Executive Summary

Private-label over-the-counter (OTC) products are encroaching upon OTC brands’ sales with competitive prices, and healthcare information sites (e.g., WebMD.com) overshadow Google search visibilities. Due to this, leading OTC brands are moving to take advantage of branded resources not yet leveraged by either sources of threat. While tailoring a site to customer needs can be daunting, branded sites are most meaningful when a brand reduces friction, builds confidence and educates.1

Eighty-six percent of Index brands went toe-to-toe with WebMD by creating dedicated sections for health content on their brand sites (e.g., illness treatment and lifestyle adjustment advice). Sixty-six percent of those, on the other hand, differentiated themselves by providing content that details how the drugs work (e.g., method of action or MOA), a topic not extensively offered by WebMD. Finally, 31% of Index brands went above and beyond by supplementing “How it Works” information with video content, utilizing animated guides to visualize how the drugs interact with the user. Gas-X was one of the few brands that created video content to support its “How it Works” page. This in turn generated 4% of the entire site’s total page views and enabled the brand to become one of the top five brands in the Index in terms of average site visit duration.2

In addition to “How it Works” content, 17% of Index brands also offered a variety of symptom identification/management tools, and 15% provided content featuring customer testimonials. Innovative brands like Bayer Aspirin built out an interactive heart health risk assessment tool that provided not only insight into heart health risk factors (based on self-selected personal lifestyle information) but also subsequent product recommendations. Allergy brands Claritin and Zyrtec also both hosted location-based allergen trackers, with Zyrtec surpassing similar offerings constructed by WebMD by providing specific product recommendations based on inputted allergy symptoms.

Ultimately, Index brands should continue developing site content or tools that help the brand differentiate themselves from private-label brands and healthcare information sites — while ensuring that the content and tools consistently drive prospective users to purchase points.

Key Recommendations

- Continue building out unique site content/tools to boost brand visibility and differentiate from private-label brands and healthcare information sites.
- Refine customer service and couponing tool functionalities to uphold frictionless site and omnichannel experiences.
- Ensure that site content pages consistently hand off to e-commerce and omnichannel purchase points, while maintaining the quality of the purchase journey to minimize brand defection.

Pharma OTC: Types of Content on Brand Sites

July 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Dedicated Hub for Health Information Content</th>
<th>“How It Works” Content?</th>
<th>“How It Works” Content Features Video</th>
<th>Symptom Management Tools</th>
<th>Customer Testimonials</th>
<th>Customer Testimonials Feature Video</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Desktop</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 59 Brands

Source: Gartner Digital IQ Index: Pharma OTC US 2019

1. “Key Consumer Trends for Website and Email Personalization,” Gartner.
2. Gartner analysis of SimilarWeb data.

Jerry Tarn | Sr. Specialist, Research, Health & Wellness
Elena Akulova | Sr. Designer

Gartner research is based on data-driven analysis. Our findings, rankings and recommendations are objective, unbiased and independent of membership.
About Gartner for Marketers

Gartner for Marketers provides the objective, expert advice and proven tools you need to seize the right opportunities with clarity and confidence and stay ahead of the trends that matter. Benchmark your performance with data-driven insights. Prioritize investments and areas of improvement. Execute your mission-critical priorities with speed and confidence.

Gartner, Inc. (NYSE: IT) is the world’s leading research and advisory company and a member of the S&P 500. We equip business leaders with indispensable insights, advice and tools to achieve their mission-critical priorities today and build the successful organizations of tomorrow.

Our unmatched combination of expert-led, practitioner-sourced and data-driven research steers clients toward the right decisions on the issues that matter most. We are a trusted advisor and an objective resource for more than 15,600 organizations in more than 100 countries — across all major functions, in every industry and enterprise size.

To learn more, visit gartner.com/marketing