



Justification for Gamification: Why Pharma Brands Should Consider This Engagement Tactic

November 2018

Background

Gamification has evolved from the ‘hot new thing’ in marketing to being more of a ‘tried and true’ tactic. It has been trendy for several years and is only increasing in popularity. A market research report published by P&S Market Research projects the global gamification market to reach \$23 million by 2022, at a CAGR of 41.8%. This is a significant growth from \$960.5 million in 2014.



(<https://www.psmarketresearch.com/market-analysis/gamification-market>)

Growth within the Healthcare Gamification market can be [attributed](#) to factors such as increased prevalence of chronic diseases paired with patients who are becoming their own health advocates. The demand for technology, and increased use of smartphones, is allowing for an increase in the market.

What is Gamification?

Simply put, gamification is when you add the elements of a game to something, making it fun and/or competitive. To further elaborate on the formal definition, Maximize Social Business's Employee Advocacy contributor, Venkatesh Raman, [adds](#) that "Gamification is defined as an application of game-design elements such as competition or innovative challenges into non-gamified context to encourage users' engagement towards a product, tool or service."

Gamification comes in many forms, because the tactic can fit just about any medium, including print, social, augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR) and so on. It also works well in healthcare for both HCP and patient/caregiver audiences. Some examples:

• Trivia and Quiz Games (There are many examples of this in healthcare, such as <http://www.ehealthcaresolutions.com/advertisers/>)

- Diagnostic Challenges for Clinicians
- Trivia & Educational Games
- Gameshow Emulations

• Cognitive Memory Games

- Visual Match Games
- Word/Phrase Recognition Games
- Problem: Solution Puzzle Games
- Digital Board Games

• Education

- Disease-Fighting" Simulations for patients
- Treatment Simulations for clinicians

• Medical Adherence

- Point-Based Apps for Adherence
- Monetary Reward System for Patients taking medication
- Virtual reality- virtual physical therapy

• Diet and Lifestyle Monitoring

- Social Platforms
- Corporate/Employee Health Challenge Programs

What are the User Benefits of Gamification?

According to research conducted at the University of Colorado, "applied to adult learning, gamification can turn a potentially dull subject into something fun to learn. It helps learners feel invested in the learning process. Perhaps most importantly, it results in better retention of information." The study showed that adults participating in gamification tasks scored 14% higher in skill-based-knowledge assessments, had 11% higher in terms of factual knowledge, and had a 9% higher in retention rate versus adults not participating in gamification. (<https://www.intouchsol.com/blog/gamification-adult-learning-intouch-ices/>)

HCPs can benefit from gamification as it can be helpful to physician education and sharpening their skills. Beth Israel Medical Center [published](#) a study in the February 2007 edition of Archives of Surgery that touted these benefits. Surgeons who played video games at least three hours a week in their past were 27% faster, with 37% fewer errors than nonplayers in simulations of laparoscopic surgery than nonplayers.

“The health industry is focusing on capturing more metrics, learning more from its participants, and steering away from PowerPoint. The trend is moving toward delivering content through interactive simulations and case studies, movies, 3D navigable algorithms, and team-oriented learning games and challenges. We know that the best medical education and training programs challenge participants in realistic situations; extract knowledge, ideas, and best practices from everyone; deliver rich media that stimulate the senses; and portray complexity in intricate and elegant visual maps. The best education and training practices today include high-quality immersive case studies linked to dynamic simulations, team challenges, and individual feedback loops,” [according](#) to Diana Long, Principal at DML Consulting, Philadelphia.

Why are HCPs interested in Gamification?

Aside from the challenge of learning, physicians and medical students thrive from the challenge of competition with their peers. Based on a [poll](#) of 500 global MDs, administered via MedLIVE.com, 82% of MDs are interested in competing against global peers in online health games that test their knowledge.

While there’s no scientific evidence of this, HCPs have a reputation of being competitive. Suraiya Rahman, MD, assistant professor at Keck School of Medicine at University of Southern California, vouched for that in an [interview](#) with the AMA. “Video games offer competitive environments, and medical students and physicians are type A. We love to win,” Dr. Rahman said. “We love being really good at something, learning something and getting better at it.”

How can Gamification Impact the Patient?

Just as an HCP can reap the benefits of participating in gamification, so can the patient. Gamification can be applied to health tools and encourage diet monitoring, medication adherence, stress reduction and general healthcare knowledge to name a few. The benefits of embracing gaming can improve patient engagement, education and perhaps clinical outcomes.

Some may warn about using gaming in the healthcare space though and approaching goals with a different lens. Michael Fergusson, CEO of healthcare software and game design company Ayogo, [reminds us](#) that "In healthcare, you have to be careful because the goal is not to get someone to do something once, but change behavior over time." This is a stark difference when comparing the goals of gaming for Pharma vs. the consumer space where the goal is to get someone to buy a product once.

Driving Patient Behaviors

Keas, an engagement platform and health and wellness company, drives health behavior and change through their solutions. Adam Bosworth, co-founder and CTO of Keas [says](#), “We’ve found that turning health and wellness into a game for people results in massively increased engagement and improved health behaviors.” The ‘Power of Play’ game is designed to promote workplace wellness, combatting rising healthcare and insurance costs.

As presented at Digital Pharma East in 2018, HealthPrize, a digital patient adherence and engagement platform for pharmaceutical brands, [teamed up](#) with a pharma company to develop a patient support digital program for patients taking a variety of the brand's medications. Points can be earned by reporting daily medication taking, verifying refills and engaging with educational materials, and then redeemed in the form of an e-Gift card. During the initial launch of the program, there was an 85% decrease among patients in gap days between refilling their next prescription, further supporting the idea that gamification can lead to improved patient behavior and outcomes.

Other examples can be as straightforward as getting people to complete mundane tasks. ChoreWars [created](#) a program that created incentive and competition for individuals or groups to get basic chores done. This platform is versatile and can be applied to work for employees, roommates, spouses and even children. You are able to create one-off contests, or weekly leaderboards to keep up the motivation, while letting the individual select a character of their choice.

While participation in gaming can potentially lead to positive outcomes, does patient-facing gaming always need to provide an element of education? [HopeLab](#), a social innovation lab focused on designing science-based technologies to improve health and well-being of teens and young adults, currently has 6 games on the market. One of which was developed with support from a pharma company and a payor, is designed to help children understand their cancer and improve treatment adherence. According to Austin Harley, a developer for HopeLab, "It's not about knowing everything," Harley said. "It's about feeling empowerment." By empowering the patient, adherence and even overall attitude, could improve.

What are the Advertiser Benefits of Gamification?

In addition to physician and patient benefits, marketers also have invaluable benefits to sponsored gamification.

Media programs that report on Physician Level Data (PLD) have growing in importance in the industry. Unsurprisingly, pharma gamification tactics are following suit. Robust reporting with insights and physician level data are now staples in many of the programs in the marketplace. These insights allow the opportunity for brand teams to identify knowledge gaps and macro trends. Aside from campaign optimization, common misconceptions can be learned about the brand and disease state; these learnings can be used for future campaign messaging.

Some programs also offer the opportunity for utilization with sales representatives in the field, and marketing teams at conventions. Level Ex has seen that their VR/AR demos at Physician Conferences have led to 79% increase in traffic, 48% increase in leads and 63% increase in opt-in for follow-up communication from 2016 to 2017.

Gamification assets can be developed for multiple utilizations creating cohesive, multi-touchpoint campaigns that can be utilized for both personal and non-personal promotion.

We've barely scraped the surface when combining AR/VR gamification with the utilization of PLD. Just thinking of the data and learnings when HCPs are eagerly embracing new, exciting technology to educate themselves and further their skillset.

Gamification Case Study

One of the most popular examples of success in gamification comes from Nike in the consumer space. Nike [created](#) a personalized app called Nike+Fuel, where runners could keep track of their running activities. Nike set a business goal of connecting with customers to obtain data. The app itself incentivized the customers to compete against each other's running achievements- competing against each other to earn virtual awards of trophies and badges. Customers were encouraged to share their results via social media. Not only was Nike able to gather personal data about its users, they were able to boost brand awareness and loyalty.

CareerBuilder is the latest advertiser to [get involved](#) in the AR gamification game. This comes as a part of their recent iOS app relaunch, with the Android version shortly to follow. Instead of searching for Pokémon and Pokéstops, the lens of your cell phone is used for looking for nearby employment opportunities and salaries. At some point in the future, a gamification component will be added, and users can earn points to do things like invite their friends. Just think how many people will end up seeing that listing? While the results aren't in on this new technology, this brand took a step outside of the box to try out something new.

Gamification has been around. AR/VR is on the rise. However, unlike the Nike example that came up in almost every gamification search, there aren't a plethora of case studies for AR/VR gamification, let alone diving into the PLD opportunities. It's time to become that example of success, or in the very least gain invaluable learnings in the process.

Recommendations

While a number of brands are utilizing gamification and their successes are growing, it is first important to make sure it's a fit for your brand. When considering a gamification tactic for your campaign, it's vital to start by asking how it fits into your overall marketing plan.

- It's not all fun and games. Any gamification tactics must be rooted into the overall media and marketing strategy. There needs to be a reason for your target to play this game and an action you want them to take.
- What can a patient or physician gain by interacting with a game? Although you have your sights on the data, you need to provide a reason for them to give it up. The customer needs to have a positive experience.
- Are your desired results even achievable by gamification? While likely outcomes include data, audience insights, awareness and even sales lifts, expectations must be realistic. As previously noted, gamification should fit in with your other tactics and KPIs should be set accordingly.
 - Based on M3/MDLinx's experience with their SmartestDoc game, they have found that gamification tactics align best with strategies focused on awareness and competitive blocking.
- Can your brand team/creative agency support the game development? While some opportunities are more turnkey than others, additional development time and legal review hours may be necessary.

Get started by reaching out to your CMI/Compas contact to learn more about gamification opportunities and to see it's a fit for your brand.

Analysts

Michelle Perkel
Supervisor, Media
CMI

Chelsea D'Ariano
Media Planner
CMI

