

Man vs. Machine

Data mining lets marketers create increasingly sophisticated e-samples, but it's hard to replicate the personal touch. **Ben Comer** examines the details

As this article goes to press, IBM is pitting its Watson computer against *Jeopardy* champs Ken Jennings and Brad Rutter, and regardless of the outcome, it's safe to say that even the most sophisticated technology can't yet replicate the vast data exchange that takes place during a brief conversation between two living humans.

With that said, an in-person meeting between a sales rep and a physician is increasingly difficult, not to mention expensive, at a time when pharmaceutical companies are looking to keep costs down. John Vieira, senior director, marketing operations and strategic services at Daiichi Sankyo, says his company is using the web to reach physicians, but not just with self-guided robo-details.

"We have a number of different programs and initiatives that are remote-based and direct-to-physician," says Vieira, including a new deal with CRM provider Aptilon for one of its brands. Vieira said that partnership will help Daiichi Sankyo target physicians that are hard to see, or impossible to see in person.

Daiichi Sankyo doesn't have a devoted all-in-one physician portal like PfizerPro or AstraZeneca's TouchPoints for requesting samples, but Vieira says the company is "looking for ways to leverage [samples] as an incentive to view a detail." That includes a partnership with MedManage for "a couple of our brands," said Vieira, and the company is exploring

e-detailing Landscape

Pam Statile, president of DTW Marketing Research Group, says channels like Epocrates can be a good way to alert physicians about e-sampling and online detail.

51% of PCPs prefer direct access to online

54% of PCPs expect their usage of a product highlighted during a live e-product presentation to remain unchanged

57% of the PCPs involved in a live e-product presentation would recommend it to a colleague

Source: Electronic Promotions Study 2010 / DTW Marketing Research Group / sample: 200 primary care physicians in the US.

options with Epocrates and "other digital and service providers to make sampling available through their channels."

Video detailing in particular has become increasingly popular with doctors; between 2008 and 2010, adoption more than doubled, from 13% to 31% of surveyed physicians, according to Manhattan Research data. Mark Gleason, SVP, corporate development at Aptilon, says doctors don't have time to see reps during office hours. "For our live video detailing, half of the [physician] interaction is happening at night or on Saturdays," says Gleason.

AstraZeneca caught the attention of journalists and analysts last May when it became apparent that Nexium sales did not decline after the company replaced the brand's sales reps with remote detailing, an initiative that Aptilon was a part of, according to Gleason. Nexium was nearing the end of its patent cycle, though, so does e-detailing make sense at launch? "Sometimes it does," says Amy Hutnick, SVP, client services, at Blue Diesel, a professional shop and subsidiary of inVentiv Health. "One ex-

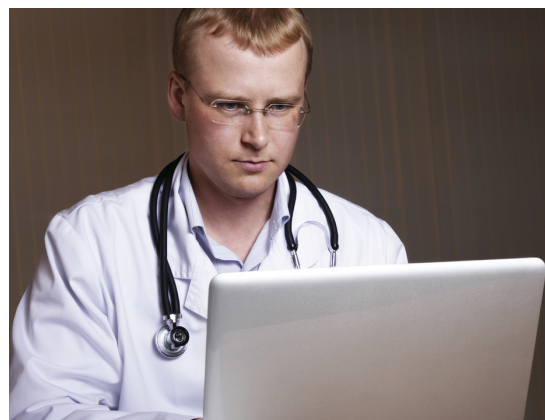


PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

Doctors don't have time for in-person meetings with reps so e-sampling and online detailing is ideal

ample might be orphan drug status, or some kind of very finite targeting, where the HCP universe is such that you might have a brand that's an inch deep and a mile wide, in terms applicability to an audience," says Hutnick.

"The challenge that we all face right now is how best to manage and create content that earns it way in with our customers," namely physicians, says Craig Douglass, SVP, group creative director at Digitas Heath. By using data to customize e-details for individual physicians, content can be curated in a way that at least aspires toward a personal presentation, Douglass says. ■