

Deciding whether to integrate a new technology into your marketing and communications efforts can be an exciting proposition filled with potential pitfalls and problems. This point of view aims to provide you with the best potential integration points for the Apple iPad within your pharma marketing efforts and some simple steps you can take to better evaluate its value of those efforts.



The iPad is a tablet form factor computing device running an upgraded version of the iPhone OS, built by Apple Inc. Connectivity is via Wi-Fi or 3G data network through one of the following enabled communications channels:

- Email
- Safari Web browser
- iTunes Store
- iBook store eBook content
- Apple and third-party developed apps
- Games
- Social media
- Utilities



While email and Web are proven channels that can be used to reach core audiences, the iPad does not offer a truly unique differentiating feature for pharma from these channels. Similar to music and video stores, the iPad will not initially offer any differentiators over the existing delivery channels on the PC, Mac and iPhone/iPod Touch platforms.

However, mobile applications (apps) in general continue to be a steady marketing performer, and health apps are growing very quickly. Currently, there are over 150,000 apps in the Apple iTunes app store for the iPhone and iPod touch platforms. When iPad launches, nearly all of these will be available for download. In addition to these legacy apps, the iPad also offers developers the ability to create iPad-specific apps featuring interactive long-form content. This additional functionality will allow apps to take advantage of a number of the iPad's key features, including the larger color screen, support of HTML5 and faster processor. That's why, for the purposes of pharmaceutical marketing, we are going to focus on this unique differentiator—the iPad app.

To help you determine the best use of this new tablet form factor device, we need to first define the relevant areas within the marketing communications process that will benefit from larger format content and interactivity. They are as follows:

1. Sales force (presentation and training)
2. Consumer marketing
3. HCP marketing

In the following sections we will review each and provide you with recommendations and simple benchmarks to use in the evaluation of the iPad for your use.

Sales Force Presentation & Training

Overview

Closed-loop marketing (CLM) system applications have existed since the late 1990s. Primarily based on the Tablet PC form factor, they required enterprise-wide commitment to provide and train the entire sales force with expensive, sometimes cumbersome new hardware, and new interfaces that often require the sales teams to learn a new way to sell.



The iPad offers a number of advantages over the Tablet PC while retaining the majority of the core capabilities of a CLM system. At just 1.5 pounds and 0.5 inch thin, even the smallest sales reps can carry and present from it effectively. Its 9.7 inch screen will allow reps to comfortably present interactive content during a touch-screen navigated detail, and its entry-level price point is a third of the cost of using Tablet PCs.

By far, the biggest advantage that the iPad will offer sales force efforts is the large format display of content through the iPad app. Using the Apple-provided SDK, apps are relatively easy to develop and cost effective to implement and deploy. Apps built to facilitate rep detailing of interactive content to an HCP will have the same potential as a CLM system to track presentation trends and audiences, with significantly less development time and cost.

More importantly, pharmaceutical marketers can now develop their own apps for use by the sales force without having to rely on integration with enterprise-level software and design format guidelines. Users will have the ability to download new content from within these apps on demand, and marketers will have the ability to update or remove expired apps whenever needed.

Apple's Enterprise developer license even allows for private distribution of these apps to up to 500 devices within a company, without having to host the app on the iTunes app store for all to download. This internal distribution method allows companies to distribute sensitive apps and training materials with confidence that they will be secure from competitors, with the convenience of being offered through the iTunes app store.

Recommendations

- Examine your marketing plans and evaluate where a rep-delivered interactive detail would help you optimize your marketing efforts
- Plan to investigate costs and implementation efforts with internal stakeholders
- Consider a scalable pilot with select sales force members to test ease of use and physician receptiveness to content
- Engage with imc² experts to help design an iPad-optimized experience for your efforts
- Monitor and report usage and data metrics to internal stakeholders for decisions on larger scale rollout

Consumer Apps

Overview

Will consumers buy the iPad in enough volume to make it a viable communications platform for pharma marketers? Only time will tell, but Apple has over 125 million registered credit card users signed up for iTunes and mobile services, 60 million of which are iPod Touch or iPhone users. Even with only a five percent initial uptake among iPod Touch/iPhone users, Apple could sell four million units very quickly, making the iPad an early hit.

As with the sales force, size and form factor should play a significant role in the consumer's consumption of pharma-based content (in the form of iPad and iPhone apps) on the iPad. Pharma marketers looking to capitalize on the consumer target's use of the iPad should focus on long-form interactive content, as well as gaming and other edutainment-based apps.



Long-form interactive content is “Web-like” content that relies less heavily on Internet access and more on self-contained, interactive, touch-navigated experiences and data. Sample content could include any of the following and more:

- Weekly/monthly health eMagazine for disease state information
- 3D, touch interactive MOAs for disease or treatment education
- Branded support program materials delivered weekly or daily
- Social media-based content for brands or disease groups

Recommendations

As with any new marketing program, all proposed apps should be vetted to ensure their contribution to measurable brand actions and should be considered as part of a broader integrated program.

When evaluating whether to develop or not, you should consider the following:

- Conduct new, and examine existing, consumer research to validate consumer use of any proposed app
- Monitor iPad sales trends from launch to identify and quantify overlap in your customer base with iPad purchasers
- Consult with imc² to optimize your app concept for the iPad format

HCP APPS

Overview

Physicians are typically early personal technology adapters, and as a result they are already heavy users of smartphones and Web-enabled mobile devices. Nearly 80 percent of physicians have indicated that they use such devices—up from 54 percent just a year ago.

However, while early adopters for personal use, they tend to be laggards in technology purchasing for the office, relying most frequently on outside systems providers to place hardware and solutions in their office as part of a solution support plan. There are many examples of this over the last 10 to 15 years:

- Free computers for physician eDetailing
- Video display technology for waiting rooms (DVD, Laserdisc, streaming content, etc.)
- Tablet PCs for pre-consult screening and registration (Freesia™)
- Wireless PDAs for ePrescribing

If an outside company chooses to implement an iPad in the physician's office, it will most likely be locked in some way to prevent the use of other software on the device. Even if it is an open environment, it is anticipated that physicians will only utilize the iPad in the office when it is provided for them through a third party.

Recommendation

Similarly to our consumer recommendations, all proposed apps should be vetted to ensure their contribution to measurable brand actions, and should be considered as part of a broader integrated program.

When evaluating whether to develop or not, you should consider the following:

- Conduct new, and examine existing, HCP research to validate consumer and HCP use of any proposed app
- Consider partnering with third-party providers that may offer the device for use in office; viable partners will allow you to include your app on the devices they provide physicians
- Consult with imc² to optimize your app concept for the iPad format
- Consider a scalable pilot with select HCP customers to test ease of use and receptiveness to content
- Monitor HCP iPad uptake post launch, and identify overlap in your HCP database with iPad HCP use in-office

About the Author of this POV

Geoff McCleary is vice president of strategy for imc² health & wellness. A mobile and tablet computing expert, Geoff designed and developed one of the Pharma Industry's first tablet-based eDetailing CLM systems, and has led a number of mobile-focused digital marketing efforts over the last 12 years in the pharmaceutical industry.

You can reach out to Geoff to discuss your questions or comments through any of the following channels: O: 610.729.1362 E: geoff.mccleary@imc2.com T: [@gmccleary](https://twitter.com/gmccleary)



Please contact us for more information or visit www.imc2.com.

Dallas

12404 Park Central Drive, Suite 400
Dallas, Texas 75251
214.224.1000

New York City

622 Third Avenue, 11th Floor
New York, New York 10017
212.430.3200

Philadelphia

1100 E. Hector Street, Suite 100
Conshohocken, Pennsylvania 19428
610.729.1310