

Closing the deal

Physicians are renowned iPad enthusiasts, so your sales presentations have a lot to live up to. Fortunately, the latest generation of sales management platforms can take your tablet to a new level. **Joe Dysart** looks at three offerings

With the popularity of iPads and other tablets at ferocious highs, new medical marketing software is promising to transform those units into killer presentation tools.

Software packages from Veeva, Cegecim and StayInFront are enabling sales reps to customize tablet presentations for doctors on the fly, while informing marketing at the home office about what works with a presentation, and what's a dud.

The packages are able to process that data and make changes so quickly because of the touch-screen orientation of iPads and other tablets.

Pharmaceutical manufacturer Merz, for example, is leaning on Veeva's iPad marketing and analytics software, iRep, to study doctors' reactions to marketing presentations. Plus, sales reps using that software can change presentations on the fly.

Jeff Morgan, director of commercial analytics at Merz, says sales reps tip off marketing to a doctor's reaction to a graphic or slide by tapping subtly on one of three discreet dots at the corner of each page of a presentation.

Tap one dot, and marketing staff back at the home office knows the page is a hit. Tap one of two other dots, and marketing knows the doctor's reaction to the page is either neutral or negative.

"Aggregating across physicians, when use of a specific slide or set of slides leads to greater use of the product we will convey that information to the field and marketing will take that information as they work on the next set of detail aids," Morgan says.

Knowing a doctor's preferences lets sales reps customize presentations just prior to a visit—or as it unfolds. "There are dozens of pages that the rep can share with a physician," Morgan says.

Science-driven physicians are "shown more clinical results, pointed to additional approved journal articles—pre-loaded into iRep—or in-

formation about the molecule," Morgan adds, while for cost-driven doctors, reps could present "prices of our product versus the competition, managed care coverage stats, and/or information on patient savings via co-pay assistance or coupons."

And physicians who



Surface: All things to all sales reps?

With Microsoft's Surface tablet now perceived as a viable alternative to the iPad, some medical marketers wonder if Surface may become the only device sales reps need in the field.

Currently, most reps need to jostle at least two units in the field to ensure they're ready for anything. With the iPad, they can unveil beautiful presentations enhanced by Big Data analytics.

But they still need their laptop to showcase more presentation material and data nested in Excel, Powerpoint and other Microsoft software programs.

With a Surface, they're can do both—and leave the iPad behind. “From a home office perspective, much of what is shared with the sales force is still based in Excel and PowerPoint,” says Merz’s Morgan, who is interested in moving to the Surface as an all-in-one unit. “Ideally, we want the sales force to carry one device that meets 100% of their work needs.”

Make sense. But for the time being, it looks like the iPad’s firm grasp on the medical marketing industry will take a while to weaken—if ever, according to StayinFront’s Arbadji. “We can see the case for Surface,” he says. “But we are not seeing this in practice as yet. StayinFront supports both platforms, but for our clients so far, iPad continues to dominate the mobile rep space.”



want to learn more about injection technique can view animation videos on correct needle placement for each specific disease, Morgan says.

Neeraj Singhal, vice president of product innovation at Cegedim, says sales reps are also using Cegedim’s marketing software, Mobile Intelligence 9, to customize presentations. “For the same medication, dosage information, drug/drug interaction, safety information and follow-up requirements may be different depending on the demographics. So for the same pill, there may be two sets of content that are useful for the different audiences.”

The interactive nature of the software packages gives a sales rep myriad ways to keep the conversation going. With StayinFront’s TouchRX, a sales rep might ask a doctor symptoms his/her patients experience with a particular malady, and then tap the tablet to pull up a national survey of doctors who have responded to the same question. “Some of these presentations may have 15 or 20 items like that which are available to the rep,” says Ken Arbadji, vice president North American Sales at StayinFront.

Sales reps can even blend a doctor’s activity on social media into the mix. Cegedim’s Mobile Intelligence 9 includes a module called One Key Digital, which monitors physician activity on social media, and automatically reports back to marketing and sales reps about the physicians activity there.

By studying reports of a doctor’s posts on online discussion forums and blogs, a rep can make the next talk with a doctor more personal. “The conversation will be much more engaging if the rep references a blog where the doctor posted a question, and pro-

vides a response to the question,” Singhal says.

Plus, users report the marketing packages can so deftly make the most of the lush graphics and compelling video, doctors in some cases grab the tablets from sales reps, and run the presentations themselves.

“We have sales reps conveying stories where the physician literally takes the iPad from the sales rep’s hand and spends time ‘playing’ with each presentation,” says Merz’s Morgan.

“Once the physician takes the iPad, they tend to go through the presentation sequentially—swiping to ‘turn’ the page—and will stop on the pages that catch their eye,” Morgan adds. “The physician’s behavior will naturally gravitate to the data that is most interesting to him or her.”

Besides monitoring the doctors, the new marketing packages also monitor the sales reps. Marketing brass can spend months brainstorming the perfect combination of text, graphics, audio and video for a new product, but in the end, the sales rep decides—tap by tap—which video gets called up most frequently, and which graphics stay in the digital dustbin.

Fortunately, every one of those taps by every single sales rep in the field can be monitored by these software packages, and instantly spirited back to marketing for analysis and presentation refinement.

“If we see specific slides and/or presentations are not used or do not lead to increased product use, we will remove or modify them,” Morgan says.

Essentially, with the new offerings from Veeva, Cegedim and StayinFront, tablets can shake off their “pretty plaything” aura and transform into serious, Big Data marketing tools. ■