

Strategic thinking:

how can data help to navigate
the way ahead in 2021?

As the Covid-19 pandemic continues to pose unprecedented challenges, Lisa Alderson, Business Development Director at Wilmington Healthcare, explores how pharma can realise the true potential of data.



The pandemic has redefined the way pharma works with healthcare professionals (HCPs) and, as a new year dawns, Strategic Account Managers (SAMs) must continue to be fleet of foot in anticipating and responding to changing customer needs.

To understand HCPs' challenges and define how they can really add value, SAMs need granular data that can be analysed, stored and shared effectively across the business from sales to marketing and medical staff.

In this white paper, we will explore the type of data that pharma needs and how it can be deployed to develop a strategic business model that will enable and drive positive change in what looks set to be another tough year ahead.

1

Understanding the bigger picture.

Before launching a strategic plan, most companies assess each organisation individually. This usually takes the form of optimisation plans and segmentation, derived from sales and market share potential. However, despite their altruistic ambitions, few pharma companies assess the patient aspect in terms of unmet needs and access etc. or, more importantly, how they can support that organisation or health body in tackling its specific challenges and disease related objectives and ambitions.

It is vital to understand the pressure each organisation is under, both clinically and financially, and how that aligns with your own commercial proposition. For example, can you save that organisation money, change its waiting times, emergency admission rates or elective waiting lists? Do you have experience of patient support programmes or joint working initiatives that could be replicated and implemented quickly? Can you help to identify specific patient cohorts and reduce the gap between an estimated patient population and those patients who have been diagnosed and are already in a care pathway?

And then, of course, there is the elephant in the room – do you have a good relationship with the customer? What experience does your own client-facing team possess? Are you investing a high proportion of your time and budget but not getting the expected results? Is there a better channel mix, or does the relationship need some new faces? Even if there is a significant opportunity to improve a poor relationship, the road to success can be a long one and you need a clear plan to turn an account around. For high impact key accounts, it is necessary to think ahead. If the structure of the organisation is likely to change so that decision making moves elsewhere, it is important to understand the wider network with the organisation and to keep abreast of changes.

By digging deeper into the relevant data and your own experiences, you can select the key organisations where you can make the most difference and develop an agile and mutually beneficial relationship that is a win-win for patients. But remember, as healthcare evolves these organisations will change and they may merge, or launch into new units, so it is imperative to keep intelligence up to date across the entire country landscape in order to adapt the sales and medical effort, adjust plans and stay ahead of the competition.



Dig deep into the relevant data and experience to understand where you can make the most difference.

2

Managing and retaining relationships through a period of change.

As organisations evolve in the new world, the roles of HCPs, Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) and other important stakeholders are changing. People may disappear off the radar for structural or development reasons and although you may have built strong relationships with HCPs, it is inevitable that you will lose sight of some of them, especially when you cannot get the same level of access within an organisation. Again, by having the most up-to-date data linked to organisational transformation, and by highlighting role and location changes, it is possible to keep ahead and maintain your most valued relationships. Knowing the changes that doctors, nurses and administrators face gives the SAM an ideal opportunity to support them. For example, going the extra mile and sharing relevant insights, care information and data about the organisation can add value and strengthen the relationship. Furthermore, it's not just about the day job, many of these HCPs are innovators in driving change including the adoption of new technologies.

It is also important to remember that KOLs are no longer spending large amounts of time on podiums or writing articles and supporting abstracts. They are digitally active, embracing social media such as YouTube and Twitter, and seizing opportunities to share, listen, learn and influence. It is important to keep abreast of these fast-moving activities, in order to add value and remain relevant.



Have the the most up-to-date data linked to organisational transformation... recognise changes in behaviours of HCPs and KOLs.

3

Communicating with purpose.

Accessing HCPs is extremely difficult. We see so many surveys that suggest that we will not be returning to the days of face-to-face appointments and educational sessions or taking KOLs to speaker events. The recent success of online webinars, Zoom meetings and e-conferences suggests that people appreciate the scheduled and focused time spent without travel or expense. Indeed, the ability to share learning and experiences quickly with peers may stimulate further growth in agile communications. This does not mean that real time meetings will disappear, but the dynamics and objectives may change. Time is at a premium and resources are scarce, so organisations that want to implement new medical technologies and drive the adoption of innovative new medicines will need to deliver quick relevant and meaningful information based on the most current data, in a way that is quick to consume and share. Visualisation of insights, especially when delivered 'live' is paramount, so invest in infographics and simulation models that can be tailored to an organisation's approach to disease management as these will get early buy-in and allow for further deep discussion. Delivering messages that demonstrate patient benefit from the start, with the science explained via digital solutions, from e-details to interactive webinars, is key to adoption.

But remember content should always be evolving, so track interest and uptake, collect feedback and respond to it, combine artificial intelligence (AI) in your presentation so that you can see what messages are most useful to different customer groups and adapt the next phase accordingly. Also, remember to keep the conversation with every individual relevant and part of their journey with you, manage feedback and interactions alongside your SAM activity so they can build on the information shared and bring it to life in the context of the challenges their organisation is facing in terms of improving patient care.



Adapt your messaging to the next phase of communication so the conversation with every individual is relevant.

4

Monitoring progress and measuring success.

For a SAM to succeed amidst so much evolution, they must think differently, work differently and therefore be measured differently. For any relationship to be successful, the playing field must be fair and open, the SAM must have a long-term game plan and a determination to keep their eye on the prize. This means pharma and its customers must work towards shared goals with the ultimate aim of providing the very best care for patients.

It's a joint effort and everyone involved from sales to medical and marketing should contribute to it and monitor and measure the same success goals. In particular, they must focus on patient outcomes, numbers diagnosed and how initiatives have enabled healthcare organisations to turn care pathways around with positive results. We should also measure how we interact with our stakeholders either digitally or via the SAM, monitoring feedback gathered during and after online activities and using e-details to show the change in perception of an organisation overall, how well messages are interpreted, and innovation adopted.

For the SAM, we could consider the time spent with key stakeholders defining ways to work together and defining strategic objectives and tactics that will benefit everyone. These can be measured by their implementation and completion. Post meeting follow-up research could also give more subjective but meaningful insight into the benefit added by a SAM.



Monitor and measure activities
across the entire organisation, using
a blend of quantitative
and qualitative KPIs.



5

Creating a 360-degree, intelligence-led approach.

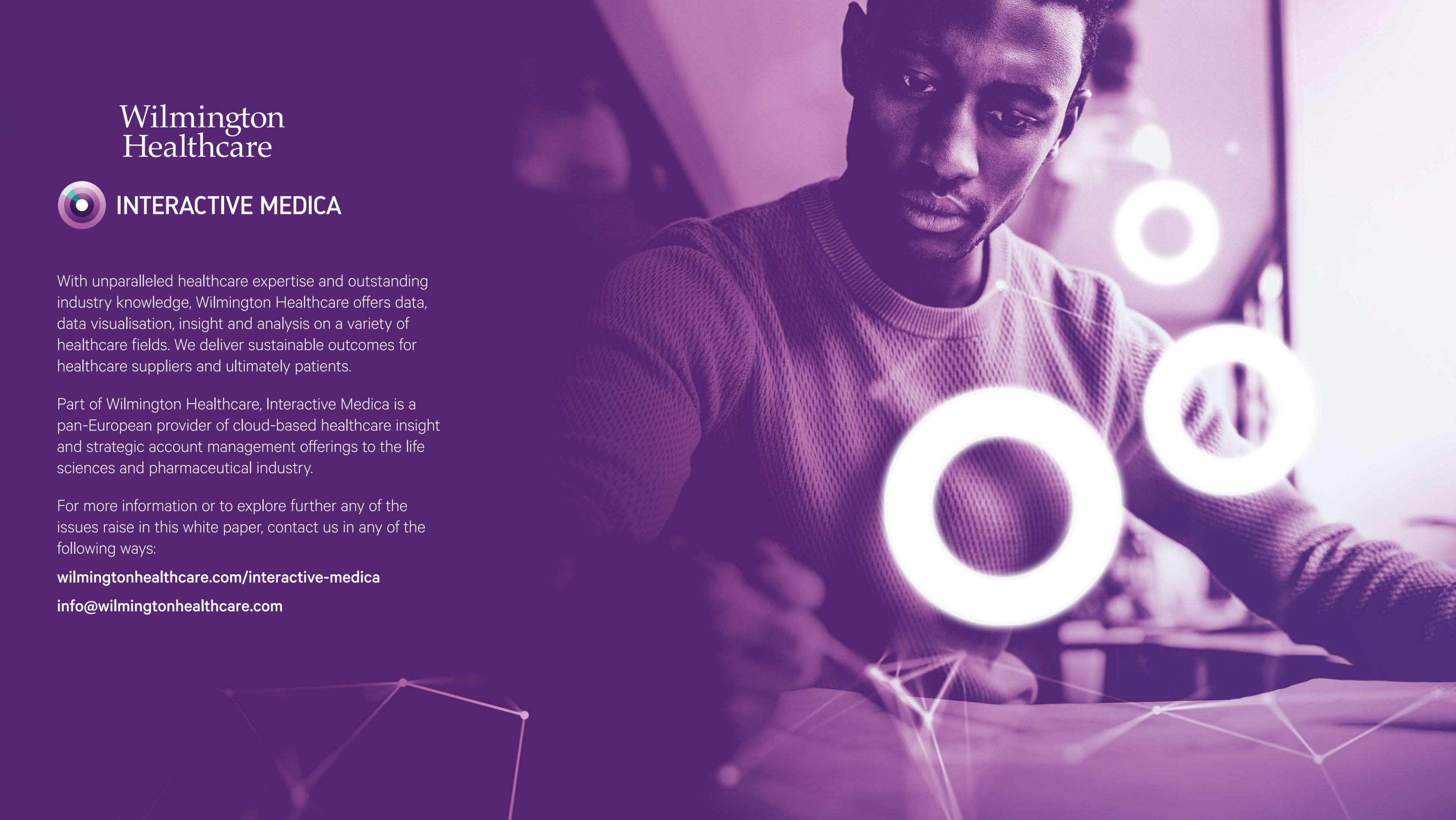
Finally, a good platform that manages all the people, places, insights and new data types is essential and not just so that a SAM can create good partnerships and plan their time effectively but also for the wider organisation. For example, marketing will need to see how the multiple touchpoints of their organisation come together to drive adoption and patient access. Medical should also be able to see the majority of this information as they work with stakeholders and need to be aligned to their colleagues in the account teams and so on, from finance to c-suite being able to look at the complete picture to see how initiatives from across the organisation are driving positive change. This is not a CRM or an add-on to your CRM; it should be an intelligent platform that will adapt to changes in the market as well as organisational needs and evolving data. Furthermore, it requires some deep strategic thinking to ensure the combined elements provide the required insight and can be used by each part of the business to support healthcare conversations and relations. It's also essential to automate 100% of the data management process to ensure compliance and continued availability.

Data is most powerful when it is shared but remember to use the most reliable, up to date information possible in the correct way as misinformation or breaches of GDPR can lead to distrust and a negative image. So, capture consents, provide clarity, track data provenance and use the data to support the customer and benefit their patients.

Finally, when it comes to data, the devil is definitely in the detail. You will need the relevant metrics in the right place at the right time, to enable informed decision making that will lead to improved patient outcomes.



Deep strategic thinking is required to ensure you have the right combination of elements to provide the required insight.



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Part of Wilmington Healthcare, Interactive Medica is a pan-European provider of cloud-based healthcare insight and strategic account management offerings to the life sciences and pharmaceutical industry.

For more information or to explore further any of the issues raised in this white paper, contact us in any of the following ways:

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