



Shifting focus from live events to adapting audiences



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April 15, 2020

AAN canceled. HIMSS canceled. AHS canceled. ACC and ASCO moved online. AACR postponed. It started as a trickle and has turned into an avalanche. Pharmaceutical companies have historically relied heavily on live events and conferences to share new data and engage with healthcare providers. These face-to-face meetings have been the hub for the dissemination of information; for interaction with HCPs and key opinion leaders; and for companies to demonstrate their commitment, showcase their product pipeline, and stay top of mind. As part of Evoke's "Overcoming COVID-19" series, this article delves into the immediate effect on in-person events and how we must rethink this long-standing way of marketing.

When your yearly marketing plan, your next product launch or label update relies heavily on live events and conferences, what do you do now that these opportunities are dwindling, maybe even evaporating altogether?

Keep your customers top of mind by creating long-term strategies that are less location-reliant and more target-specific, enabling stronger connections centered on more agile customer profiles.

Here are some quick tips on what you can do:

1. Talk to stakeholders

- For events that have moved from physical to virtual, work with organizers to create the best experience possible for viewers. If you've already put in the sponsorship, determine how you might be able to also reinvest those dollars with them at a later time
- Connect with industry associations and key opinion leaders to understand how you can support each other and explore partnerships that benefit the brand and the greater good
- Plan for the rise of micro and community events that will be the first in-person meetings to come back. Identify your key markets and prepare a geo-targeted approach to bringing offline meetings back into the mix





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2. Make the physical digital

- Transition your speaking engagements to podcasts or video interviews, and develop thought-leadership content from the presentations you were going to give
- When raising awareness and generating sales, shift to producing more targeted content that can be used in new lead-generation campaigns
- Audit or develop a new comprehensive **content marketing strategy** that ensures you have compelling personalized digital content for each of your target audience segments at key moments of their respective journeys. Use multiple formats (eg., POV decks, infographics, videos, and sound bites) across platforms from online learning, to eDetailing, to webinars
- Leverage your existing segmentation to double down on email effectively. A double-pronged approach of reaching physicians via first-party email and rep-triggered emails (RTEs), promises to be a successful channel strategy to reach physicians in the short- and long-term

3. Cut through the noise with media

- Don't cancel your media placements. In fact, plan on heavier digital endemic and programmatic advertising that capitalizes on the increased time audiences will be spending online researching, reading, and sharing information across the web and from trusted sources
- Utilize social media for quick attention. A comprehensive approach of owned and paid content is likely to be engaging and be shared, which has long-term positive effects for building trust across HCP and patient communities and creating earned content
- Revisit your paid search campaigns and increase your reach with active information seekers by expanding your disease state education (DSE) and branded paid search campaigns to support HCPs looking for information for themselves and their patients

The future of conferences and events will be forever changed by COVID-19, but the fact remains that the pharmaceutical and healthcare businesses still have the same customers they did before. Doctors, nurses, lab techs, and more still need to hear from you, and there's an opportunity to stay connected today.

If you need help in thinking about how to implement these approaches for your brand, or would just like to learn more, please reach out to business@evokegroup.com. Evoke's customer experience strategists can help through the process, from research to technology implementation.