

Beyond UCPMP 2024

**From Compliance
to Competence**

By

Brand Innerworld

Healthcare Brand Consultancy & Training

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Introduction

12 March 2024, the Department of Pharmaceuticals yet again notified the Indian pharmaceutical industry with a newer code for ethical conduct through UCPMP 2024.

UCPMP was first introduced in 2014, and the code was 'Voluntary'. Although not suggested explicitly, UCPMP 2024 has omitted the word voluntary to make the code mandatory.

There can be several views and opinions on UCPMP 2024. Some may see it as a step forward, while others dismiss it as toothless. While a few may be happy that under UCPMP 2024, companies will be penalized for giving expensive gifts to doctors, others may argue that the penalty is not high enough. (Link to DoP's notification on UCPMP 2024: bit.ly/3PEp6nV)

Whatever the opinions, the big question is why should any marketer follow 'unethical practices' of promotion in the first place? Is it not fundamental to every marketing practice must be 'ethical'? Everyone in the pharma industry is undoubtedly familiar with the challenges of patients, either through personal experience or by caring for loved ones. Shouldn't this understanding not naturally inspire ethical practices?

Not every pharma brand indulges in Unethical Practice (at least not those brands we have worked with). Yet, others argue that certain practices are necessary evils as the competition is indulging in them. They will lose out in the market if they don't match up to the competition.

In my opinion, this is a limiting argument. This argument implies that the company sells 'products (molecules)' and not 'brands.' Products are replaceable; Brands are not. Brands fight market battles not by copying their competitors but by differentiating themselves to create value. When pharma brands are born out of a deep understanding of the patient's needs, desires, and aspirations, they differentiate themselves from the competition and create a demand-pull.

India is different

At a fundamental level, the Indian pharma market is different from its Western counterparts. Unlike Western markets, the Indian pharma market is dominated by Branded Generics. This practice gives ample opportunity for Indian pharma companies to build their brands and leverage the efforts for a much more extended period.

Because Western markets place a strong emphasis on patented medicines, the marketing focus is on establishing the new chemical. The patented drugs' expensive nature and

and shorter lifespans (due to patent expiry) demand molecule-focused marketing.

On the other hand, the branded generic nature of the market in India ensures cheaper medicines. Brands enjoy longer lifespans. Some brands have dominated MARKET for over 30 to 40 years. When one observes these brand journeys, one learns they were deliberately built with patients in mind.

Hence, while Western markets need to focus on newer (need not be better) molecules, India needs to focus on brands, keeping patient outcomes in mind.

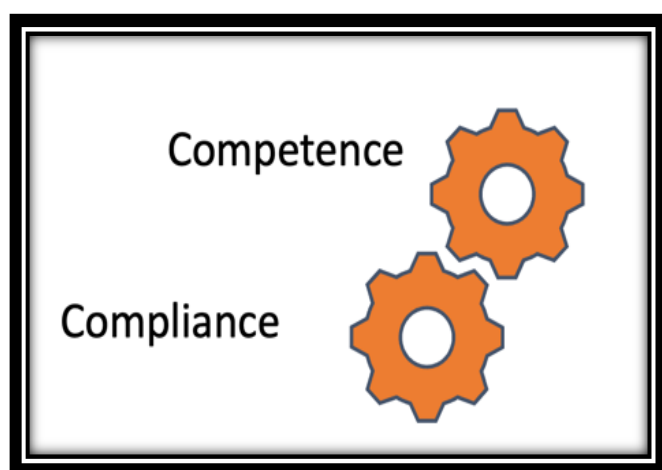
A fundamental principle of building a pharma brand is to differentiate it from the competition in a manner that the patient is ultimately benefited.

I have mentioned case studies of several strong Indian pharma brands in my book, The Perfect Pill: 10 Steps to build a strong healthcare brand. (link: amzn.to/49e8JVK)

Compliance to Competence

Having seen the pharma sector closely inside and outside India, I believe pharma companies must go beyond UCPMP compliance. They must focus on building competence.

Marketers must build competence to get deeper insights into patient's lives, their pain points,



desires, and aspirations. The brand teams must focus on the challenges physicians face during diagnosis and treatments and ensure adherence. Using these insights, brands need to provide unique value through strategic differentiation.

When brands are differentiated to provide unique value to patients, carers and physicians, an ultimate demand pull is created. This demand-pull results in a win-

win situation for patients, physicians and pharma companies.

This report highlights ten fundamental ways of differentiating brands (of the same molecule) to create a healthy demand-pull.

Use of generative AI

Generative AI is a boon for the healthcare sector in general and pharma brand builders in particular. Today's generative AI can scrape through blogs, networking sites, support group sites etc. to understand patient journeys, carer's challenges, and physician's dilemmas.

Based on this information, generative AI can suggest commercially viable solutions through formulation, packaging, promotion and media.


Generative AI helps marketers brainstorm with hundreds and thousands of experts to give unique, customized solutions, keeping the strengths and weaknesses of individual pharma brands.

This report aims to provide a direction for pharma brand marketing teams to go beyond just complying with UCPMP 2024 and build competence so that an external code of conduct becomes irrelevant. This report also highlights what is possible with generative AI and how pharma marketing professionals can leverage it.



Gauri Chaudhari
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Author The Perfect Pill:
10 Steps to Build A strong
Healthcare Brand

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10 ways to differentiate a pharma brand of the same molecule

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1

Differentiation Through Formulation

1) Differentiation through formulation

Two formulations of the same molecule ARE not the same

Many outside the pharma world believe that the two brands of the same molecule must be the same. Nothing can be farther from this belief.

Two brands of the same molecule need not be the same. They can be differentiated by ***increasing speed, duration of action, safety and tolerability, dose and dosage form convenience, bioavailability and overall effectiveness.***

Differentiated formulations provide differentiated and unique benefits to patients. Physicians welcome such brands as patient satisfaction results in boosting their practice.

Many brands in the industry have already used formulations as differentiators. Though some lack adequate brand-building efforts, they can certainly boost their presence using fundamental principles.

The brands can differentiate themselves through formulations to provide the following benefits.

- Efficacy & Effectiveness
- Safety & Tolerability
- Convenience & Patient Friendly

a) Efficacy:

Several pharma brands that have stood the test of time have differentiated and improved formulations.

Today, various novel technologies are available to enhance formulation effectiveness.

For example, patients suffering from pain or spasms need instant action. The traditional formulation of NSAIDs take 30 minutes to a few hours to provide relief. One can increase the speed of action by formulation modification. Example- NSAIDs into a soft gelatine capsule in a solubilized form, the medication can be absorbed more quickly into the bloodstream.

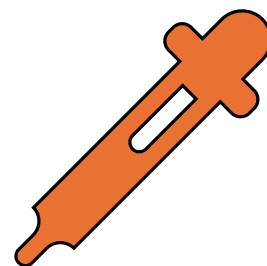
The Micellar Solubilization method can enhance an oil-soluble vitamin supplement's overall efficacy. For example, water solubility is significantly increased by incorporating vitamin D3 into micelles. This method improves D3 absorption in the gastrointestinal tract, leading to faster and more efficient uptake.

There are several ways of differentiating brands of the same molecule using novel drug delivery systems. A few technologies could be expensive; others may not. A demand-pull is created when brands are built meticulously around a differentiated benefit through formulation.

b) Safety & Tolerability:

Physicians constantly look for brands that have better safety and tolerability profiles. Brands can differentiate themselves in terms of safety and tolerability by using some of the latest technological advances.

Indian patients are often heard saying, “ *Wo wale Doctor ki dawai garam padti hai.*” (loosely translated to –“That doctor’s medicines cause acidity or stomach issues ”) or “ I don’t go to that doctor because he gives strong medicines.” What exactly is this concept of strong or ‘garam’ medicines? If one carefully understands this term, it means the medicine has GI side effects.



Can brands improve the tolerability of medicines? Can we add mucoprotective agents that soothe the stomach lining?

An ophthalmologist frequently hears patients comment, "Doctor, the eye drops increased the irritation in my eyes." Eye drops containing preservatives that affect cornea cells often cause this reaction. Can ophthalmic brands differentiate themselves by using non-irritant preservatives or creating preservative-free eye drops?

In India we do have formulations that are safer or more tolerable than others. But unfortunately, brands are not consistent in highlighting these points and building a brand around them. These points are often used as tactics.



c) Convenience and Patient Friendliness

HCPs keep looking for brands that provide convenient dosing, friendly dosage forms and ease of administration.

Brands that have managed to change the dosing option from three to two times a day or simply once a day often tend to gain unimaginable traction in the market.

Patients feel less pain when companies change their oil-based parenteral formulations to aqueous bases. They may also use microcrystalline chemical entities to provide a pain-free experience.

Today's scientific advances can help pharma companies create advanced brands at economical prices. The need is to use these advances to build brands using fundamental brand building principles.

Use of Generative AI for Formulation Differentiation

Generative AI is a boon to pharma companies as a guide in building value-added formulations. It can also guide formulation developers to quickly understand if such formulation is commercially available in the domestic or international market. A rough cost calculation can also be done within minutes to know the commercial viability of such a formulation.



2

Differentiation Through Packaging

2) Differentiation through Packaging

When pharma companies improve their packaging, customers reward them.

Patients face several issues regarding packaging. Solving these issues provides immense opportunities for differentiation.

A few of the many issues

- a) Readability issues*
- b) Structure issues*
- c) Complex language*
- d) Sameness of packing*

Readability Issues:

Several patient blogs mention this issue.

Patients, especially the elderly, who often have compromised vision, struggle to read the tiny fonts. This difficulty in reading can lead to incorrect usage of medications, potentially resulting in adverse health outcomes. Both patients and physicians welcome any brand that differentiates itself in this aspect.

Structure issues:

Most strip packs have a design issue. A few tablets are always placed in a strip above the expiry date stamp. Once the tablet is removed from its packaging, the expiry date becomes invisible, posing a significant risk.

Many packaging designs do not consider the needs of elderly patients having reduced manual dexterity or strength. Patients and physicians would welcome any innovative differentiation.

Complex language of inserts:

Many prescription medicines come with pack inserts. The language used in package inserts is often complex and filled with medical jargon difficult for an average patient to understand.

Simplifying the language and offering instructions in multiple languages relevant to the Indian demographic can assist patients in understanding and complying.

Sustainability in Packaging

Sustainable packaging in pharmaceuticals isn't just good for the planet; it's good for business. Eco-friendly choices reduce waste and resonate with environmentally conscious patients and HCPs, driving brand loyalty and boosting sales. By going green, pharma companies can stand out, attract new customers, and grow their bottom line.

Today, there is a huge need gap for any packaging innovation that would be valued by the patients and the HCPs alike.

Use of Generative AI for Packaging Differentiation

Generative AI can not only suggest structural innovations but can also design them for the marketer.

When the marketer uploads the pack, AI can suggest necessary modifications.



3

Differentiation Through Packaging Design

3) Differentiation through Packaging Design

Brands connect with patients at a much deeper level and enhance patient outcomes.

The pack design, visuals, and colors connect with patients subconsciously. In fact, when the packaging design is changed (without changing the formulation), patients complain of not getting the same result.

When a doctor prescribes 'hari patti' (Cyclopam) for stomach aches, patients feel happy because, at some point in the past, the 'hari patti' has given them tangible relief. When doctors prescribe 'Teen tikli dawa' (Dexorange), patients feel energetic even before consuming it. Thanks to the impact visual elements have on human psychology.

Also, in a country like India, where patients often can't remember or pronounce the name of the medicine, they frequently describe their medicine to doctors by mentioning the packaging elements.

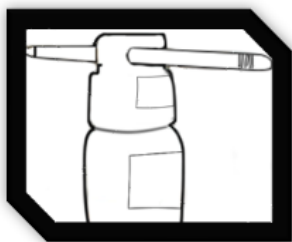


Fig 1

Several brands in the international markets show a deep understanding of patient's pain points. Fig 1 shows a brand packaging for arthritis patients. The pack helps arthritic patients to open the bottle with minimum effort.

Fig 2 shows the pack design for BID dosage, where morning and evening doses are depicted as visual reminders of the dose.



Fig 2

Any pharma brand/company ready to invest in packaging that keeps patient needs at the center would find traction in the market. A differentiation achieved by packaging can be of great value to patients and physicians.

Use of Generative AI for Design Packaging Differentiation

Generative AI can not only suggest design innovations but can also design them for the marketer. If the AI model is fed with information about the target audience and their pain points, value-added packaging differentiation ideas can be obtained at minimal time and cost.



4

Differentiation Through Market Definition and Sharper Targeting

4) Differentiation through Market Definition and Sharper Targeting

To differentiate effectively, brand needs to sacrifice.

Brands can't stand for everything; they must have a **unique** proposition. In the process of building the unique proposition, a brand may need to sacrifice several opportunities.

For example, a brand of anti-epilepsy Lamictal (lamotrigine) stands for epilepsy in a girl child. Not that it was not effective in epilepsy disorder in boys. However, given the pharmacokinetic and dynamic profile of lamotrigine, the company decided to promote the brand for epilepsy in girls and women. Lamotrigine does not adversely impact female hormones and does not have drug-drug interaction with contraceptives.

By clearly targeting the brand for female patients, Lamictal successfully differentiated itself even at the cost of sacrificing male patients.

Though not all, many pharma marketers position their brands for multiple indications. As a result of this practice, brands don't stand out in the market.

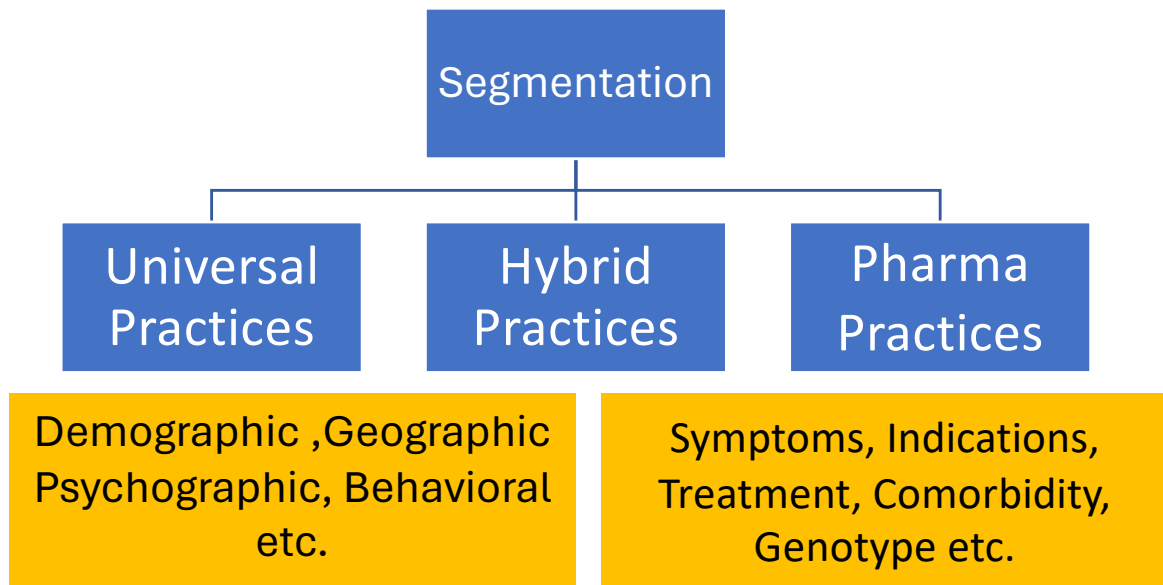
For example, a brand of propranolol can have benefits for cardiac conditions as well as in migraine. However, to establish a significant brand presence, it should focus solely on a single indication. Those brands that have sacrificed one segment for another have always benefited.

Brands can be created for specific target segments. These segments can be based on indications, patient profiles or geographies. The fundamental idea is to understand the segment correctly and then design the brand for the segment.

Brands can be explicitly targeted for specific patient profiles. Patient's needs, expectations and aspirations differ with age, gender, occupation or co-morbidities. Hence, the one-size-fits-all approach does not help.

Thus, one brand should not stand for all. Marketers must sacrifice one segment for the other to do full justice to the target audience.





Use of Generative AI for Sharper Targeting

Generative AI can help pharma marketers segment markets just in an instant with the patient and HCP segment size, their pain points, desires and aspirations. Such help from AI can improve marketers' decision-making ability while building strong brands.



5

Differentiation Through Promotion

5) Differentiation through Promotion

Promotional planning is the ultimate weapon in the marketer's armoury!

Depending on the exact pain points of the HCPs, brands can focus on creating promotional plans around one or more of the following,

Promotional plan to

- Ease of diagnosis
- Increased treatment initiation
- Ensuring compliance

a) Differentiation through promotional activities to increase diagnosis

Accurate diagnosis is the key to treatment and positive health outcomes. Lack of facilities, reluctance of patients, social stigma, and financial burden can cause delays in diagnosis.

Sometimes, very simple yet practical challenges come in the way of diagnosis. Some of India's strong pharma brands realized this situation and have differentiated themselves. Markets have hugely rewarded these brands in terms of revenue and market share.

Thyronorm, a brand for the treatment of hypothyroidism, drove a huge awareness campaign to increase thyroid diagnosis. No wonder Thyronorm leads the market.

Prothiaden, a brand for anxiety and depression, helped general practitioners spot the symptoms and diagnose mental ailments. Prothiaden continued to lead the market despite fierce competition.

Yet another example is of a skin infection brand actively seeking prescriptions from the rural market. The brand recognized that Indian female patients often hesitate to allow male doctors to examine their skin infections. Since fungal and bacterial infections look clinically different, the brand created a visual chart of various infections and gave it to rural doctors. Now, all that the doctor needed to do was ask the patient to point to the picture to describe the symptoms. Markets hugely rewarded the brand in terms of prescriptions and sales.

b) Differentiation through promotional activities for initiation of treatment

Treatment initiation is not always easy. Many patients, despite diagnosis, fail to start the prescription. One of the key reasons is the financial constraints faced by the patients.

Free samples to such patients have often helped; unfortunately, UCPMP 2024 has put a cap on it.

Another reason for failing treatment initiation is reluctance or fear of side effects.

Hence, brands can differentiate themselves by helping patients initiate therapy. They can provide patient education material, FAQ booklets, videos, and audio to help patients take the first step.

Some brands in the market have also provided ground support to patients. Given the patient load, doctors rarely find time to help patients with 'How to' queries. A company known for its injection brand for osteoporosis sends representatives to patients' homes to educate patients on how to inject themselves and receive the required dose.

c) Differentiation through promotional activities for adherence.

The patient outcomes depend on the adherence to therapy. When patients fail to adhere, outcomes are not seen, and HCPs are blamed. Hence, the HCPs greatly value any company working around adherence.

There are three main hurdles in adherence,

- Forgetfulness
- Side effects
- Financial constraints

Pharma brands can make a difference in the market in several ways. Such brands are welcomed by HCPs, creating an ultimate win-win for patients' physicians and pharma.

Incorporating adherence-focused initiatives into a promotional plan can create much-needed and valued differentiation.

Here are some interventions

Patient Education:

Clear and accessible educational materials that explain the medication's purpose, benefits, potential side effects, and proper administration. It can utilize various formats like infographics, videos, and online resources to cater to diverse learning styles.

Dose Reminders:

Simple dose reminders through pack design. Pre-filled pill organizers or blister packs marked with dates to improve medication adherence. Brands can develop their apps or tie up with already existing apps like 'MyTherapy Apps'

Patient Support Programs:

Creating digital assets to support patients and building patient communities can be a rewarding experience. There are several patient support groups operational in India. Brands can associate with them to improve patient outcomes.

Financial Assistance Programs:

Now that samples are capped under UCPMP 2024, financial assistance to patients through hospital or association partnerships can help patients immensely



By implementing these strategies, pharma brands can play a proactive role in tackling adherence challenges. Thus, benefiting patients by improving health outcomes and strengthening brand reputation and loyalty.

Use of AI and Metaverse

Today, with the advancement of technology, it is possible to assist patients in various ways. Patients can practice injecting skills using virtual reality.

Generative AI can help companies create and design customized, credible, and relevant patient material in just a few seconds. It can be created in the language of the patient's choosing.

Patients can even choose the format of the material. They can choose to receive material in text, video, or audio format. AI can create it in just a few seconds.



6

Differentiation Through 'Beyond The Pill' Initiatives

7) Differentiation through 'Beyond the Pill' initiatives

Today's healthcare is more than just pills

Today, healthcare is about more than just prescribing the correct medication to treat a patient's illness. The technological advances have significantly contributed to patient outcomes. Several pharmaceutical companies are using the Beyond the Pill approach to help patients and physicians.

AstraZeneca, a company focusing on cardiac brands, teamed up with Vida Health, a digital therapeutic and coaching company. They launched a mobile app for patients recovering from a heart attack. A heart attack is a traumatizing experience for the survivors and their families. They want to get past the event and move on with their lives with a faster and more solid recovery. The app provided digital coaches to talk to patients one-on-one. Patient education material, food journals, and lifestyle guidance were provided that ensured a faster recovery.

Vertigo is a chronic disease. Proper medications and exercises are necessary for its management. Abbott provides vertigo exercise videos for patients to manage their condition, hugely benefiting patients and gaining customer loyalty.

Alkem's Donapp is also a great initiative to help families of patients who have dementia. The biggest fear families face is: What if the patient goes missing? Dementia patients tend to wander far away from their homes. They neither remember their name nor their address. No one on the road can help them. The statistics showed that 1 out of 5 patients have wandered off at least once in their lifetime. Alkem's Dona app has a 'Location Tracker', by which the moment a patient walks out of a predefined radius, an SMS goes to two predefined numbers of the caregivers, alerting them. It also gives the exact location of the patient.



Thanks to technology, several digital prescription (DRx) tools have clinically shown improvements in patients when used alongside medicines. For example, there are DRx apps for diabetes management. These apps help patients manage stress, exercise, and follow diet plans. These apps can effectively control blood glucose levels when used along with medicines.

Providing 'Beyond the Pill' services certainly strengthens brands' market positions.

Use of Generative AI for 'Beyond -the-Pill' Differentiation

Beyond the pill, initiatives can be in the area of diagnosis or treatment.

Yet for these initiatives to be successful, they must be based on the challenges faced by the patients, their families, and the physicians. The generative AI can scrape through the internet to fetch patients and doctor insights within just a few seconds. 'Beyond the pill' initiatives can be further developed based on those insights.



7

Differentiation Through Media

7) Differentiation through Omnichannel Media Initiatives

Patients and doctors have moved their locations, and so should the brands.

Patients and doctors are increasingly becoming part of the digital world—the moment the first sign of the symptoms is experienced, patients run to Google. Physicians, too, have moved to the digital world to stay updated.

In the rapidly evolving Indian pharmaceutical market, pharma brands need to adopt an omnichannel communication strategy that addresses the complex journey of patients and healthcare professionals (HCPs) as they navigate between the digital and physical realms.

Physician Engagement in a Digital Age:

While HCPs are increasingly digital, there's a nuanced interplay between their online activities and offline expectations. They may research new treatments online but often rely on added information provided by MRs. MRs become the face of the brand that HCPs tend to trust or distrust.

Harmonizing Brand Presence:

Brands with robust online and offline strategies are more likely to create lasting impressions. The digital front can offer consistency and immediacy, while the offline front can provide personalized and experiential engagements.

The Journey-Centric Omnichannel Approach:

The omnichannel approach synchronizes the digital touchpoints, such as online CMEs (Continued medical education), advertisements, articles, and reviews. MRs provide the irreplaceable human elements (read trust of quality and accessibility) through in-clinic visits and one-on-one meetings

Instead of merely juxtaposing online and offline efforts, an omnichannel approach integrates these touchpoints around the patient and physician journeys. By leveraging data analytics and CRM systems, brands can map out these journeys and understand the unique needs and preferences at each stage.

Brands that engage with patients and HCPs at every stage of their journey benefit from increased trials and loyalty.

Use of Generative AI for Media Differentiation

Generative AI can scan through patient and HCP blog articles and social media sites to chalk out their journeys and build personas within a few moments.

Based on these personas, Generative AI can suggest a robust omnichannel journey.



8

Differentiation Through Brand Personality

8) Differentiation through Compelling Creatives and Brand Personality

“He doth the best cure whom we trust.”—Hippocrates

Hippocrates, the father of medicine, hypothesized that trust plays a vital role in achieving desired outcomes. Those patients who trust their doctors get better results.

Going forward, J.N Kapferer proved that even brands of medicine have personalities. Medications for certain diseases or disorders demand a specific type of personality to gain a patient’s trust.

Kapferer filtered down 15 personality traits for pharmaceutical brands and correlated them to the propensity of prescription. A dynamic personality works well for an anti-ulcerant brand. Cardiovascular brands must exhibit an optimistic personality, and anti-anxiety and anti-depressants must exhibit warm yet serene personality traits to instantly connect with patients and physicians.

Marketers can build brand personalities using nine tools.

| | | |
|--------|--------|------------|
| Name | Logo | Color |
| Symbol | Font | Vocabulary |
| Design | Visual | Packaging |

Brand name

It is the first and the most important tool to shape brand personality. In a global fight between Viagra and Cialis, Cialis made its mark by choosing a softer brand name that shaped the brand's personality as empathetic. The 'gra' phoneme in Viagra makes it sound masculine. Cialis, positioned for couples, used softer phonemes with s and l. My book *The Perfect Pill* talks about the Cialis case study in detail.

Brand colors

Colors play an important role. While a muddy brown tablet and the packaging of an antidepressant would bring the patient's mood further down, pink or yellow tabs would uplift the mood.



(This is not the actual logo of Trika. it is a creative depiction for better understanding)

Logo, symbol and visuals

They help brands connect instantly with patients and HCPs.

Trika, the brand of anti-anxiety, differentiated itself in the market by using the serenity of a butterfly.

Hytrin, the brand for benign prostate hypertrophy, used engaging visuals to build awareness around the disease. A patient with BPH finds it difficult to pass urine yet does not know how to explain the problem to doctors. The brand used visual depiction to help patients understand and communicate the problem.

Use of Generative AI to Build brand Personality

Generative AI can be of great help in identifying and creating clutter-breaking creatives. Today's GPTs cannot only give path-breaking brand personality development ideas but also help design the brand's creative strategy.



9

Differentiation Through Supply Chain

9) Differentiation through Supply Chain

Quality and accessibility are two critical factors for any brand to get prescribed.

The Supply Chain plays an essential role in ensuring Pharmaceutical Quality and Accessibility in India's Climate

Adaptation to India's Climate for Quality Assurance

In India's environment, characterized by extreme and variable climate conditions, the quality of pharmaceuticals is highly sensitive to temperature and humidity fluctuations. Efficient supply chain management becomes paramount to ensure that the integrity of medicines is maintained from production to delivery. Pharma companies can differentiate themselves by investing in advanced packaging and climate-controlled storage and transportation solutions. This ensures that products remain within their required temperature and humidity ranges, thereby preserving their efficacy and safety.

Leveraging the Supply Chain for Enhanced Accessibility

Given India's vast geographical diversity and infrastructure challenges, accessibility to medicines can be significantly hindered. Pharma brands can differentiate themselves by developing a resilient and flexible supply chain to overcome these barriers. This includes establishing regional distribution centers equipped with climate-controlled facilities and employing a mix of transportation modes to ensure the timely and safe delivery of medicines across the country, even to the most remote areas.

In the context of India's diverse and challenging climate, the pharmaceutical supply chain plays a crucial role in ensuring both the quality and accessibility of medicines. By prioritizing and innovating in supply chain management, pharma companies can not only meet the essential healthcare needs of the Indian population but also significantly differentiate their brands in a competitive market.

Use of AI in Supply Chain

Today, AI can help companies to ensure the quality and accessibility of medicines through the supply chain. IoT can help monitor climate data to ensure quality medicines.



10

Differentiation Through Pricing

10) Differentiation through Price

Affordability matters, but Indians seek value

It is incorrect to believe that patients make health-related decisions only based on price. People don't go to a doctor because they are inexpensive, but they go to them because they are good. Indians are a value conscious lot. They seek value for their money.

From this point of view, pharma marketers must understand that they are in the business of creating value.

The brand outside price control can use price as a differentiating tool to add value.

In the fiercely competitive pharmaceutical industry, how a brand is priced can be as crucial as the product itself. Understanding the strategic nuances behind different pricing models is essential for pharma marketers aiming to position their products in the market effectively. Among the most effective pricing strategies is the "no-brainer," "middle ground," and "investment" pricing framework.

No-Brainer Pricing:

This approach makes the prescription decision almost automatic. By setting prices significantly lower than competitors while offering substantial value, brands can quickly attract attention and market share.

However, the challenge lies in assuring HCPs of the product's quality and efficacy, despite its low cost. It's a strategy that demands careful communication to avoid skepticism regarding the product's quality. Company credentials play an important role here.

Unfortunately, this strategy does not leave enough money to invest in value-added brand attributes described earlier in the report.

Middle Ground Pricing:

Striking a perfect balance between cost and quality, middle-ground pricing appeals to many consumers. This model is ideal for brands that offer clear advantages over budget options but remain accessible to a broad audience. Success in this range requires a keen ability to convey the product's unique value proposition, (subtly) justifying its price point against both cheaper and more expensive alternatives.

Investment Pricing:

For products that offer unparalleled benefits (through any of the differentiation tools mentioned earlier in the report) or utilize cutting-edge technology, investment pricing positions a brand as a premium option.

Brands employing this strategy must deliver exceptional quality and add features through formulation, patient services, and promotion. Continuous investment in innovation, quality, and service is essential to maintain this premium positioning.

For pharmaceutical marketers, selecting the appropriate pricing strategy is a delicate balance of market understanding, competitor analysis, and explicit value communication.

Use of Generative AI for Price Differentiation

Generative AI can be of immense help to pharma marketers while deciding pricing. Within seconds, it can scrape the web to list the pricing of various brands and provide price points offered by the competition. It can further scrape the web to understand the target segment's price expectations.

Moving forward for a new launch, Generative AI can also suggest various differentiating features the brand can add to command a specific price.



Conclusion

The deliberations within this report pivot around the critical need for Indian pharma brands to differentiate themselves in such a way that they create value for patients. Though we have mentioned 10 ways of differentiation above, numerous other ways exist.

Indian branded generic market provides immense opportunities to build pharma brands and create an ultimate win-win for patients, physicians and pharma companies. In contrast to Western markets, a typical branded generic market allows brands to reap the benefits of such efforts for several decades.

The argument that certain practices are a necessary evil in the face of competition does a disservice to pharmaceutical brands' intrinsic value and potential.

Differentiation to provide unique patient benefits is the key to demand-driven market presence. Such value-building exercises negate the need for any external code of conduct like UCPMP.

While every pharma company must deliberate on UCPMP 2024 and build measures to comply strictly, there is also a need to build competence in creating value through differentiation.

Generative AI emerges as a transformative ally in this quest for brand value generation through differentiation. Its analytical prowess to decipher complex patient and practitioner narratives equips marketers with invaluable insights. These insights can lead to innovative solutions that resonate with the unmet needs of the healthcare ecosystem.

One must look beyond UCPMP 2024 to develop an ecosystem prioritizing patients. The industry's attention should be on developing competence rather than simply complying with UCPMP. ***Fortunately, generative AI can help speed up the process of building competence at a minimal cost.***

About the author

Gauri Chaudhari

Gauri is a founder of Brand Innerworld, and brings over 27 years of rich experience in the pharma and healthcare industry to the forefront of brand consultancy and training. Her expertise spans a wide spectrum of healthcare branding, including prescription medicines, OTC products, hospital services, digital platforms, medical devices, and surgical brands. A recognized thought leader,

Gauri is also the author of "The Perfect Pill: 10 Steps to Build a Strong Healthcare Brand," an Amazon best-seller.

Her current endeavours are focused on harnessing the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence to fortify healthcare brands.

About Brand Innerworld

Brand Innerworld is a consultancy and training firm specializing in the pharmaceutical and healthcare sectors, offering an array of services to enhance brand potential. Brand Innerworld's expertise includes consultancy, advanced training programs, and innovative research for in-depth market insights. With a keen emphasis on artificial intelligence, Brand Innerworld delivers ground-breaking solutions tailored to the evolving needs of our clients.