

Connecting Digital Solutions to Orchestrate Customer Engagement in a Rapidly Changing World

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Introduction

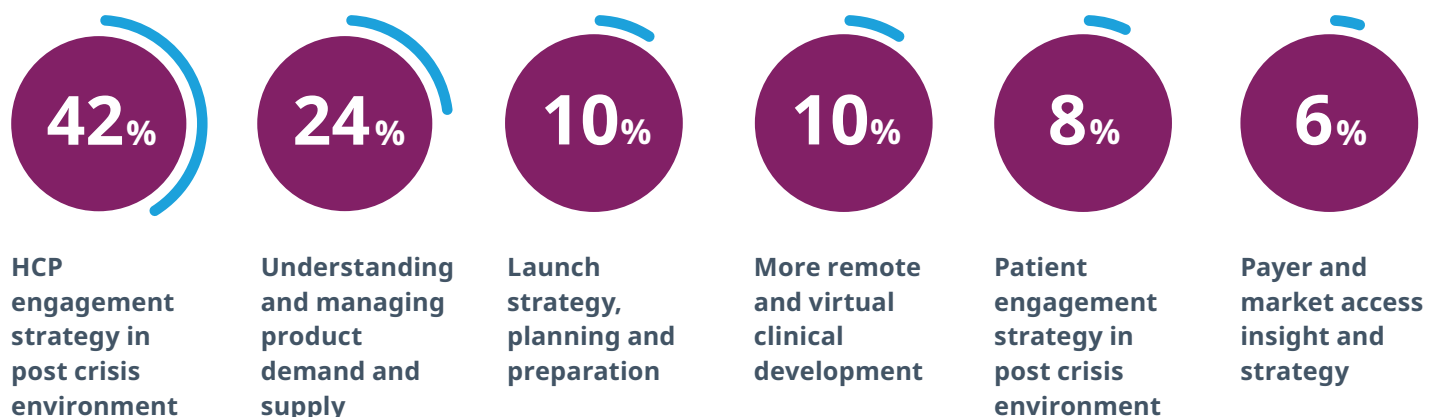
Life Sciences companies have been implementing virtual engagement solutions for years with varying levels of success. Until the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations did not need to rely so heavily on remote technology to manage customer relationships. The next big challenge for business leaders will be how to effectively integrate and scale these digital solutions so they are flexible enough to be used to support their overall customer engagement strategies, yet robust enough to be used as the primary channel when necessary.

Several weeks into the COVID-19 pandemic, most Life Sciences companies have already implemented IT solutions to ensure business continuity. Many of these solutions would have taken months or years to implement under normal circumstances. While the recent switch from traditional face-to-face interactions to virtual engagement was immediate, over the past several years, remote engagement has been a growing component of an overarching commercial strategy ([The Power of Remote Personal Interactions](#)). As new

solutions are launched across enterprises to address rapidly changing commercial needs, it may highlight the need for interconnectivity to ensure these tools work together with existing infrastructure to effectively orchestrate meaningful customer engagement.

An IQVIA poll of HQ Pharma executives in April 2020 revealed they most require external support for management of their HCP engagement strategies in the post-crisis environment.

Where does your HQ most require external support in the management of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis?
(Choose one) **1,265 responses (HQ Pharma executives, 9th April)**



CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Access to physicians has been declining over the past decade, and their time is limited, so getting an HCP to commit to a personal interaction requires a concerted effort. Commercial teams must deliver a compelling message reinforced through multiple contacts that may take weeks or even months before they get a commitment to meet. While the digital tool for virtual engagement is critical to the interaction, the journey to get a commitment for that engagement is even more important. Experienced commercial leaders understand that personal engagement is the last stop of this long, complex journey and all the contacts along the way need to be orchestrated effectively to ensure virtual interactions provide value to the HCP; otherwise, they will not be embraced. The good news is technologies that enable a sound virtual engagement strategy have already been developed and digital solutions have demonstrated their effectiveness as an integral part of successful new drug launches ([Driving Launch Success](#)).

CONNECTING TO HCP DATA

When commercializing therapies in healthcare, the journey begins with HCP data. Global businesses require an HCP database with information that spans all countries, and that are strategic to achieving business objectives. Not all HCP databases are maintained with the same level of oversight. If a database is not updated frequently, contact information may become obsolete and commercial teams may waste time targeting inaccurate contacts. By utilizing an HCP database that is updated daily and includes profile attributes for each contact, commercial teams can accurately segment and profile the target audience for their specific message. Actively managed, global HCP database solutions are available with integrity levels of greater than 98% to ensure that commercial messaging will reach its desired audience efficiently.

CONNECTING SILOS

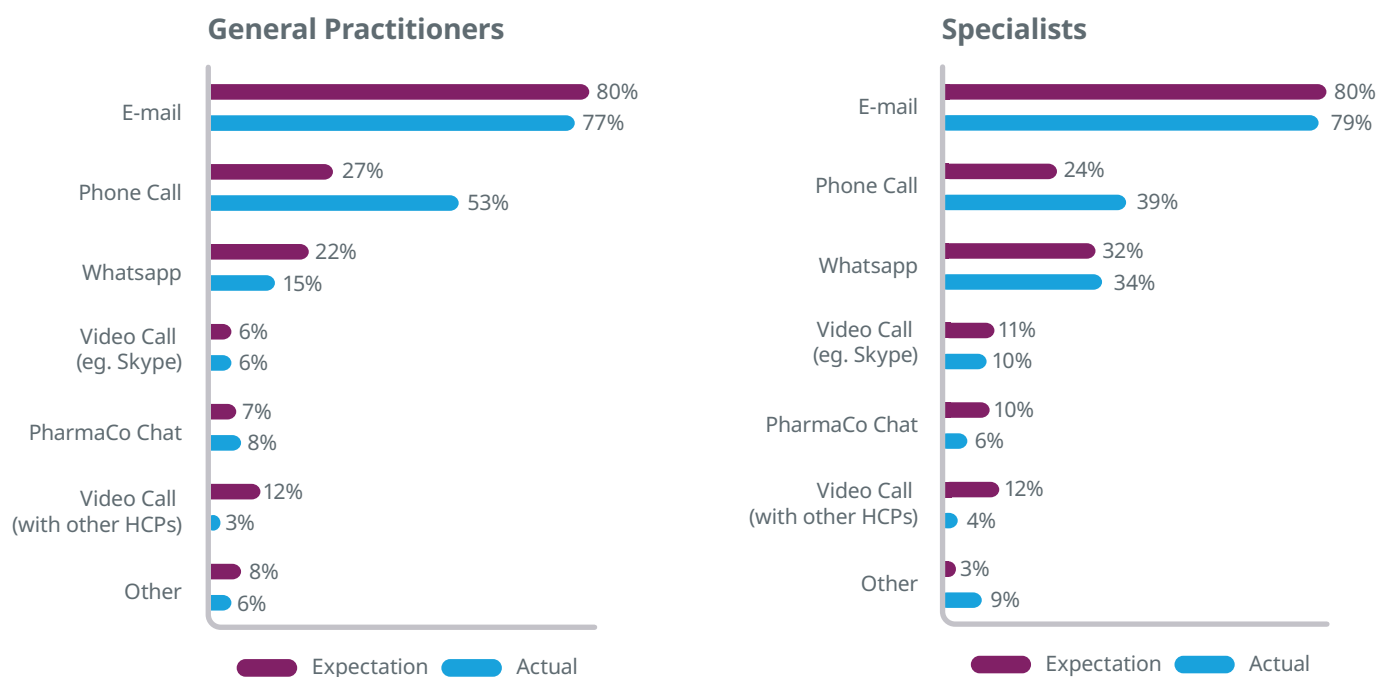
In the near term, HCPs may find themselves inundated with email and digital traffic as vendors flood these channels to connect with their customers. Life Sciences companies run the risk of alienating customers by overloading them with disconnected or irrelevant communication from multiple sources within their own organizations.

Effectively orchestrating the flow of content will become more important as Marketing teams, Sales teams, Product teams and others will be vying to win the attention of the customer.

Connected solutions can transform your commercial operations from silos functioning independently and concurrently, to a horizontally-aware and highly collaborative organization. Sales, marketing and other customer-facing teams can work in concert with precisely scheduled and deeply contextualized customer engagement activities. A powerful healthcare AI/ML engine can synthesize prescription data, contact history, preferences and interests to create a customized and actionable omni-channel communication strategy. Built-for-purpose healthcare solutions should help increase productivity of commercial teams by providing recommendations for next best virtual engagement activities tailored to the individual's preferences for content, communication channel (phone calls are still the second preferred mode after email) and contact frequency. Solutions that are used to connect with HCPs for activities like remote detailing or virtual meetings must be secure and content should be stored and managed to ensure only the most current, approved information is shared.

Physicians show high expectations for direct and non-invasive contacts with a growing interest in interactive online formats

- Which remote communication channels would be your preferred option to receive communications from pharmaceutical companies?
- Which remote communication channels have been activated by pharmaceutical companies to contact you?



Source: IQVIA PMR on 1095 physicians – March 14th-16th 2020, ITALY

CONNECTING COMPLIANCE

Virtual HCP interactions will be subject to the same compliance regulations and transparency reporting requirements as in-person events. All events will still need to have a documented, legitimate business rationale, meet Fair Market Value guidelines, capture detailed contracts, and proof of performance—prior to payment.

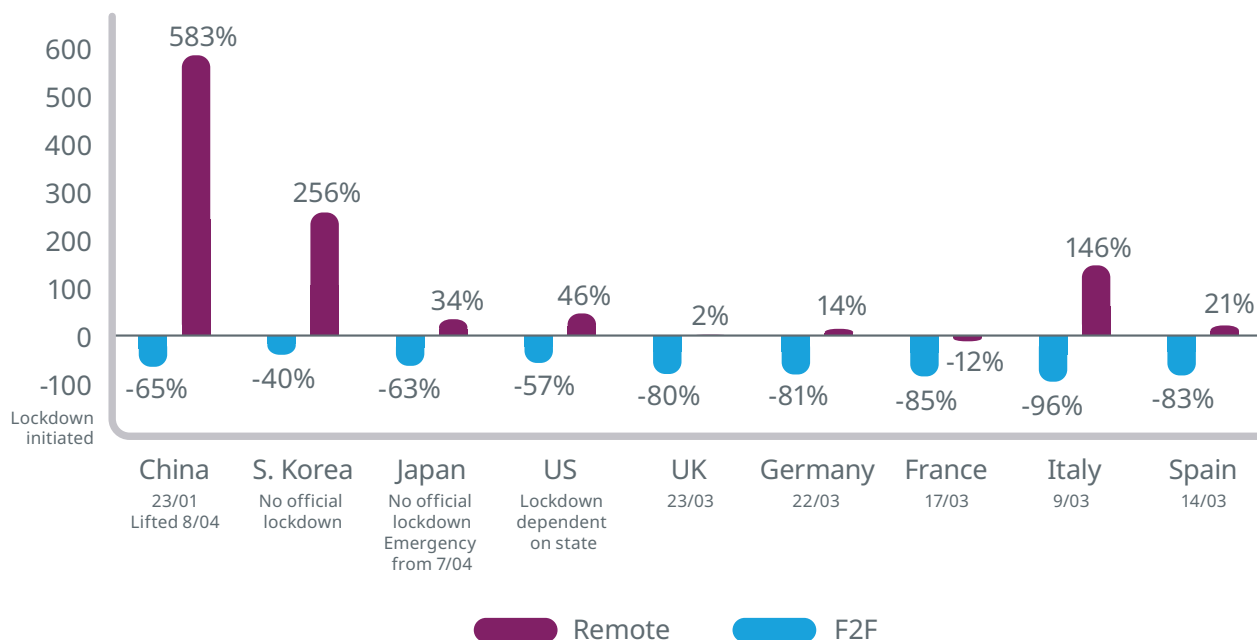
Ensuring HCP events are compliant does not need to involve a slow, cumbersome process that can lead to frustrating experiences for commercial teams and HCPs alike. Solutions that have been designed to manage these requirements efficiently incorporate

business rules embedded in the software to automate compliance and ultimately provide a positive HCP experience. These solutions can provide complete, accurate capture of ToV with seamless integration into transparency reporting files.

Any solution designed to help manage regulated activities needs to be continuously updated to stay current with complex and changing regulations in jurisdictions around the world. The current trend toward virtual interactions may facilitate an increase in the number of interactions among global HCP communities. Easy-to-use global solutions that provide approvals, scheduling and a digital audit trail in a

Significant decline in face to face promotional activity in countries affected earliest by COVID-19 to date
Steady increase in remote interactions in Japan, US and Italy compared to the preceding weeks

Apr* 2019 vs Apr* 2020 - % Change in absolute recorded promotional volume



Source: IQVIA European Thought Leadership; ChannelDynamics April 12, 2020; F2F includes detailing and meetings, Remote includes phone detailing, e-detailing (live+automated), postal & e-mailings, e-meetings (live+automated)

compliant, end-to-end system will become important tools to support all types of HCP interactions in the future.

EVOLVING SKILL SETS

Virtual engagements are significantly different from in-person meetings and individuals who excel in personal interactions may not have the same level of expertise using virtual tools to create a meaningful engagement. Expertise in managing relationships through remote channels will require work to become astute at how to get the most out of the technology and virtual interactions. Can all users flawlessly host virtual events without connection, audio or presentation issues that can lead to poor experiences and frustrated customers? Do all users understand how to optimize lighting, camera angles and interactive techniques to

make virtual meetings professional and engaging? Can all users interpret feedback to ensure the message is resonating with the customer without visual cues like body language as a feedback mechanism? Companies should consider that commercial teams may require training to provide skills necessary to engage customers as this evolving omni-channel engagement strategy relies more heavily on virtual solutions.

THE FUTURE

The ongoing role of remote HCP engagement remains uncertain as we wait for social restrictions to safely ease and we begin to understand the comfort level for personal interactions from HCPs and healthcare companies alike. Commercial teams should prepare for the potential that virtual engagement will be the

preferred and possibly the only means to engage HCPs for an extended period. The pace of innovation to accommodate remote interactions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been swift and some aspects, such as methods for remote, compliant sampling at scale, will continue to improve. As these solutions are implemented, it is important to consider their capacity and flexibility to quickly pivot to the necessary form of interaction (in-person or virtual) that is preferred or dictated by both the customer and the environment.

The fundamentals of customer engagement won't change, regardless of channel. Every contact must deliver value; content must be of interest and delivered in a way that suits the target personality. To ensure your solution is delivering on that mandate, collect feedback from commercial teams and HCPs at regular intervals and maintain the flexibility to alter course if needed. Companies that leverage technology to effectively orchestrate customer engagement activities can develop stronger relationships and improve overall customer satisfaction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Deploy technologies that provide functionality to support short-term strategies yet are scalable and flexible enough to support medium- and long-term strategies; consider geographical differences for countries including technology infrastructure and business culture when implementing globally
2. Spend the time to develop a thorough virtual engagement strategy as part of an overall customer relationship plan with short, medium- and long-term goals
3. Consider training needs for those who will utilize new virtual tools to engage customers; external resources may be helpful to meet specific training needs
4. Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of your program and be prepared to pivot based on customer feedback or environmental influences; data, analytics and surveys can help measure effectiveness

LEARN MORE

To learn more about how IQVIA Technologies can help support your digital strategies for customer engagement ([IQVIA Technologies](#))

WHITEPAPER LINKS

- [The Power of Remote Personal Interactions](#)
- [Driving Launch Success](#)

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