

What's New in eDetailing? Not Much Improving Strategy & Metrics is the Key to More Significant Results

With all the talk of increased time constraints on healthcare professionals, decreased ability to use honoraria, and the like, we weren't sure what we'd find in our 2007 eDetailing benchmark. Never mind the opinions we were hearing; our clients wanted to know: what were product managers actually doing with eDetailing, and what results were they getting?

Abstract

In general, although other aspects of online marketing to physicians changed significantly in 2007, the eDetailing model stayed steady. Brands continue to spend, with eDetailing getting 34 cents of every dollar in online HCP marketing. Certainly, brands are developing good content using new approaches within the eDetail. There is an assumption that the eDetailing program is of value, since eDetailing spend is expected to stay the same or increase. What is lacking in the majority of brands is an attention to the metrics necessary to ensure maximum value and prove to management that eDetailing is worth *increased* investment.

This benchmark looks at 21 brands doing eDetailing across 9 different pharmaceutical companies. The full benchmark results are restricted to members. This white paper contains some general guidance.

"eDetailing" Still the Same

The first thing that came up in our conversation with vendors was a frustration with the term "eDetailing" as overly narrow and limiting possibilities. On the other hand, at least most people have a common understanding of the term "eDetailing." For the purposes of our benchmark, we limited this definition to programs that did use an interactive medium (usually Web-based), had a logical beginning and end, and did not involve any live person.

Investment Levels Remain Strong

We always ask how much brands are spending on eDetailing, and the dollar amount answered depends mostly on where a brand is in their budget cycle. At the end of year, the answer is far less optimistic than when a year is in the planning phase. However, year over year, the end result has remained about the same since we started measuring this in Spring of '06.

*Only 16% of brands plan to
decrease their eDetailing budget
in 2008*

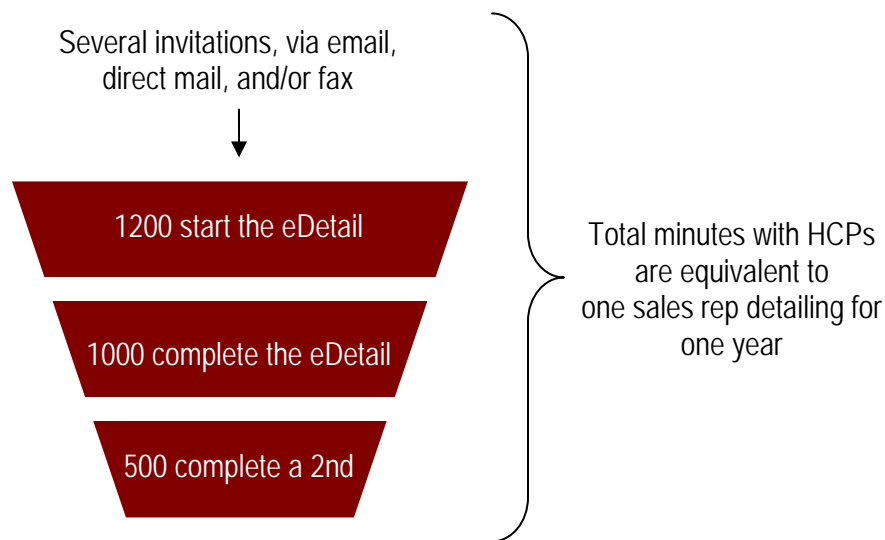
When we ask how this will change for the next year, most brands estimate they will increase their investment – only 16% of brands planned to decrease their budget for 2008. Brands report eDetailing remains an important part of their online marketing to physicians – the most important tactic in the portfolio, outranking even their product sites, media, and

3rd-party sponsorships. eDetailing "wins" share of wallet as well, getting 34 cents out of every dollar spent to market to healthcare professionals online in 2007.

Typical eDetail Program

We interviewed product managers and their vendors and looked at actual program plans and their results for 21 brands across 9 pharmaceutical companies. These brands ranged from small to blockbuster, with an average annual revenue of around \$900 million. From these results, we were able to provide detailed information to each brand, how they compared with the industry at large, and where they might improve. For non-clients, here is an aggregate picture of the landscape, without revealing the confidential information that only our membership has access to:

Benchmark for eDetailing Programs



A typical program has about the same customer-facing time as one sales rep working for one year. All else being equal, that would make the relative spend on eDetailing a drop in the bucket as far as overall brand promotion is concerned. The key to making eDetailing a more significant part of your promotion is to

- ♦ Ensure that eDetails complement/augment sales force activity
- ♦ Evaluate immediate impact/response from customers to ensure maximum value

Best Practices to Maximize ROI

eDetailing is a significant investment in not only money, but also in time and med/reg review wrangling. It's worth working to squeeze out every drop of value. Here are some best practices that we found were (surprisingly) seldom used.

1. Recruit More Widely

Consider expanding your reach without increasing your cost per complete by recruiting more widely without offering more honoraria. A majority of brands could be doing this, and yet less than 10% actually do. What's more, telling you this isn't sharing some competitive secret; these are all easy to imagine:

- ♦ Leverage materials you may already have for your sales reps to use to recruit – distribute them at conferences and dinner meetings.
- ♦ Have a link from your Web properties to the eDetail

Treat these “extra” physicians (and nurses, and consumers) as you do HCPs from states who cannot receive honoraria. Add a disclaimer at the beginning, if necessary, to indicate which audience the content is appropriate for. Also consider a strategy to:

- ♦ Reach beyond high-volume physicians
- ♦ Reach beyond called-on physicians

2. Integrate with Other Marketing Efforts

Less than 20% of brands have any additional communication to HCPs that is tied in any way to the eDetail experience (other than invitations and honoraria / request fulfillment). Consider using other, related communications through email, or integrate other efforts such as key Web pages, patient materials, or relationship marketing programs for physicians.

3. Integrate with and Augment Sales Efforts

No brands did all of these. Many brands did *none* of these:

- ♦ Use your reps to recruit, but ensure they recruit well. Give them a thorough intro to each eDetail and suggest some best practices for recruiting (starting it while in front of a physician is not the best way, for example).
- ♦ Consider eDetailing as a possible method for increasing the touches from a rep by ensuring reps fulfill sample / info requests whenever appropriate.
- ♦ Where an HCP does not have a specific request, consider what you tell your sales force, and what they should do about it. An email saying just “Dr. Samuelson has completed an eDetail!” may not be actionable.
- ♦ Very few brands reported receiving any feedback from reps, even though presumably most reps would be familiar with the material, and some would hear responses from physicians. Consider asking for this.

4. Measure and Optimize

When asked about plans for optimization, the typical answer suggested glacial timing to implement change, saying “since last year” or, “beginning next year”.... What if two different email subject lines were tested for recruitment emails? What if physicians could pick any one of three sections to skip and still complete the eDetail? How could this improve not only your eDetail but also other online and offline messaging efforts? The majority of brands measure effectiveness only after a program is completed, and by looking at one overall measure rather than by analyzing the effectiveness of specific parts of the program.

To optimize results, basic data has to be captured, tracked, and understood, which usually can be accomplished at little additional cost. The following would only require minor, if any, changes to the eDetailing program of most brands, and only involve one market research question (intent) within the eDetail.

Analysis	Metrics to Track
Efficiency of program at getting time with physicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost per complete (where "cost" is fully loaded with program development, management, recruitment, and fulfillment) • Cost per minute
Effectiveness of recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of invitations accepted • Volume of eDetail starts
How engaging the content of each eDetail is	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion rate, based on number who start • Repeat rate for second eDetail
Targeting plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of HCP who completes / repeats • Type of invitation accepted (email, direct mail, etc.)
Effectiveness of program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intent to change prescribing behavior (self-reported) • Lift in Rx • Relative ROI compared with other online and offline tactics

Conclusion

Today, eDetailing is perceived as important to brand managers, and is a key part of the online marketing tactics, but it is one tactic in a checklist that each brand executes to communicate with HCPs. With a little more analysis, strategic planning, and integration with other marketing and sales initiatives, eDetailing could be a more strategic component of the overall marketing mix.

About This Benchmark

21 brands across 9 companies qualified for and participated in this eDetailing benchmark. The eDetailing is part of our Internet marketing benchmark service, with 37 brands across 12 companies in our database. New in 2007 is a complementary benchmark in consumer relationship marketing across all channels. TGaS only does benchmarking, only in pharma – we're not trying to sell you eDetailing, or any other solution.

Contact TGaS Advisors to find out

- How does my program compare against the range of results?
- What are typical policies around honoraria? How are these projects managed?
- What can my brand do to improve our results?

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How do other pharmaceutical companies do "it"?

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