

# Pharma: Powered by service?

Healthcare professionals' customer experiences are increasingly being shaped by retailers like Amazon and Zappos. What ideas should drugmakers borrow from them to personalize promotion and what are the limits?

**R. J. Lewis**

*Founder, president and CEO,  
e-Healthcare Solutions*

Great user experiences are critical to customers. Expectations run high and a bad experience damages your brand and customer loyalty. Pharma should emulate the process of constant data-centric iteration. Leading digital companies today use data to drive site redesign and an improved customer experience. Facebook, Amazon and other leading companies are testing dozens of features at any given moment and managing hundreds of iterations of their homepages. Proven results, not hunches or aesthetics, drive innovation through constant iteration based on data. Font sizes, types, colors, images, page placements and calls to action are rigorously and continuously A/B tested to deliver superior user experiences as evidenced by conversions and transaction rates. Data speaks, and marketers need to listen.

**Roman Kudryashov**

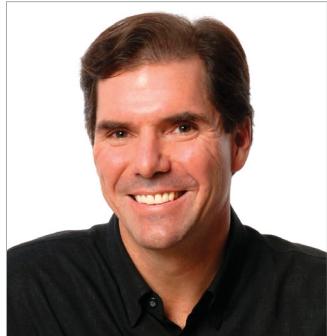
*Principal and production  
marketing manager, MediScripts*

Companies like Amazon and Zappos succeed by anticipating the entirety of a consumer's experience. Drugmakers should similarly construct meaningful interactions across the entire patient journey, from diagnosis to treatment through recovery or health maintenance, intervening when patients and family are likely to need support. This means not just better communication design but promotion through service infrastructure. Collaborative partnerships between drugmakers, systems engineers and supporting caregivers can create comprehensive patient services that address behavioral, mental, environmental and contextual roadblocks to effective healthcare. A landscape of fragmented solutions isn't just ineffective promotion. It actively hurts patients by introducing unnecessary complexity.

**Evan Young**

*Creative director,  
Discovery USA*

Great online retailers deliver unparalleled experiences because they're incessantly refining. They simplify. They perfect. And then they start over. The belief that the User Experience can always be better may be the driving force behind their resolve, but the end game is about being true to the brand. By recognizing that their online storefront is just one of many touchpoints, they strive for a consistent Brand Experience across every interaction—and the customer is at the center of it all. The message "Powered by Service" sheds tremendous light on the Zappos brand. Although I could highlight the importance of analytics, A/B testing and personalized online experiences, it's more important I to be true to your brand.

**Jeffrey Wilks**

*President, advertising  
inVentiv Health*

By living in a different ecosystem—one less burdened by privacy laws and restrictions—tech-savvy retailers provide inspiration to pharmaceutical companies looking to build engaging experiences. To improve their own customer engagement and to build such experiences, pharma should look to retailers' success in effectively leveraging data- and analytics-based insights. Another key lesson from e-commerce is its relentless focus on usability. Testing and retesting navigation, click-stream behaviors and layout and design along with rapid-fire A/B testing for messaging are all critical success factors for a mobile-enabled plane.

**Got a forum question or comment?**  
E-mail [kevin.mccaffrey@haymarketmedia.com](mailto:kevin.mccaffrey@haymarketmedia.com) or [marc.iskowitz@haymarketmedia.com](mailto:marc.iskowitz@haymarketmedia.com).



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