White Paper

Agile Brand Promotion

Use Next Best Action insights to optimize tactics and spend across personal and non-personal channels

Table of contents

Introduction

Among life sciences commercial teams, the phrases "artificial intelligence" (AI) and "machine learning" (ML) elicit reactions ranging from enthusiasm or confusion to caution and even fear. Tenured industry leaders may wonder if it's prudent to rely on machines to support decision making. Can machines truly understand the nuances and complexity of human relationships? Sales representatives who have worked hard to understand their customers and nurture strong relationships may feel especially leery of taking direction from machines. In reality, most of us have integrated these kinds of tools into our personal lives — and we are already experiencing the benefits firsthand.

Consider entertainment apps that use AI/ML to recommend songs and podcasts or series and movies you are likely to enjoy based on past viewing patterns and ratings. Do these services presume to know you better than you know yourself? Of course not. They simply have access to a much broader set of data about available content. Using AI/ML, the apps can more quickly make you aware of what you may enjoy. You remain in control of what you consume.

Another example: wayfinding apps. We all know the way to our own homes, but most of us wouldn't hesitate to use an app that alerts us to potential roadblocks or recommends faster routes based on real-time conditions. We are still using what we know. We are still driving the car. The app simply makes us aware more quickly.

Now imagine having a similar capability to support your commercial team: the power of vast datastores, deep analytics, and timely, tailored recommendations. Imagine being able to harness data and analytics to serve up Next Best Action recommendations based on environmental factors (the market landscape, the access environment, and geographic variation); your company's specific capabilities; and portfolio, franchise, and product factors (clinical attributes, patient journey, product lifecycle, and behavioral triggers).

It is possible through Agile Brand Promotion (ABP) — more specifically, the advanced analytics at the core of this innovative model.

Do you make decisions in siloes?

Commercial success hinges on a wide array of decisions — from setting a national strategy to determining how best to invest in digital tools to deploying the right combination of reps, medical science liaisons (MSLs), and other field force personnel locally to support healthcare providers (HCPs).

These decisions need to be made more than once; ideally, teams continually review and adjust tactics based on ever-changing market conditions. That kind of dynamic decision-making requires orchestration of complex and dynamic data. Yet too often, teams are working with incomplete, outdated, or simply inaccurate information, often relying on manual processes. As a result, they may make suboptimal choices — including failing to pivot based on emerging challenges and opportunities.
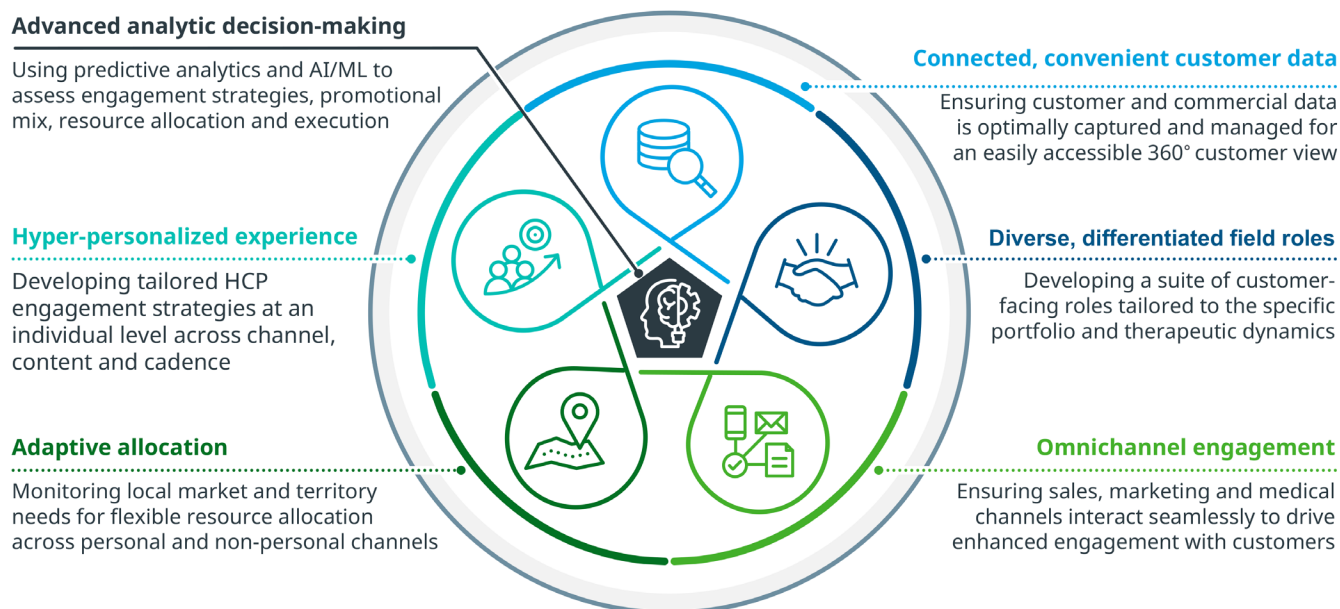
That's beginning to change as more organizations adopt ABP. This new way of thinking is customer centric and service oriented. It's focused on value and outcomes. And it makes use of two-way communications with customers across multiple channels in personalized ways. The ultimate vision for ABP: to reach the right stakeholder for a given brand at the right time.

It's no small feat. Nor is it a capability that can be built overnight. Even so, now is the time for every team to begin or advance the journey to ABP.

The building blocks of ABP

THERE ARE SIX COMPONENTS, OR PRE-REQUISITES, TO ACHIEVING ABP:

Figure 1. Six components of ABP

Advanced analytic decision-making
Using predictive analytics and AI/ML to assess engagement strategies, promotional mix, resource allocation and execution

Connected, convenient customer data
Ensuring customer and commercial data is optimally captured and managed for an easily accessible 360° customer view

Hyper-personalized experience
Developing tailored HCP engagement strategies at an individual level across channel, content and cadence

Diverse, differentiated field roles
Developing a suite of customer-facing roles tailored to the specific portfolio and therapeutic dynamics

Adaptive allocation
Monitoring local market and territory needs for flexible resource allocation across personal and non-personal channels

Omnichannel engagement
Ensuring sales, marketing and medical channels interact seamlessly to drive enhanced engagement with customers

As Figure 1 illustrates, these components are interconnected and interdependent – not sequential or linear.

Each component is an important enabler of ABP. The balance of this paper will focus on the component at the center of the clover — advanced analytic decision-making — and its role in powering "Next Best Action" insights.

What are Next Best Action insights?

As the name suggests, Next Best Action insights are about harnessing data and analytics to make intelligent, near-real-time recommendations. The concept of Next Best Action is not new. In fact, it's been around the life sciences industry for years. However, it typically has focused on supporting face-to-face promotion — that is, helping sales reps know when to call on a healthcare provider (HCP) and what materials or messages are likely to resonate. Some organizations are using alerts and triggers for Next Best Actions. Others have also started implementing email-based suggestions.

While there is value in these activities, they often result in siloed recommendations — and they fall short in considering the whole promotional picture. Teams now need Next Best Action insights to cover a much broader remit. That includes:

- Recommendations for **personal and non-personal engagement** at the individual HCP level.
  - » Which channel(s) does an HCP prefer right now?
  - » What message(s) and/or resource(s) are likely to resonate?
  - » Where are opportunities to leverage an HCP's participation in a social network?
  - » Is now the right time to reach out — or would it be more effective to wait until after a key milestone?

- **Attribution analytics** to understand what's working and what's not, enabling organizations to determine the best use of promotional dollars.
  - » Which HCPs are best positioned to write for your brand? Which are facing payer barriers?
  - » What is the sequence of messaging best aligned to individual HCP preferences?
  - » Which digital ads are performing well?
  - » Which email campaigns have the highest clickthrough and conversion rates?

- » What tactics will enable locally precise execution — positioning the brand to win in diverse local markets?
- » What is the right face-to-face interaction based on patient needs, payer hurdles, and medical education support?

What does it take to deliver Next Best Action insights?

To break through siloes and keep pace with complex patient, brand, provider, and market dynamics, focus on these three areas.
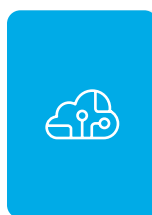
Technology
You need an analytics platform for organizing business rules and algorithms and running them against massive datasets.

Data
You need access to complete patient and provider data to feed into the analytics. Data also must be timely. Algorithms need recent data to deliver accurate insights. Timely data is also crucial to machine learning and its ability to react to "close to current" events at the localized level.

Processes
You need clear organizational processes for translating Next Best Action insights into on-the-ground activities.

The potential value of going beyond siloed efforts to what could be termed "Next Best Action for everything" is clear. What's less clear: how to execute.

Today only about 10% of large pharma is using an optimized AI/ML-driven engagement model that combines field and digital for learnings along the way. What's holding them back? These are some of the most common challenges and barriers we hear:

> *"How do we identify the patient opportunity and map that to HCPs? The data sources are overwhelming. We aren't sure where to begin."*

> *"Stakeholder relationships are highly complex. How can we drill down from national-level strategy to provider-level tactics?"*

> *"We have entrenched functional silos and ways of working. There's a lot of fear, uncertainty, and doubt about what Next Best Action analytics might reveal. How can we break through organizational barriers and resistance to change?"*

> *"How do we find the right technology solution for our organization? There are so many providers out there offering solutions."*

The answer isn't simply to acquire more and more data in hopes that it will provide guidance on how best to proceed. That becomes an endless feedback loop – and results in missed opportunity.

Five factors to drive success

IQVIA experience points to five factors crucial to the success of any organization's journey to Next Best action insights.

FACTOR 1: Start with patients, not providers

For any brand or therapeutic area, the first key question is this: What and where is the patient opportunity? Build your initial sizing and segmentation with patients – not providers. Use analytics to predict patterns of likely patients needing diagnosis or treatment within the disease category. With these insights, begin to map patients to providers. Start with a pilot, and then continue to operationalize and optimize your predictive models over time.

FACTOR 2: Continuously update 360-degree customer information

Having the right breadth and depth of data — and updating it regularly — is critical. You need to integrate both patient information, such as claims data, payer data, and third-party market data, and provider information. Provider data should include deeper-dive insights about their digital behavior, their treatment and brand perceptions, and their roles in both formal and informal thought leader networks.

When learning from customer data, don't limit yourself to predefined journeys. Instead, understand the value of each individual customer — and the return on promotional investment of every interaction point.

Factor 3: Establish clear cross-functional processes

Orchestrating processes — across analytics, marketing, sales, and medical strategies — can be one of the most challenging aspects of implementing Next Best Action insights. It is also one of the most important factors for success.

Build or refine your processes with an outside-in view — putting patients and HCPs at the center. Work to understand diverse patient and provider experiences and then craft workflows to improve how you support those experiences.

Factor 4: Use connected technology to automate Next Best Action analytics and recommendations

Relying on connected technology helps generate adaptability – a cornerstone of ABP — while maintaining efficiency. Connected tech is key to ensuring that suggestions go beyond instructions on what to do. Instead, offer context about why something is being suggested.

Without that context, sales reps may question recommendations and argue that they are more familiar with their customers than any "machine" can be. This is where you can mention the wayfinding and entertainment apps that reps likely use in their day-to-day lives. Remind them that the Next Best Action insights are designed to help them get where they are going more smoothly — not to take the proverbial wheel away from them.

Factor 5: Enable flexible resource deployment for personal and non-personal engagement

Infuse territory design with room to adapt to changing needs across channels. Learn from field inputs and iterate through scenarios to find the optimal setup.

These five factors echo the need for a bottoms-up analytical engine — that is, starting with individual patients — but being robust and sophisticated enough to manage the breadth of data. Your engine also needs the ability to connect data across stakeholders, providers and profiles. Finally, it should offer the analytical power to make real-time recommendations that empower feet on the street to optimize their interactions.
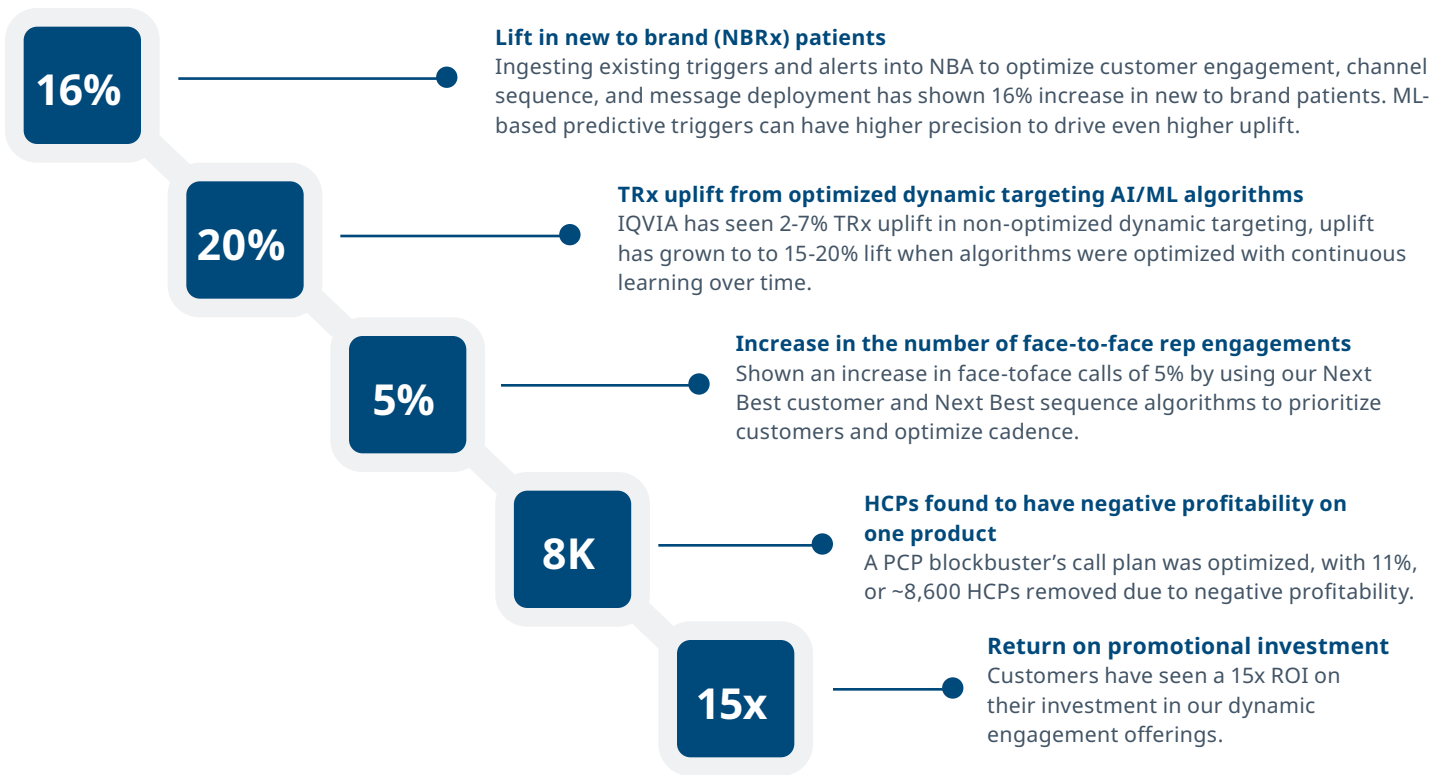
Insights you can act on

- Dr. Thomas would like to write for the brand. However, managed care barriers make it more challenging to get patients on therapy.

- Dr. Patel likes visiting two different social blogs. He also likes face-to-face engagement with a medical science liaison and then a rep. After that, he looks to digital for more background, but he doesn't like email and opts out of those communications.

- Dr. Hernandez writes consistently regardless of the frequency of face-to-face interaction. Resources are better deployed to Dr. Willis, where personal engagement is linked to a 15% increase in new prescriptions.

Understanding not just volume but also *intent to write*, cost of *access challenges*, as well as *patient opportunity* and *network influence* are all important in determining message, value of the physician, and cost of the detail. These insights help the home office and the field make better decisions on which HCP to see, when to call on them, and what message to present.

Who's leading the way?

Realizing the potential of Next Best Action insights is a journey — one that some commercial organizations have already initiated. Making progress can be faster than you might assume. Consider that IQVIA can implement an analytics platform in as little as eight weeks. From there, it usually takes about three months of data ingestion and analytics to begin to glean insights — in other words, to see what's working and how resources can be dynamically deployed to improve results.

16%

Lift in new to brand (NBRx) patients
Ingesting existing triggers and alerts into NBA to optimize customer engagement, channel sequence, and message deployment has shown 16% increase in new to brand patients. ML-based predictive triggers can have higher precision to drive even higher uplift.

20%

TRx uplift from optimized dynamic targeting AI/ML algorithms
IQVIA has seen 2-7% TRx uplift in non-optimized dynamic targeting, uplift has grown to to 15-20% lift when algorithms were optimized with continuous learning over time.

5%

Increase in the number of face-to-face rep engagements
Shown an increase in face-toface calls of 5% by using our Next Best customer and Next Best sequence algorithms to prioritize customers and optimize cadence.

8K

HCPs found to have negative profitability on one product
A PCP blockbuster's call plan was optimized, with 11%, or ~8,600 HCPs removed due to negative profitability.

15x

Return on promotional investment
Customers have seen a 15x ROI on their investment in our dynamic engagement offerings.

Your Next Best Action

By applying the power of advanced analytics to timely, accurate, and comprehensive data, commercial teams can make decisions with greater agility and confidence. You can give sales reps tools to help further strengthen relationships and improve results. And rather than waiting months to determine the effectiveness of promotional investments, you can gauge that in near real time and make adjustments to increase your return. Above all, remember that well-designed and executed Next Best Action insights are not about handing over the reins to technology. These insights use technology to supercharge your strategies, your tactics, and your results.

About IQVIA Connected Intelligence™

Connected Intelligence brings together IQVIA's unique portfolio of capabilities to create intelligent connections across its unparalleled healthcare data, advanced analytics, innovative technologies, and healthcare expertise to speed the development and commercialization of innovative medicines that improve patients' lives.

Discover new insights, drive smarter decisions, and unleash new opportunities with the power of **IQVIA Connected Intelligence**

IQVIA