

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Accelerating Digital Transformation And Successful Digital Teams

10-MIN SUMMARY



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The pandemic has forced pharma to rely more heavily on digital technologies, but Bayer's Sebastian Guth (President, Bayer Pharmaceuticals, Americas Region) and Brian Cantwell (Vice President, Digital Strategy, Bayer US Pharmaceuticals) believe that the industry is embracing its potential to provide deeper insights and better value to customers.

Sebastian points to the 2 big approaches or learnings that have defined Bayer's path since the start of the pandemic. First, "the power of focus on purpose" that is reflected in the company's ethos of "help for all, hunger for none," which has catalyzed the company to ensure continued and robust product supply, safety of co-workers, and value for customers. Second, he emphasizes the importance of customer obsession. Even in a crisis, the healthcare professionals (HCPs) need information to help them best serve patients. Bayer looks for tangible ways to assist. He cites the example of working with obstetricians and gynecologists to reduce the need for women to visit the HCP from twice to once a year for IU contraceptive checks, providing a small, but effective change.

What components are needed for a successful digital team? Brian believes there are four

key components. First, he stresses the need for digital experts to be integrated with the brand and franchise teams—a close business partnership with the P&L holding functions. He explains, "Digital does not exist in a silo. It exists for the purpose of driving business results, engaging with customers, driving better education of HCPs, patients, payers and, ultimately, contributing to health outcomes." This is vital in order to translate overall branding customer strategies into real-world digital engagement and digital solutions to meet the needs of the business and the customer.

"We did not come here to get comfortable; we came here to get strong."

- Sebastian Guth

Second, insight-driven design must govern customer engagement and campaign plans. Data show what the right tactic is, the right time to execute it, and the right channels to use. The second aspect to this is that the experience provided must also be compelling. The real experts in this are the customers. Their feedback, and data about how they interact with pharma, must define what comprises a good experience.

Third, agile and robust operations must be in place in order to bring these ideas to life and make a difference in the real world. Technology needs to operate at the speed of business. This means having the ability to translate today's insight into the right experience through the right channel at the right time as quickly as possible.

On top of these 3 components, which will deliver value today, pharma must have an eye to the future. In order to realize value in the coming years, there must be the fourth component—a test-and-learn mindset for innovation and experimentation. Some of the teams must be focused on developments in the future. Over 10 years ago, experiences were focused on digital interaction via a desktop computer, but in 2016, mobile took over as the leading channel. Forward-looking companies were prepared for this evolution and reaped the rewards of being ahead of the game.

"Rather than fire-fighting, how do we make this speed and pace a way of working that is sustainable for all of us?"

- Brian Cantwell

Sebastian has seen a tremendous acceleration in digital transformation over the past year. Previously, he would describe pharma's pace of change as "a race of the turtles." As a leader, he believes the right mindset is crucial across all company functions. Everyone must be imbued with a willingness to learn and, as a part of this, to embrace failure as a natural part of development. Failure can inspire progress in new ways. Different parts of the value chain are upskilling and

transforming field organizations and he considers it critically important to equip the salesforce with new technology, and give them confidence to test, experiment, learn, and ultimately, grow in their profession as the industry evolves.

Regarding Medical Affairs, Sebastian thinks medical science liaison (MSL) personnel will be the tip of the spear, becoming even more important for engaging with customers on scientific questions. Therefore, they must have the right technology and tools so that they can have these conversations at any time, from anywhere, and where customers prefer. Digital transformation is defined as the ability to meet these different needs; it goes beyond the traditional sales model.

Interactions will have to flex between in-person and remote models, depending on HCPs' preferences. This requires substantially more data to enable the sales team to know what approach to take and when. Customer behaviors show what works best for them, so the power of those data must be harnessed and applied. Bayer is building a technology stack to enable seamless interactions and the approach has been applied to customers in the oncology arena, which is related to a recent launch in prostate cancer. Guth states that Bayer is the first pharma company to deploy Google Home and a voice-guided interaction opportunity and ability for physicians to retrieve medical information when and where they want.

Pharma companies were able to launch new remote detailing capabilities within weeks during the pandemic, so the industry has shown that it can operate at a greater pace. Brian says pharma needs to ask itself, "Rather than fire-fighting, how do we make this speed and pace a way of

working that is sustainable for all of us?"

Before introducing digital, Sebastian says it is important to get the culture right. Technology is a means to an end to support HCPs to be better physicians. There must be an obsession with addressing the customer's needs. Listening with intent is important in the analog and digital worlds of customer interactions. Field-based staff must listen intently and, alongside this, data, like click rates and customers' locations, can tell vital stories about how valuable assets are to them.

Brian stresses that digital needs to be a continuous focus, not merely a flavor of the month. It is an ongoing process of embracing failure, learning and improving mechanisms to keep pace with innovation and customer expectations, and push our whole industry forward as leading organizations.

In a world that is continuously changing, where customer demands are evolving, there is no place for complacency. Sebastian states, "We did not come here to get comfortable; we came here to get strong." Progress and success are demonstrated by the results achieved, and in KPIs like the net promoter score, which measures customer experience. Value is measured by whether doctors are recommending what Bayer provides and whether they are better able to serve their patients.

"That is the purpose of our industry, the value we create. Choosing our future, and creating it, is liberating and fun,"

- Sebastian Guth

So, what does it mean to be 10x? Brian says it is not just about digital marketing or digital customer engagement, but also the opportunities offered in R&D and beyond. As pharma companies, and as an industry, it is about evolving the value proposition to customers and becoming more digital businesses at the core. It is about considering what services and business models that complement molecule-based R&D processes can be developed with digital support.

Sebastian quotes, "Don't predict the future, choose it". He believes that the industry must start making the future it believes in. Failure will be a part of that, but what matters is the act of engaging in transformation, which offers tremendous opportunity to bring greater value to our customers—the right messages at the right time through the right channels, enabling them to serve their patients better. "That is the purpose of our industry, the value we create. Choosing our future, and creating it, is liberating and fun," he concludes.

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