

THE WHY OF GenAI FOR PHARMA:

KEY INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVES
ON THE STRATEGY OF
SYNTHETIC INTELLIGENCE



"As GenAI evolves at a record pace, pharma commercial teams must keep pace without losing sight of the overall business strategy."

BY MARK BARD, DHC GROUP

Understanding, testing, and extracting value from GenAI is critical for the majority of commercial teams across the pharmaceutical, bio, and life sciences landscape today. Companies and brand teams are actively debating how it will impact their overall business and let them focus on higher-value work so they can empower the GenAI to automate routine processes and use the core technology and platforms to accelerate the efficiency of marketing and customer experience.

The potential impact of GenAI within pharma ranges from MLR, creative, audience building, targeting, patient support programs, field force content optimization, as well as the broader category of customer experience programs with both patients and physicians.

Given the essential need to share insights and learning in a cross-functional approach in order for pharma to learn fast, scale up, and disseminate best practices in a sustainable manner, we have pulled together advice from a cross-section of AI experts. In addition to teamwork, ongoing education about "what's possible" today - and in the near future of 6 to 12 months - will become a requirement for teams seeking to fully optimize their use of GenAI across the commercial organization. In this piece we look primarily at the "why" of generative AI, but also offer considerations for broader artificial intelligence applications and use cases.

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A Conversation with Michael Sivak

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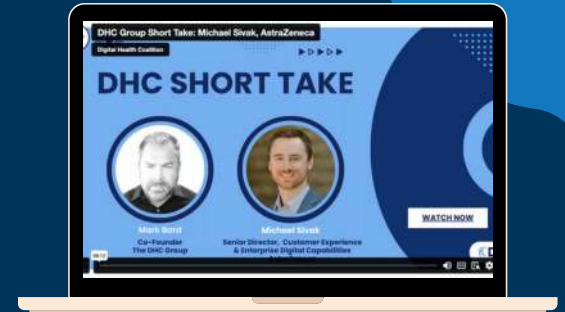


Mark Bard, Co-Founder, The DHC Group

? **What does GenAI mean for the industry?**



Michael Sivak, Senior Director, Customer Experience and Enterprise Digital Capabilities, AstraZeneca



This article is derived from a recent Short Take conversation. [Watch that interview here.](#)

AI has been around for quite a while, but only available to those that could afford the significant cost and infrastructure requirements. Pharma has been using it to optimize HCP engagement for years, and other industries even longer. There had also been a very narrow niche in the form of Generative AI that was never even on the radar for most people. That all changed in the last 14 months. It started with the launch of ChatGPT in November of 2022 and suddenly there was a massive leap into the mainstream. It democratized the use of AI- available to anyone and with virtually no cost to get started. And it's moving FAST- faster than anything we've seen before.



We put a lot of trust in the information and content we get from AI. How should we think about accuracy of the content and the potential for misinformation?

When I think about misinformation, the first thing that comes to mind are influencers who've got millions of followers that push conspiracy theories. They are a source with a captive audience, and they are not regulated or fact checked. That breeds public misinformation.

Meanwhile, pharma IS regulated. Pharma companies cannot allow misinformation into any content created- there's a reason MLR exists and why content submissions to the FDA are required.

The issue with misinformation and GenAI centers on the sources used to train the models. As we [pharma] can control how we currently create content, we can also control what content we use to train GenAI models that would be used to create future content. That means tight controls over the tools we use and ensuring that we only use trusted sources for training the models. I think there is less to worry about misinformation in the pharma space in the future than out in the rest of the unregulated areas of the internet.



Mark Bard

It's like the early days of the Internet where big companies were using it, and then when you democratize that, and certainly those GenAI models were within the walls of some of these very large companies, and now the use cases just exponentially grow. How do you put GenAI as a concept into a brand plan?



Michael Sivak

We need to be more prescriptive about how we will use GenAI. What we see right now are many “test and learns” and trials/pilots that are based on a concept of ‘Let's figure out what GenAI can do’- rather than focusing on... ‘What specific problems do we have that GenAI could help solve?’ For example, are we trying to solve for increased personalization and creating the most relevant content for an HCP audience group?’ The point is, if we start with a specific purpose in mind and focus on that problem we're trying to solve for, what comes out at the end is something that's usable- something that we can say ... ‘Yes, it worked.’ Or ‘No, it didn't. Either way we learn specific things that we can action in the next iteration.’

So have a specific purpose. Focus on what the thing is you are going to solve for. It can be for personalization. It can be for localizing or adapting content from one country to another country. It can be for taking content created for one audience and modifying it to be usable with another audience because HCPs learn and understand in different ways. One example of this type of use case is to use GenAI to increase relatability of video in post-production- translating the video sound and image so that the speaker is speaking in another language. Medical events, KEE speakers, congresses and symposia- instead of having translation with subtitles beneath, GenAI can be used to make it more real and immersive for an HCP to fully experience in their own language. That may be important for some. But you also need to ask ‘is this use case a problem we really need to solve for and one that will provide a worthwhile level of value, or is it just a novel use of GenAI?’

Consider an example where you have created content for HCPs who are more “data-centric” in making their decisions in healthcare. Would you communicate that given message in a different way to a “safety-first” HCP?’ The answer is likely ‘YES’. But, do you have the bandwidth to create that alternative content for this additional segment or persona? That answer is often ‘no’. You may find that using GenAI to create or adapt the content for the additional audience helps solve for the bandwidth problem.



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COMBINING GenAI WITH CX FOR BUSINESS STRATEGY AND VALUE

Rich Schwartz

Life Sciences Industry Practice Lead

Qualtrics

Amara's Law states that: "We tend to overestimate the effect of a technology in the short run and underestimate the effect in the long run." And - while we are 'in the short run' for now - we should not hesitate to imagine, experiment, activate, and plan the experiences created and enhanced by Generative AI technologies.



Patient experiences may break anywhere across the journey. It is a bit like a scene from Indiana Jones. It is a cross-channel quest, with tribulations like cost, misunderstanding, mistrust, motivation, and fear. A technology that can make sense of it all, assist with in-the-moment needs - guiding us on which levers to pull, advice to give, and help predicatively - avoid snake pits altogether - is a huge step in patient navigation and support for the industry.

My thoughts are based on the work we have been doing at Qualtrics for some time, leveraging what we believe to be the largest database of human sentiment anywhere on the planet. So, imagine a collection of structured, unstructured, solicited, and observed human experience data - from sites, apps, calls, emails, feedback, social conversations, online reviews, chats, chatbot interactions, and more - enhanced with the power of Generative AI to deliver personalized content and drive optimal actions. This is making frontline people, closest to customers, more productive and effective.

That sentiment data becomes essential in any Generative AI output because taking action to fix an experience for a disgruntled patient is very different than that taken for a frightened one.

COMBINING GenAI WITH CX FOR BUSINESS STRATEGY AND VALUE

To help XM (experience management) professionals build their Gen AI plans, we've examined how organizations are both currently using, and planning to use its vast capabilities. Getting to the best outcomes will require vision and willingness to adapt to evolution and innovation. Foundationally – nothing should be happening that is not safeguarding customer security, privacy, and data protection and keeping us clearly within regulatory frameworks.

Getting started is best thought of in the context of customer needs first, along with organizational readiness, ability, and appetite. I believe, particularly based on where our industry is with the maturity of Gen AI, that professionals can be well-served focusing on these four disruptive attributes of Gen AI in patient experience optimization:



Data Summarization

Gen AI can extract information from a wide variety of content, both structured and unstructured, and summarize insights from across those datasets. Think about a patient who starts their journey with a brand in digital but becomes confused with insurance - and channel shifts to your call center. Your interactions and summarizations of call center engagements become more informed in the moment by the path of the patient and enhance the profile to serve them best. A more dimensional view of the needs of the patient can help the frontline people and resources closest to them know what they need and draw from data to generate real-time resolution.



Pattern Recognition

Gen AI can spot patterns across large datasets, which enables it to identify information like emerging topics and sentiment. Imagine clarity and best actions when a segment of customers seems unclear about a specific condition management resource or when a key subset of employees in the field or call center are particularly frustrated with customer feedback and lacking approved resources to resolve it. These insights can provide input into much faster and more robust predictive analytical and actionable models.

COMBINING GenAI WITH CX FOR BUSINESS STRATEGY AND VALUE



Conversational Interface

Gen AI can understand human language prompts and even craft human-sounding responses and resources. It can also make contextual adjustments based on structured and unstructured signals generated by customers. So if we wrap our heads around real-time insights to action equations that are steeped in billions of pieces of feedback assessed on your deep data plus behaviors, preferences, and even on emotions like joy, frustration, confusion, and the intensity of these emotions - we quickly and clearly understand intent, friction, effort – and precise essential actions. Done with a customer-first mindset, this changes our human connections for the better.




Content Personalization

Gen AI not only repeats what it has learned from the existing content it has been trained on, but it can create new content that extrapolates from those learnings. This includes adjusting its style and tone based on prompts. That frustrated patient who has been rage-clicking on your site and ended up jumping to your call center has different needs than one who is confused, mistrustful, or afraid.

These four attributes of Gen AI are valuable when we think about the interactions a patient has across their journey and your opportunity to show up with greater empathy and accuracy.

There are pathways to compliant uses of Gen AI solutions. It is imperative to sort that out in an organization because when medical science, formulary status, and spending (cost) are on everyone's side - sentiment data-driving actions become an advantage for the brand, the care team, and the patient. That aging adage that brands are not going to lose share to Gen AI, but they will lose share to other brands that know how to use Gen AI - applies here to be sure.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

 Rich Schwartz is one of the preeminent voices on customer experience in the life sciences industry. He is a tireless champion, voice of reason and aspiration, advising CX innovators in senior roles throughout the industry. [Connect with Rich on LinkedIn.](#)

GenAI and PROGRAMMATIC MEDIA, AUDIENCES, and EFFECTIVENESS

Louis Naimoli

VP, Programmatic, Haymarket Media



AI In Healthcare Marketing

When thinking about the uses of AI in healthcare advertising, there are several key areas where marketers can adopt AI technologies to create programs that drive more efficient outcomes for pharma advertisers. While deciding which of these avenues of AI testing to choose from, one of the most valuable AI tools that is available today is on the campaign audience creation side of things.

Audience Building

Rather than relying on traditional segmentation options like HCP deciles or standard patient audiences, there are more data-driven approaches that help supercharge campaign outcomes. Leveraging AI during the audience design process allows marketers to build more unique strategies that more closely align with the overall goals of their advertising clients.

On the DTC side, propensity models of anonymized audiences allow marketers to leverage a mix of data inputs like health data, online behaviors, and past interactions to design optimized segmentation of audiences that are designed with specific campaign goals in mind like engagement rates, OTC purchases, and even Rx outcomes.

From an HCP perspective, there are effective models (including HayloVitals) and offerings to drive predictive analytics-driven segments to help brands better understand the behaviors of HCPs prescribing over time to help pinpoint three core areas of focus - rising influence, consistent prescribing, and declining interest - that are built using several different metrics including volume, recency, and frequency. These segments offer value from both a campaign activation standpoint and via campaign analytics by providing transparency into how media impacts an HCP's prescribing habits before, during, and after a campaign.

As AI continues to evolve and marketers increase their adoption of its benefits, I'm confident that we'll see a positive impact on the effectiveness of media budgets as well as new and improved AI-driven solutions specifically curated for the modern pharma marketer.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Louis Naimoli is an industry expert on ad tech and programmatic, tracking the implications of trends on audience building. He is a trusted voice for marketers thinking about how to use innovation to reach effective and efficient outcomes. [Connect with Louis on LinkedIn.](#)

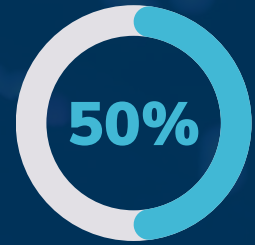


NAVIGATING THE AI LANDSCAPE IN PHARMA: THE IMPERATIVE OF CROSS-FUNCTIONAL COLLABORATION

Bob Brooks

Formerly of Relevate Health, GSK, and IQVIA

According to a study by the Project Management Institute, organizations that use cross-functional teams report **50%** higher success rates for projects, and research by the Institute for Corporate Productivity shows that organizations with effective cross-functional collaboration are five times more likely to be high-performing.



The Cross-Functional Imperative

To avoid the pitfalls of fragmented AI adoption, pharmaceutical and medical device companies should assemble a cross-functional team comprising internal and external commercialization and innovation experts. A well-coordinated and collaborative effort will ensure a comprehensive understanding of AI's potential applications and accelerate the integration and activation process.



Embrace Responsible Experimentation

Innovation thrives on experimentation and responsible activation. Pharma's cautious approach must yield to a culture that embraces controlled experimentation, enabling teams to explore AI possibilities without compromising regulatory compliance. This responsible approach mirrors historical models from the early days of digital, mobile, and social media integration, where controlled trials paved the way for widespread adoption.



Organizational Communication and Training

Effective AI initiatives will require active communication, training, and participation across the organization. Clear and consistent communication channels and robust training programs ensure that all stakeholders, from brand managers to technical centers of excellence, are aligned with the AI strategy.

NAVIGATING THE AI LANDSCAPE IN PHARMA: THE IMPERATIVE OF CROSS-FUNCTIONAL COLLABORATION

Crafting a cross-functional team is both an art and a science. Representation from brand management, centers of excellence, IT/Tech, medical, legal, regulatory teams, and Agency of Record (AOR) partners is essential. Collaboration with big tech and external boutique organizations expedites key experimental projects, pilots, and initiatives, navigating the evolving AI landscape.

Ten Steps to a Successful Cross-Functional AI Team:

- 1 Clear Vision and Strategy:** Define specific goals and KPIs for AI integration.
- 2 Leadership Buy-In:** Secure support and resources from organizational leadership.
- 3 Cross-functional Team Formation:** Assemble a diverse team with expertise in AI and relevant domains that include AORs, key external tech, data integration and creative partners, and naturally, MLR team representation.
- 4 Talent Acquisition and Training:** Recruit AI talent and invest in staff training.
- 5 Clear Communication and Collaboration:** Foster a culture of transparent communication and collaboration.
- 6 Data Infrastructure:** Ensure robust data infrastructure to support AI initiatives and ensure the centralized contracting considers the need to integrate and centralize appropriate HCP and patient behavioral data for a single view of the customer.
- 7 Regulatory Compliance:** Collaborate with regulatory and legal teams to develop clear guardrails and ensure compliance.
- 8 Pilot Projects and Iterative Development:** Test AI applications through small-scale pilot projects with pre-defined, cross-departmental communication plans that lead to clear guidelines for organizational policies.
- 9 Ethical and Company Culture Considerations:** Establish guidelines for ethical AI usage and embrace the cultural needs of the organization for successful integration.
- 10 Measurement and Evaluation:** Create a robust process to measure the impact of AI initiatives and specific pre-defined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

In the quest for responsible innovation, cross-functional teams emerge as the linchpin for successful AI integration in the pharmaceutical sector. By combining historical insights with a forward-looking strategy, pharmaceutical companies can navigate the AI landscape with agility, ensuring a steady and reliable path to innovation in 2024 and beyond.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Bob Brooks, formerly of Relevate Health, GSK, and IQVIA, has been a key figure in launching digital transformation and AI service offerings in clinical research and pharmaceutical commercialization. His extensive experience in team leadership and product launches has been pivotal in enabling life science companies to introduce new technology offerings, drive growth, and foster cultural shifts within the industry. [Connect with Bob on LinkedIn.](#)



PHARMA VOICES ON AI IN THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS



Ericka Higgins-Tothe

US Head, Customer Experience & Marketing Enablement, Novo Nordisk

When I think of AI, it's more front of the house, back of the house. Front of the house is more customer facing opportunities. It's the virtual assistant being there for your customers 24/7 around the clock. Taking omnichannel to the next level in terms of the sophistication of advancing personalization and content. How do we crack the code? And then if you think "in the house" - looking at our review process, we're never going to really achieve omnichannel if we don't understand hyper-personalization at scale. GenAI can help us get there eventually.



Michael Rowbotham

CFC HCP Innovation Product Lead, Pfizer

That answer is a hundred thousand different places. I'd suggest a different tact. Innovation for marketers is to understand how GenAI works. Understand the algorithms, understand the language models, and understand what goes into it so you understand what comes out of it. Once you understand how it works, then you'll see both the positive and the negative of GenAI. You've got to be aware that there are some very obvious limitations to it. But we're on the cusp of massive change due to AI. Imagine in 10 years' time - it's going to change absolutely everything. So right now, marketers need to know what you are playing with.



Michael Sivak

**Senior Director, Customer Experience and Enterprise Digital Capabilities
AstraZeneca**

I've seen GenAI used in ways that I never would've imagined. Television commercials created entirely by GenAI. Beautiful abstract artwork and music created by GenAI. HCPs using GenAI to dispute insurance denials. Amazon reviewers using GenAI to write reviews. Entrepreneurs using it to create complex websites for their businesses, in a fraction of the time. All of this has happened in the last 14 months. With that pace of change, I don't think we know yet what the bounds or limits are. This is coupled with untold billions of dollars of investment- from semiconductors and advanced AI chips to software, to companies providing GenAI services, etc. It's difficult to think of a time in history or a specific technology that has had this level of investment and progress this quickly. The old adage "we don't know what we don't know" seems to ring true of AI and GenAI. New uses become apparent every day. We may underestimate the possibilities because so much opportunity still lies ahead.



About DHC Group

Expanding on the legacy of the 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization Digital Health Coalition, the DHC Group funds and conducts research, hosts and produces industry events, while offering media and outreach opportunities for its members. The DHC Group partners with numerous industry outlets, including the Digital Health Coalition, to drive industry thought leadership forward and make research-supported content available to a broader audience of pharmaceutical, media, publishing, technology, and advertising firms interested in the future of digital health, marketing, and customer experience.

TheDHCGroup.com

For more information about The DHC Group, contact Executive Director, Christine Franklin at cfranklin@thedhcgroup.com.



Additional Resources on AI from DHC Group

[HCP & AI, Market Insights and Opportunities - June 2023](#)

[AI and The Future of Pharma Sales, Marketing, and Customer Experience - August 2023](#)