



6 Questions You Should Be Asking Your Digital Point-of-Care Media Vendor

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), roughly 86% of all office-based healthcare providers (HCPs) are using an electronic health record (EHR) system. The near-universal use of EHRs presents BioPharma marketing leaders and their media agency partners with an opportunity to deliver approved messaging to the appropriate provider at the right time to help optimize the care of their patient population.

So how do you select the right vendor to ensure your approved messages reach the HCPs you are actually interested in? The first step is knowing which questions to ask potential digital point-of-care media partners.

ANY EHR PROVIDER DELIVERING A QUALITY SOLUTION SHOULD BE ABLE TO ANSWER THESE SIX QUESTIONS.

1

ARE YOU EXPERIENCED?

This question may seem obvious, but you might be surprised by how few potential partners have deep experience in the EHR marketing industry.

With the rise of COVID-19, many BioPharma brands are having a more difficult time connecting with HCPs and clinics. As such, new channels of communication like digital point-of-care marketing are becoming increasingly popular, leading to a lot of marketplace noise and inexperienced players jumping into the market.

These relative newcomers may not understand the details about how EHRs work. Effectively executing promotional campaigns in an EHR is not at all like running web-based banner ads online. It's a highly specialized channel—that's part of what makes it so powerful—but it also means it demands a nuanced strategy, one that accounts for the unique nature of EHR promotion.

Trusting your brand's approved messaging with an inexperienced vendor may not only lead to poor results, it can also quickly become a frustrating experience.

Be sure you contract with an experienced digital point-of-care media vendor who has the depth of experience to help you navigate the complexities of delivering promotional messaging within EHRs.

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WHAT EXACTLY IS THE SOLUTION YOU OFFER?

Not all digital point-of-care media is created equal and doing a “boxes checked” comparison across vendors can be a recipe for a suboptimal experience, without the proper context.

Different vendors have different offerings, and depending upon your campaign objectives, you should choose a vendor who can deliver the types of messaging that aligns with your brand strategy. Generally speaking, there are two main types of messaging that can be displayed within EHRs—promotional messaging and financial messaging:

- **Promotional messaging.** If your goal is to drive brand awareness among HCPs via their EHR, you need to make use of promotional messaging, which can be hyper-targeted. For example, you should be able to target a specific provider specialty or providers with certain patient population characteristics. These banner advertisements can link back to your brand's website, to promotional materials, or to another landing page of your choice. Unlike financial messaging, promotional messaging appears during the EHR workflow before HCPs make any prescribing decisions.
- **Financial messaging.** Financial messaging, on the other hand, is not intended to increase HCP awareness or education about your brand. It is purely financial in nature, and most often takes the form of either printable or electronic coupons. Unlike promotional messaging, financial messaging appears after medication is selected, not targeted, and is measured through coupon redemptions.

Both types of messaging have value, depending upon your goals. Be sure to select a point-of-care media vendor who can deliver solutions to fit your needs.

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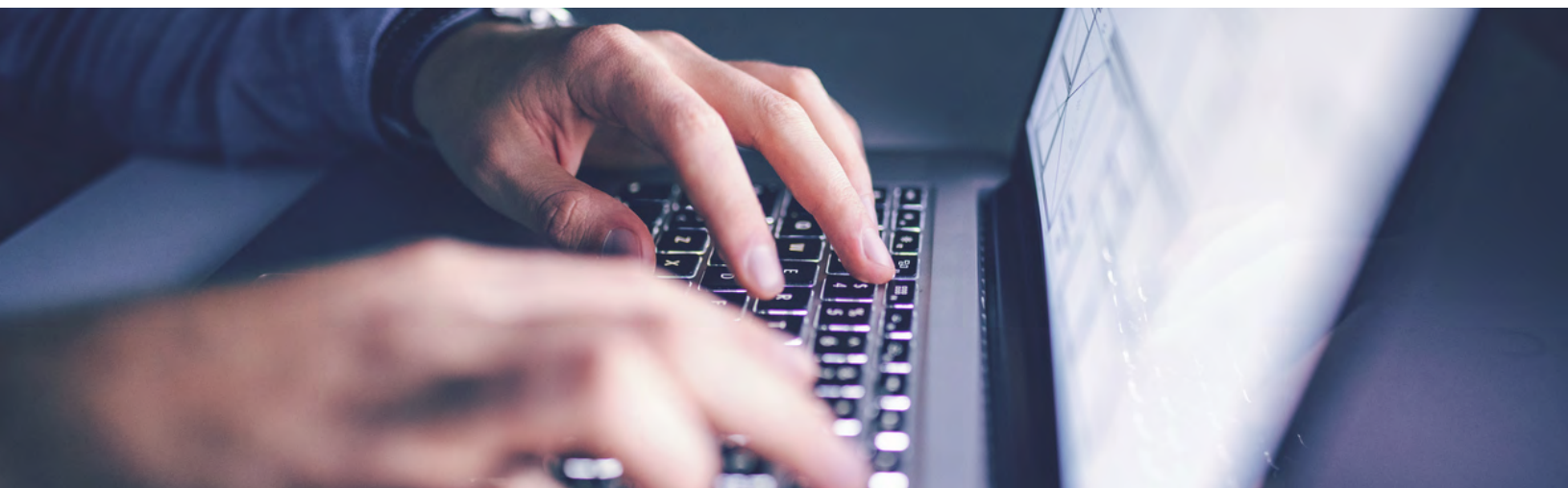
WHO ARE YOU REACHING AND WITH WHAT SOLUTION?

We cover this topic a bit more in the next section, but this is a critical question you should be asking any potential point-of-care media vendor. The answer you seek is all dependent upon your campaign goals.

Want to reach endocrinologists treating type 2 diabetics with promotional messaging about your new SGLT-2 inhibitor, for example? You need to make sure the point-of-care media vendor can reach that specific target audience with promotional messaging.

If you have other campaign goals—such as delivering coupons—you should ensure the vendor you select can deliver financial messaging. You also may want to consider driving awareness around the coupons using promotional messaging during the EHR workflow.

The most important thing to remember is that once you have a campaign goal in mind, be sure that the vendor you select can deliver on that goal.





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YOU SAY YOU CAN REACH X NUMBER OF HCPs—WHAT DOES THE REACH YOU ARE PROVIDING REALLY MEAN?

This is perhaps the most important question you can ask a potential point-of-care media vendor. There is a lot of confusion in the marketplace around EHR market share and what it really means.

For example, a potential vendor tells you that their network reaches 30% of all HCPs in the United States. As someone new to the space, that sounds almost too good to be true. And, in fact, it may very well be. Dig just a little bit deeper into the numbers, and you may discover that you might only be able to reach a small fraction of those providers with your brands' promotional messages.

What could lead marketers to be mistaken or confused about by their vendors concerning the number of providers they are reaching? Let's cover a few items for consideration:

- **Some EHRs do not offer promotional messaging.** While it may be true that the vendor you're speaking with has a large number of HCPs in their network, you may not be able to reach all of them with your messages. This is because almost none of the large EHR providers offer promotional messaging during their provider workflows. If your objective is to deliver promotional messaging, having unreachable HCPs in your target audience is something you should be aware of.
- **Many EHRs primarily cover acute settings.** There are some EHR networks who include primarily acute care (hospital) focused platforms. While this may be helpful in some instances, the majority of the interest among BioPharma brands is in the ambulatory (outpatient) space.
- **Several EHRs may not be able to reach the medical specialty of interest to you.** Let's say you are working with a brand in a specialty cardiovascular therapeutic area, yet the EHR you're advertising in contains only a small number of cardiologists. If the providers you're reaching have no interest in your product, the messaging will be ineffective in communicating what is intended.

After removing the HCPs who fall into the above categories, what you're left with is a fraction of the originally projected target audience.

Your best bet is to look for a point-of-care media vendor with a *meaningful* market share that aligns with and is verified by 3rd party market share reports available in the public domain. That is, a vendor who can deliver your brand's approved promotional messaging during the EHR workflow of ambulatory providers in the medical specialty relevant to your brand.

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WHAT IS THE EXTENT OF THE REPORTING PROVIDED?

After spending so much time and money on your digital point-of-care marketing campaign, of course you want to know what type of impact (if any) your messaging has made.

This is where robust reporting comes in. Different vendors offer different analytics and reporting capabilities. Be sure the vendor you select can answer all the questions that are important to your organization. Think about the key performance indicators (KPIs) you must report on and ask any potential vendor if they can deliver those metrics.

Some KPIs you might want to ask about include:

- **Impressions**
- **Prescription analytics**
- **Physician level data**
- **Coupon redemptions**

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WHAT IS THE COMPLIANCE OVERSIGHT AROUND YOUR PLATFORM?

This is a critical question. The EHR advertising landscape has many legal, regulatory, and compliance-related requirements that apply, and for good reason.

However, if you are working with an inexperienced vendor who is not familiar with the dos-and-don'ts of point-of-care digital marketing or does not control the compliance oversight for the EHR platforms in their network, then you run the risk of unknowingly overstepping boundaries.

Legal, regulatory, and medical review of all advertising content is the responsibility of clients. The technical and delivery architecture of promotional messaging, however, is overseen by the EHR platform and must be carefully designed and operated to meet legal, regulatory and compliance requirements, including obtaining appropriate permissions from EHR clients to advertise to them, among other system and privacy requirements.

Be sure to always ask this question and make sure you are comfortable with the answer you receive.

When done right, digital point-of-care marketing in EHRs can be a game-changer for many brands. Done wrong, however, you run the risk of wasting a lot of your time and money on ineffective campaigns.



ACCESS OUR FREE WORKSHEET

To help guide conversations you may be having with potential EHR advertising partners, we've prepared a helpful downloadable worksheet you can fill in. Click [here](#) to access your free worksheet.