

Indian pharma in need of digital pill says report

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Most pharmaceutical companies in India - both multi-nationals as well as domestic are still shying away from leveraging the huge opportunities that exist on the digital platforms, a new study released by D Yellow Elephant (www.dyellowelephant.com) on July 22, 2015 revealed.

Titled 'Indian Pharma Digital Health Report 2015', this first-of-its-kind report analyzed as many as 40 pharmaceutical companies in India across 10 key digital parameters, ranging across websites, apps and 10 social media platforms, namely Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Google+, Instagram, Pinterest, Vine, Slideshare and Blogger.

The report has segregated all firms in key buckets of Digital Primes, Aspirants and Onlookers basis analyzes of presence, engagement, response, and consumer followership among few key parameters.

According to Mr Aman Gupta, managing director of D Yellow Elephant, "The Pharmaceutical sector in India, whether Indian companies or global players, they are atleast 5-7 years lagging behind their global counterparts and if compared to other sectors, the time lag could go upto 10 years and above. Ironically, some of these same companies abroad are seen to be proactively using digital platforms to engage with health care professionals (HCPs) and patients," he said, explaining that this report is an attempt to help the pharmaceutical sector entities in India catch up on the time gap, identify the loopholes and help them incorporate digital medium in part of the decision making process.

Highlighting the key findings of the report, Ms Chandni Dalal, lead, Digital Strategy at D Yellow Elephant said, "Out of 40 companies surveyed, only nine companies managed a score above 50 over a scale of 100 points. This shows the reluctance to effectively engage with their stakeholders on the digital platform."

"The report is an attempt to underline the opportunities that exist and draw a roadmap for these pharmaceutical companies in India to engage better with the HCPs, and the patient community," she said that with the advent of smartphones across geographies, it is high time that the potential is realized. "What better way than effectively use these platforms to bridge the gap to healthcare access in a country like ours," she explained.

According to Ms Dalal, "Some of the results have been predictive with LinkedIn emerging as the most popular social media

platform, with 95 percent presence; but only about 14 companies showing an active engagement. For their part, pharmaceutical companies in India are venturing on the digital highway, but basic building blocks like having an India specific website is still amiss." Only 30 percent companies have an India specific website.

In the age of quantified self, Indian patients and HCPs are exhibiting an expectations market, with the advent of digital health, big data and dialogue exchange; Indian pharma has long stayed behind the curve on social media.