



clarkston
CONSULTING

2024 INDUSTRY TRENDS:

LIFE SCIENCES

COMMERCIAL

(SALES + MARKETING)

As we look to 2024 and beyond, technology continues to enable the trends impacting commercial organizations within the life sciences industry. Whether it's adapting to new regulations or evolving the path to content delivery, Commercial and Marketing Operations leaders will need to understand changes in the rapidly evolving technology that supports their business.

Today, we're breaking down the 2024 life sciences commercial ([sales and marketing](#)) trends, focusing on the impact of technology on commercialization key decisions, modular development of marketing materials, and evolution of commercial data.

1

COMMERCIALIZATION: KEY DECISIONS FOR COMMERCIAL ECOSYSTEMS

2

MARKETING: RISE OF IMPLEMENTING MODULAR MARKETING CONTENT

3

COMMERCIAL ANALYTICS: AI INTEGRATION IN COMMERCIAL PIPELINES

1 COMMERCIALIZATION: KEY DECISIONS FOR COMMERCIAL ECOSYSTEMS

In a landscape of limited investment, [life sciences organizations](#) continue to prioritize choices on where to place their bets. This is most evident in their pipeline strategy decisions as organizations slow down and [speed up development activities](#). However, companies are making similar choices in their [commercialization strategy](#) when selecting a commercialization model to take their first or subsequent drugs to market.

Outsourcing various commercial functions – either through a partnership with another pharmaceutical company or a third-party provider – is often considered as commercial leaders make decisions on ways to limit investment.

As organizations define the parameters around launch, it's critical to understand how those decisions impact the necessary commercial ecosystem of [capabilities that will be required to support them](#). For example, while outsourcing field engagement may save headcount costs, it will require a robust set of integrations to provide the necessary data from the third party.

Organizations that facilitate cross-functional discussions across Strategy, Commercial, and IT organizations early in their commercialization journey will be ahead of the pack. By understanding the impact of outsourcing various commercial functions on the IT enablement roadmaps, [commercial leaders will ensure capabilities](#) are available in time for launch and appropriate data feeds are in place in key areas like transparency reporting, monitoring, and pharmacovigilance.



2 MARKETING: RISE OF IMPLEMENTING MODULAR MARKETING CONTENT

Foundations of Modular

On the Marketing Operations side, the future of promotional and non-promotional materials is trending toward modular content. While [the concept of modular](#) isn't new, 2023 was a year when organizations truly dipped their feet in the water to build an ecosystem to support modular. The idea behind modular content is that each component of a traditional piece of content – claims, logos, infographics, photos, etc. – can be reviewed and approved through the Medical, Legal and Regulatory (MLR) process at an individual level at the outset and then added to a content library. The promise here is a faster, more efficient MLR process, where content creators can pull pre-approved components as building blocks for new promotional materials.

By having the MLR team review and approve individual aspects of content, building up a strong pre-approved content library and creating materials could be as simple as drag-and-dropping the appropriate claims, graphics, and logos. At this point, the need for rigorous stages of approval is minimal. The modular revolution pushes the concept that because the components are all approved, the sum of the parts (the finished promo or non-promo material) is approved. However, regulatory teams are still determining each organization's comfort level with this approach.

Modular Technology

While streamlined approval processes reduce the time from material creation to bring that content to market, the potential goes much further. Creating templates and using plug-and-play methodologies with approved modular content libraries makes creating promotional materials for different marketing channels extremely easy. Utilizing a



few options for templates facilitates the creation of omnichannel marketing materials with ease, whether its pamphlets, posters, banner ads, or social media posts in the pre-approved formats. This can help organizations reduce reliance on agency partners and the investment in tackling every modular iteration as a new piece of creative – an approach that can make the push to personalized content cost-prohibitive.

The capabilities of modular content also have immense potential for interaction with the budding [use of generative AI](#). Organizations are piloting approaches for promotional material generation via artificial intelligence. [Generative AI can be employed](#) to create content for specific audiences, demographics, and marketing channels by pulling from the modular content libraries of the respective segments that align with your brand’s marketing strategy. Several foundations are required for organizations to take this leap.

A robust Promotional Material repository, such as the Veeva PromoMats platform, supported by a Digital Asset Management library, is critical to provide a source of approved materials for the AI. These solutions can be supported by an existing claims library; however, organizations that don’t have one in place can employ AI to generate it. Finally, commercial teams need clear differentiation of target healthcare providers (HCPs) by market segment and stage of their adoption ladder so each piece of content can go to the appropriate audience.



3 COMMERCIAL ANALYTICS: AI INTEGRATION IN COMMERCIAL PIPELINES

On the Commercial Operations side, technology is innovating the path to commercial data management. This next evolution of AI within Commercial Analytics creates an opportunity for Commercial Ops and Commercial IT collaboration around using AI to talk to commercial data and enable commercial data strategy.

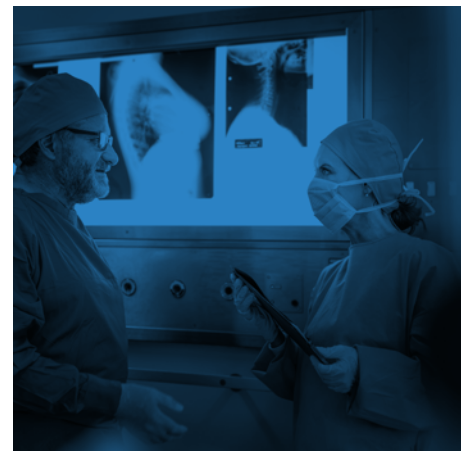
Using AI to Talk to Commercial Data

Most recently, the focus of AI has been centered around language models (words), so it can seem counterintuitive that AI can be used to interact effectively with data; however, as life sciences organizations, we don't interact with our data on numerical terms either. Previously, a data analyst or engineer was pulling data or setting up a data pipeline using a coding language. That data was often further prepared by someone from a commercial operations or insights team to be digestible, as a "story" to leadership either in constrained dashboards or a constant cycle of PowerPoints.

Firms can unlock huge efficiencies in insight generation if commercial teams can communicate directly and creatively with their data. AI can suddenly enable language-based data interaction. Large language models (LLMs) are excellent at querying databases based on natural language input and understanding nuances of engagement and claims data. While any business users are adept in preparing data in Excel and gathering insights, there is a significant barrier to querying claims or HCP activity data. This creates an opportunity for AI to help.

AI Enabling Commercial Data Strategy

Additionally, pharma companies are finding opportunities to use AI to enable commercial data strategy. The industry is realizing that large data governance projects aren't feasible in the commercial space given the constant ingestion of new data



sources and the need for ongoing commercial business support. Without them, organizations may not be well equipped for long-term data management best practices that keep commercial data clean. Advances in AI technology, however, have enabled fast-tracking these previously arduous manual exercises.

While the use of AI tools isn't a replacement for commercial data stewardship by the operations teams, integration of generative AI into data strategy allows for better scaling of these activities. Technologies such as Databricks Unity Catalog and Atlan have rapidly developed to provide greater visibility into data lineage, immediate documentation, and improved data access/control. Imagine a claims data file with dozens of columns used for a specific task. Generative AI can quickly create a data dictionary of column contents and the range of values or distinct categories in each column.

While generative AI is a rapidly developing technology and can still make mistakes, this initial automated output reduces hours of manual effort previously required by commercial data analysts/engineers. This process can be automated for every data refresh instead of manual maintenance saving valuable time. Understanding where and how data is stored in distinct stages is also critical for life sciences organizations that often change data vendors or procure new data sources. AI can help automate this typically time-consuming manual activity for the team. When it comes to commercial data, integration of AI into existing systems and technologies can reduce the effort needed to bring organizations to a higher data standard.





For commercial leaders looking toward the future, embracing technology to ensure compliant and effective business practices will be key. Enabling field-facing teams with communication technology and modular content will help organizations provide targeted information at the right time in the best way. Further, leveraging AI to manage data behind the scenes will reduce the effort to maintain that commercial ecosystem. By strengthening partnerships between Commercial and Commercial IT organizations, leaders can bridge the gap to weather these trends into the future.

ABOUT CLARKSTON CONSULTING

Businesses across the life sciences industry partner with Clarkston Consulting to enhance strategic decision-making, improve operational efficiencies, implement new technologies, and promote business growth and market diversification. Leveraging deep functional and industry expertise, our people discover, design, and deliver solutions that fit your business, your goals, and your future. At Clarkston, your purpose is our purpose.

For more information about how we can help your company, [please contact us](#).

