcare decisions.

According to our research across industries, data is considered absolutely critical to the success of businesses, with **85%** across industries and **72%** in Pharma saying data is the most important factor in delivering a positive customer experience.

We're all sold on the vision of relevant marketing – with **91%** of Pharma executives believing relevant, people-based marketing is important in generating a positive patient experience. Not just sold, in fact – actively committed to making it happen. Delivering messaging and experiences aimed at real people, not device IDs. Seamless interactions,

wherever their patients are. Predictions that truly help them understand patients' needs. All powered by data. And businesses are feeling confident about this future. In fact, when asked about their priorities two to three years from now, among the Pharma executives we surveyed:

91% saw real-time personalization as critical to marketing success

94% believed data will be central to strategic decision-making

87% agreed complex technology-driven marketing and advertising platforms will be unified

80% agreed online and offline experiences will be seamless

And yet companies still struggle to make sense of the petabytes of data pouring into their systems. Marketing silos make it difficult to get a unified view of the customer across touch points. And consumers still need confidence in matters of data privacy.

Introduction

So why are we still struggling to deliver on the promise of data-driven marketing?

It isn't because we haven't jumped on some shiny, new trend. The results suggest it's because marketers focus on the outcome (good), but not enough on the key fundamentals to deliver that outcome (less good). Data-driven marketing is about getting three core fundamentals right.

You need to be able to:

1. Get the right data.
2. Get the data right.
3. Use it in the right way.

None of these are rocket science in principle. But because they are so simple many companies still struggle to get them right.

In this eBook, we're going to look at what you actually need to tackle all three and deliver the data-driven marketing **customers and healthcare providers** expect and deserve when it comes to being informed about their healthcare and pharmaceutical options.

Let's dive in.



The first fundamental: Get the right data

It's very likely all your marketing and operational data will eventually be useful as you adopt machine learning and artificial intelligence. But is the data you're collecting actually helping you move the needle right now? And are you collecting and curating the right data for your needs in the near future?

The truth is that today data is abundant, but not all data is created equal. It's not just about quantity, but quality as well. Most businesses in the Pharma industry already recognize this, as **63%** of businesses see improving the quality of their data as a top priority, with only **34%** focused on simply getting more data.

More than
60%

of businesses see
improving the quality of
their data as a top priority.



What's the edge you're missing?

Starting with the basics, think about your goals as a business – what data will help you achieve them? Which data sets will give you a unique edge in converting your patients? Pharma companies need to leverage data and consumer insights to build strategies for driving brand conversions, persistence and compliance. They need data to build better relationships, helping patients stay healthy by taking advantage of demographic, psychographic and behavioral attributes that can help develop programs and marketing campaigns to better serve lifestyles and communities in need. And they need to enrich understanding of existing and potential patients, leveraging data and analytic insights so they can be sure they are reaching the right patients. It's good to know that the top areas where businesses across industries say they would benefit from having more data are: customer service information (36%), behavioral data (36%), social network activity (35%), and measurement and analytics data (33%). What's your need? What are your use cases?

First-party data

That's your own, proprietary data, obtained when your customers interacted with you either in person or online, on your website or a mobile app, for example. It's usually transactional or customer service-related. But are you getting the most from it?

Too often your own data is siloed in different platforms or even in different departments. For instance, are you getting the best understanding of the healthcare providers (HCPs) you are targeting? Is the data about them fragmented so you don't get a complete view?

Are you collecting data on the media you are running? Is it being aligned across channels?

Ask yourself: Are your functional teams and platforms sharing the right data? And how much more powerful could that data be if combined with other data sources like second- and third-party data?

Second-party data

This is someone else's first-party data, shared in a privacy-conscious way. In other words, insight into how your **patients/consumers or healthcare providers** are interacting with other brands.

For example, leveraging the data you have purchased from the American Medical Association aligned with additional data sources to identify physician innovators who are more likely to adopt a new brand.

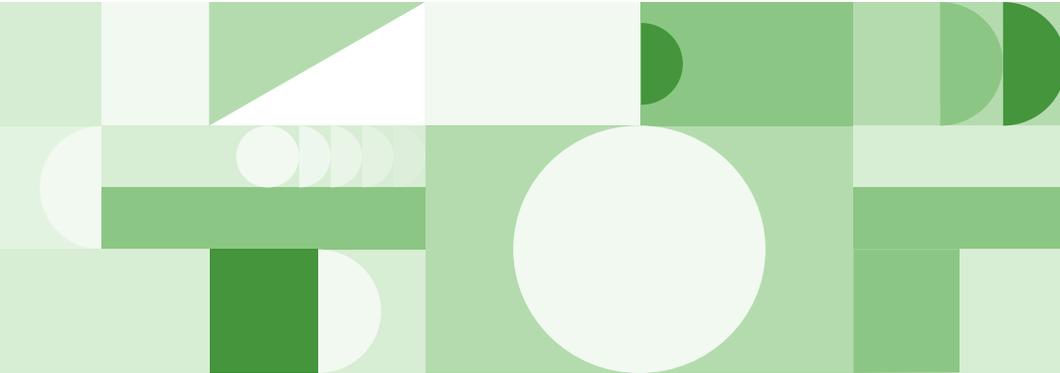
Ask yourself: Could your business benefit from another business' first-party data, or alternatively, could your data benefit someone else?

Third-party data

This is data owned by third-party providers, usually covering attitudinal, behavioral or demographic insights. Third-party data provides insights that helps you understand what motivates your patients and target HCPs based on lifestyle, demographic, and behavioral insight for personalized engagement. You can help patients stay healthy by taking advantage of demographic, psychographic and behavioral attributes that can help you develop programs and marketing campaigns to better serve lifestyles and communities in need. You can enrich your understanding of existing and potential patients by leveraging data and analytic insights.

Ask yourself: What data about your customers and prospects would be most important in better understanding them and delivering a relevant experience?

Section 2



Our study shows that across industries most businesses are still primarily relying on first-party data, but most expect their use of second- and third- party data to increase in the next 12 months. Of the Pharma company executives we surveyed, 58% said they invest in first party data, **49%** said they plan to invest more in second-party data, and 36 plan to invest more in third-party data.

Second- and third-party data could be your opportunity to validate and augment your own data to get a fuller picture of your customers, delivering more personalized and relevant experiences.

The important thing is to be able to make that data actionable.

That's the key: A list of everybody who needs your product is not going to help if you don't have a way to reach them, whether that's online or offline.

To make the most of any data, you need to be able to activate it across channels and platforms, and always, of course, in a privacy-compliant and ethical way.

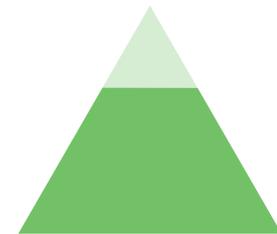
While it's tempting to handle everything in-house, if you're considering using a partner, or increasing how much of your data you're outsourcing, you're not alone,

as 91% of Pharma executives believe they need to work with partners to get the most value out of their data – and they know they need wider data, too (89%).

This becomes even more relevant as you consider the challenges of our second fundamental, so read on.

68%

of companies use their proprietary data.



The second fundamental: Get the data right

As we all have experienced first-hand, the customer journey is increasingly fragmented across devices and channels. And to keep on top of the changes in consumer behavior across channels and non-linear, multi-channel journeys, marketers are also using

more platforms, applications and tools than ever (on average, 91 cloud services alone)¹.

Every new device, every new customer touch point and every new technology is a new data source. If you're able to link them all via a unified data layer and keep track of your customer across that journey, that's incredibly powerful data that could give you a real edge over your

competitors. Otherwise, it's just one more opportunity to lose them.

It's not like there's some deep, dark secret to data unification. It's that reconciling all those channels, all those platforms, all those devices – all those identities – is really difficult.

But not impossible. And the payoff of delivering a relevant and impactful customer experience is substantial.

¹ <https://chiefmartec.com/2017/06/average-enterprise-uses-91-marketing-cloud-services>

Section 3

The “holy grail” remains the elusive single customer view. To build it, you need an identity solution – the ability to connect data at the identity level without exposing any personally identifiable information (PII) in the digital space for a complete view of your patients or target HCPs.

Only when you can bring together all the data from those disparate sources into a single, whole view, can you actually get at the heart of what your patients or target HCPs actually care about.

Most brands have been on the path toward creating a single customer view for some time, yet most are still struggling to achieve it. In part, that’s because there’s often a disconnect between what we say we want and what we’re able to accomplish. Surprisingly, while **89%** of Pharma executives agree data helps them stay close to customers in a highly fragmented buying process, only **39%** say that centralizing the data is a key priority, and **33% of Pharma senior marketers cite recognizing customers across channels as a data challenge.** This is a significant disconnect and part of the reason why returning to the fundamentals is essential.

For most companies, a successful unified data layer can only be achieved through what we call the “open garden” principle.

Most global consumer platforms are so-called “walled gardens,” or they offer many benefits for consumers and businesses alike, but the data stays on the platform. The issue is that most brands don’t want to work solely with one platform; rather, they want to work across digital and traditional channels.

If we truly want to put the patient or HCP first, then we can’t keep their data in walled silos. We need to focus on unifying the data in a privacy-compliant manner regardless of source, technology or platform. It’s a philosophy and framework that, when realized, creates a connected, collaborative ecosystem – which can then deliver, relevant and consistent experiences customers expect, and which so far have eluded most companies.

This approach is absolutely vital to delivering great customer experiences and winning in the market.

[Learn more about the benefits of a unified data layer.](#)

Biggest challenges to getting the data right:

55%

staff capacity and skills to leverage new technologies to their fullest potential.

53%

managing and executing multi-channel campaigns.

49%

gaining actionable insights from our data.

44%

making data useable.

44%

proving value and ROI associated with data and how data is used.

38%

integrating new marketing technologies into the marketing stack.

36%

maintaining and validating data.

33%

recognizing customers across channels.

The third fundamental: Use the data in the right way

Data Ethics

Across industries, **92%** of marketers agree that customers share their data in exchange for a better experience – one that doesn't involve compromising their privacy. It's up to us to prove to them that data improves their experience, thereby earning their trust.

So, when we talk about leveraging second- and third- party data it goes without saying that this only works when that data is kept safe, secure and anonymized as necessary as regulations require. The same applies to creating a unified data layer that supports customers across their customer journey or indeed any other data-driven marketing initiative.

Ethical data use protects your customers and your brand – and allows you to build

long-lasting customer relationships. Don't lose it and don't misuse it; ensure you have the right permissions and use the data to drive value to your customers first, and your brand second.

82% of Pharma professionals surveyed said they are more confident handling customer data now compared to 12 months ago. That is an excellent springboard to start leveraging second- and third-party data, if you're not doing so already. Once the right data set-up is in place, it is much easier to drive people-based marketing forward.

This is where a sound data strategy focused on providing a better patient experience is helpful. Our study found that across industries, **95%** of businesses have a data

strategy, though for most (**78%**) this has been developed only within the last three years. In fact, we'd go so far as to say that if your data strategy hasn't been created or refreshed within this calendar year, it is out of date.

A partner can help with data strategies, best practices and industry-specific guidance, while keeping an eye on upcoming trends and any changes in legislation – all concerns that were raised in our research.

Section 4

Data-driven Strategy

Making sense of all this data is an art as well as a real science. Your business needs to be able to truly understand who your customer is from attitudinal, behavioral, demographic and lifestyle perspectives. Only then can data be used effectively to shape your marketing strategy – a top priority for **59%**.

The philosophy of “using data the right way” inevitably starts with putting data at the heart of everything you do. To achieve this, it's important to combine all customer data, including first-, second- and third-party data and overlay the research and collection of data. You can then begin to

understand your customers better by identifying their needs, pain points, levels of service and product usage, etc.

This provides an opportunity for all parts of the business to establish a clear direction about how specific customers should be treated at each stage of their journey, rather than a one-size-fits-all strategy. It's the first step to building a customer experience strategy, providing a unified vision for delivering frictionless and personalized experiences across all the touch points in your customers' journey with you.

59%

consider using data to shape their marketing strategy a priority.



Section 4

Analytics

OPTIMIZE ANALYTICS AND INSIGHTS

However, with customers becoming more selective about the marketing they engage with, it has never been more important to make sure your message stands out. 44% of Pharma companies agreed that making data usable was a key data challenge. Advanced analytics provide the opportunity to leverage predictive analytics to enable more effective and efficient targeting and measurement of programs to drive new patient acquisition, and greater adherence and compliance.

Again, it's data and analytics that drive and support the delivery of impactful experiences. The ability to design data-first contact strategies lets brands develop a single snapshot of their future omnichannel strategy, covering a range of offline and online channels. These strategies allow you to react to customer behaviors to deliver timely, tailored communications and increase your ability to communicate with your

patient or customer effectively throughout their journey.

Digital activation is a critical part of any contemporary marketing strategy. Bringing all the right data in, getting it right and turning it into insights is important. Making sure it makes a difference to the customer is fundamental.

There are so many digital marketing and publishing platforms, and many offer further data points, often in real time. These can be factored in to make the difference to the people seeing the marketing, whenever and wherever they choose to interact with you.

Additionally, understanding your impact and ROI is essential to the continued optimization of your strategy. By providing closed-loop reporting, you move away from assigning revenue to the final step in the conversion. You can rely on an attribution model instead, understanding the impact each of your messages has on your

customers as their journey culminates in a transaction.

This lets you enhance their experience by focusing on the channels that had the greatest impact, further optimizing your marketing spend.

By using your data in the right way, you can focus on becoming more patient-centric, allowing you to deliver on people's expectations and when they decide to create a relationship with your brand. You can ensure your marketing brings real value and return, not only to your customer but to your business as well.



Conclusion

The promise of data-driven marketing has been obvious to all of us for years. There's no question that more personalized, relevant and seamless experiences power better healthcare outcomes.

The steps sound simple – get the right data, get the data right and use it in the right way. But until now, the execution has been harder than it should be.

We've been hampered by silos and data fragmentation, by changing privacy legislation, differing data sets and innumerable new technologies in our pursuit of delivering perfect customer experiences.

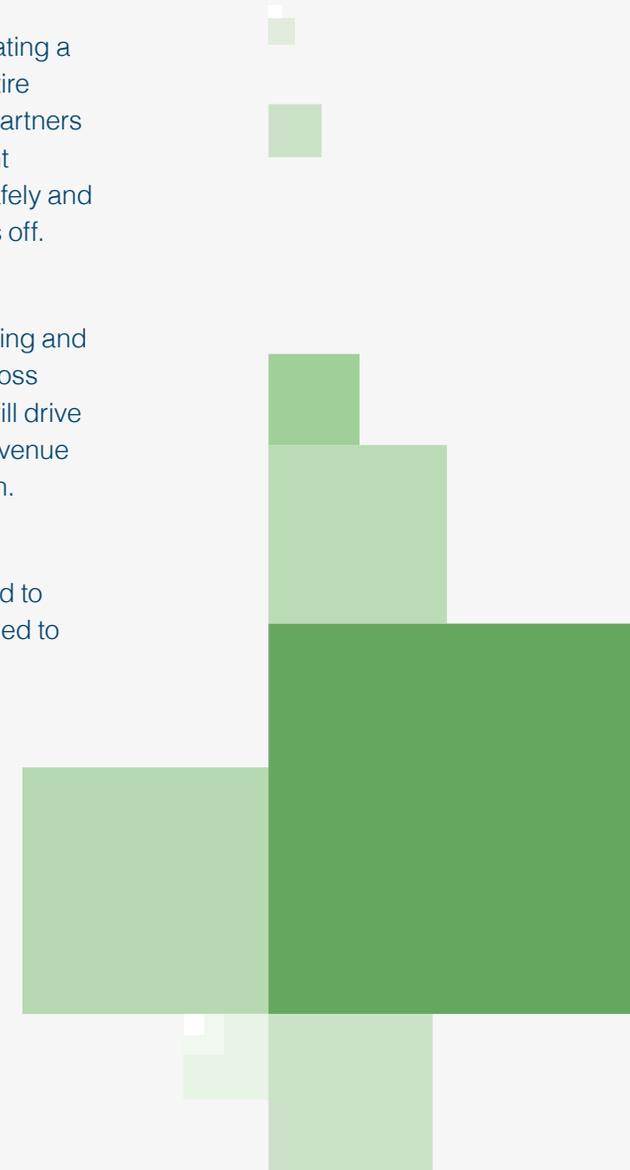
By focusing on the fundamentals and getting the basics right, we can create effective customer journeys, informed by data. You will be able to connect HCPs to their patients and prospective patients, and caregivers, and links patients across the healthcare ecosystem.

By collecting the right data, creating a unified data layer across the entire organization and working with partners to leverage and activate the right second- and third-party data safely and securely, marketers can pull this off.

You can deliver on-point personalization, accurate targeting and optimize your measurement across channels. And ultimately, you will drive patient and HCP satisfaction, revenue growth and improve your margin. Everybody wins.

But there's no big trend you need to capitalize on to do it. You just need to focus on the fundamentals.

The ideal customer experience is within our reach



About us

We're Acxiom. We commissioned our 2019 state of data-driven marketing research from Savanta to dig into what marketers and data influencers in the Pharma, Retail, Automotive, Consumer Packaged Goods, Financial Services, Travel, Insurance, and Sports, Entertainment and Gaming industries were struggling with when it came to data. This eBook addresses Pharma insights that came out of that research.

We've been helping the world's best marketers and advertisers get more out of their data and technology for 50 years. We deliver data foundations through data products, identity management, marketing solutions and services, helping clients create the seamless, relevant and meaningful customer experiences marketers dream of.

Let's talk. Email us at info@acxiom.com