

A Measure of Success

Online marketing offers unique tracking potential, which industry is discovering as brands invest more dollars in the web. **Marc Iskovitz** reports

Interactive Insights

DO control your own destiny. Create compelling content that users would want to interact with

DO your homework when checking the specs on a prospective vendor's study methods

DO keep the control group clean. Use a research partner that will give you that level of certainty

DON'T treat reach media execution unfairly. Measure the impact of static and reach banner ads

DON'T try to be overly comprehensive

DON'T overlook the unique tracking opportunities that online provides

Most large pharma brands have embraced the online channel, albeit some more than others. To make sure they're getting the most from that spend, many companies turn to measurement firms.

Calculating ROI for a campaign can be more art than science, and vendors often cater to each pharma's different ROI philosophy. At the end of the day, though, it comes down to tracking what you spent vs. what you get.

Before arriving at an ROI figure, it's necessary to get a read on campaign effectiveness. Determining whether a website, banner ad or paid search strategy impacted conversion, awareness or favorability is fairly straightforward, say metrics experts.

"We want to know who's been exposed to an ad or a website and who hasn't," said Morgan Lozier, director of web evaluation in the brand and communications division of TNS Media Intelligence. "We want to measure their perception of a brand and desired outcome."

To identify the two main groups, TNS tags every ad in a campaign or brand site and surveys the exposed cohort and the unexposed control group.

Carolina Petrini, comScore SVP, suggests including all marketing touchpoints in the analysis, even taking the pulse of media, both static and interactive banner ads, no matter how insignificant you suspect their impact to be. "Impact on trademark searches, category searches, therapeutic area searches, visitation to the website—we

see media having an impact on all those things," she says.

But don't go overboard. "If the purpose [of the campaign] is to lift awareness, that's what you test for," notes Petrini. "If the purpose is to lift conversions, that's what you test for. Not all campaigns do it all."

With effectiveness figures in hand, one may then assign ROI to various aspects of the media mix.

"More focus is on making the correct media selection: do you go more mass or rifle shot," notes Dave Kweskin, SVP in the brand and communications division of TNS.

Pharma is starting to explore other corners of the web, including Web 2.0. Measuring the impact of social networking can be a little different, though. Brand managers have a tough time tracking patients' reach to other consumers about a product like they can measure more traditional web-based advertising or e-mail campaigns, says Andrew Levitt, founder of word-of-mouth marketing company HealthTalker. Levitt's "return on involvement" metric, which he is using in a customized program for Shire to raise consumer awareness about a specific



Dave Kweskin



Andrew Levitt

disease state, can help track consumers' usage, persistence and reach to others.

Having a brand profile page and getting people to "friend" your brand accounts for 70% of impact on things like purchase intent, says Jim Nail, chief marketing officer for Cymfony, which is owned by TNS, and that's more effective than buying banners and sticking them on blogs.

This medium is not only measurable; it's also effective. TNS's MarketWhys DTC Tracking Studies show website visits correlate strongly with new and total Rx's and can increase intent to contact a physician by up to 50%. Yet not everyone is as comfortable with online as with offline. Some see that changing.

While online lends itself more to doing ROI analyses, says Kweskin, "over time there will be less emphasis on ROI, simply because people understand that this medium works."