

Maximizing Impact of Data Disclosures: A Guide for the Publication Professional



Maximizing impact of data disclosures: a guide for the publication professional

Publications teams are increasingly seeking innovative ways to maximize the visibility and impact of their scientific data disclosures. In a landscape of increasing demand for personalized content and growing competition for attention, the traditional approach to medical publications – focused primarily on journals and congress presentations – is no longer sufficient to drive deep engagement and real-world impact, at scale. To effectively reach all audiences and ensure scientific insights drive real-world clinical outcomes, we have an imperative to explore novel approaches to data dissemination, such as audience-centric omnichannel communication.

Yet all too often, in our extensive experience working with organizations, teams encounter significant obstacles to innovating in this area. One challenge frequently encountered is a lack of integration between Publications teams and some of the Medical Affairs functions responsible for external engagement, such as the Scientific Communications (SciComms), and the Digital Engagement teams. As the remit of many Publications teams may end at the point data are published, it is important that these other functions come together consistently to take an integrated approach to extending the reach of data, working cross-functionally under the shared purpose of driving awareness of, and engagement with, data – through communications tailored to their target audience's needs and behaviors.

Through our experience with various Medical Affairs teams, we've seen inconsistent implementation of cross-functional integration. While some companies excel, many need broader, integrated change management.

Obstacles to innovation

We have observed a number of obstacles to organizations adopting innovative approaches to data dissemination; these are summarized below:

- **A siloed approach, arising primarily due to legacy structures, competing departmental priorities, and distinct budgeting processes:** The traditional focus of the Publications team is to produce high-quality scientific outputs. Operating often in a siloed manner, SciComms teams are driven by specific KPIs that emphasize direct external engagement and impact. This can often lead to gaps in communication, with each group lacking insight into the strategies, objectives, and ongoing activities of the other. These factors can result in a lack of ownership of innovation in the area of data dissemination.
- **Budget constraints and misaligned prioritization of innovation investments:** Many teams are mandated to extend the reach of publications using specific formats, such as plain language summaries (PLS), often due to evolving compliance or transparency expectations. These are essential, but may mean there is little capacity or appetite to invest in broader innovative formats or digital engagement strategies for publications. This creates a false dichotomy between compliance and innovation, when in reality both are imperative and should be strategically balanced.
- **Lack of clarity around internal vs. external data extenders:** There is often confusion between publication extenders developed and submitted with congress or journal submissions (e.g., graphical abstracts, PLS) and data extenders initiated and distributed by pharma-owned channels. While the former are well established, the latter can face greater scrutiny internally due to concerns around promotion, compliance, or perceived bias. This ambiguity can hinder the adoption of impactful digital tools that could responsibly and compliantly extend the life and reach of data.
- **Limited awareness and understanding of available digital and omnichannel tools among Publications teams:** Publications professionals have deep expertise in traditional publication formats, such as peer-reviewed journals and congress presentations, and in more recent times, the use of traditional digital publication extenders and PLS, but in some cases they may lack familiarity with newer digital platforms and omnichannel communication strategies. Without targeted training and continuous professional development in these areas, teams may be hesitant to adopt innovative dissemination practices.
- **Regulatory uncertainty regarding the dissemination of publications through novel channels:**

While digital and omnichannel strategies present significant opportunities, the complex regulatory environment surrounding pharmaceutical communications can create uncertainty. Publications teams may lack clear guidance on how to compliantly leverage new channels, such as social media, third-party digital platforms, or interactive digital assets. This uncertainty can lead to cautious approaches, significantly limiting the scope and effectiveness of digital dissemination efforts. This is especially true with social media given the guidelines set out in Good Publication Practice that such outreach may appear promotional even where the intent is to educate [1]. Done properly, however, from a central social media account with appropriate sign-off, this is usually acceptable [1].
- **Cultural resistance within organizations, where traditional channels like journals and congresses remain dominant due to established reputations and perceived prestige:** Many organizations continue to prioritize traditional publication outlets due to their established credibility through the peer-review process and historical prestige. This preference is often reinforced by internal recognition systems and external author expectations, leading to cultural resistance to adopting newer digital platforms. Overcoming this ingrained behavior, requires intentional efforts to shift mindsets, demonstrate the tangible benefits of novel additional dissemination methods, and build confidence through pilot projects and visible successes.



Overcoming this ingrained behavior, requires intentional efforts to shift mindsets, demonstrate the tangible benefits of novel additional dissemination methods, and build confidence through pilot projects and visible successes.

A path forward: practical solutions for integrated publication strategies

Overcoming these obstacles requires a deliberate shift toward integration, communication, and collaboration across teams. Here are practical steps that can help organizations move toward a more integrated and innovative approach to data dissemination:



1. Establish a cross-functional publications innovation committee

A cross-functional committee provides a formal governance structure that drives alignment, fosters collaboration, and ensures strategic coherence across all functions involved in scientific data dissemination. In practice, this could be a subset of the overarching publication steering committee jointly setting annual objectives for publication and communication activities, establishing shared timelines and responsibilities for major publication milestones, and agreeing on key thematic educational themes and priority data sets for cross-functional amplification.

The committee may also oversee the development of integrated content maps, coordinate the rollout of omnichannel dissemination campaigns, and serve as a forum for troubleshooting challenges that arise when executing across teams. External partners such as medical communication agencies or digital platform providers can also be integrated into the committee to share insights and innovative ideas, and support with strategy development and implementation.

A background image showing several hands of different skin tones stacked together in a circle, symbolizing teamwork and collaboration. The image is overlaid with a blue-to-teal gradient.

External partners such as medical communication agencies or digital platform providers can also be integrated into the committee to share insights and innovative ideas



2. Develop unified publication and communication plans

By creating integrated plans that detail publication milestones alongside digital and external engagement activities, organizations can better identify potential opportunities for cross-functional communication and alignment. This approach differs from the traditional model where publication planning may be done as a separate activity, with sub-optimal visibility into wider Medical Affairs or SciComms timelines. By synchronizing efforts through a shared calendar, teams can proactively plan joint initiatives – for example, aligning a major publication release with a digital thought leader campaign, or timing a webinar to closely follow a new congress disclosure. This not only improves efficiency, but also ensures a unified voice and maximizes impact opportunities across channels.

Once integrated plans have been established, regular joint planning sessions allow for ongoing identification of opportunities for leveraging existing digital channels, events, and activities for greater amplification.



3. Conduct omnichannel capability training

We define omnichannel as the deliberate audience-centric approach that allows us to identify the right channel for the right target segment through a tailored communication that delivers impact. To that end, the implementation of focused, interactive training workshops centered on omnichannel strategy, digital content creation, and navigating compliance in digital environments is instrumental in raising baseline knowledge across the cross-functional team and encouraging collaborative ideation of omnichannel approaches to extend the reach of key publications.

Continuous learning resources, such as e-learning modules and expert-led webinars, can further help the team reinforce and update their skills.



4. Reassess budget allocation frameworks to enable innovation

Incorporate strategic innovation funding into annual publication budgets to ensure balanced investment across mandated deliverables and novel dissemination formats. Jointly reviewing and prioritizing dissemination needs across Publications, SciComms, and Medical Affairs can help unlock resources that support creative, audience-centric strategies without compromising compliance obligations.



5. Create clear guidance and governance for digital data extenders

Develop and socialize internal frameworks that distinguish between congress/journal-linked extenders and pharma-owned dissemination tools. Providing teams with clear definitions, compliance pathways, and use-case examples can demystify what is permissible and effective, encouraging the responsible use of new formats to drive engagement.

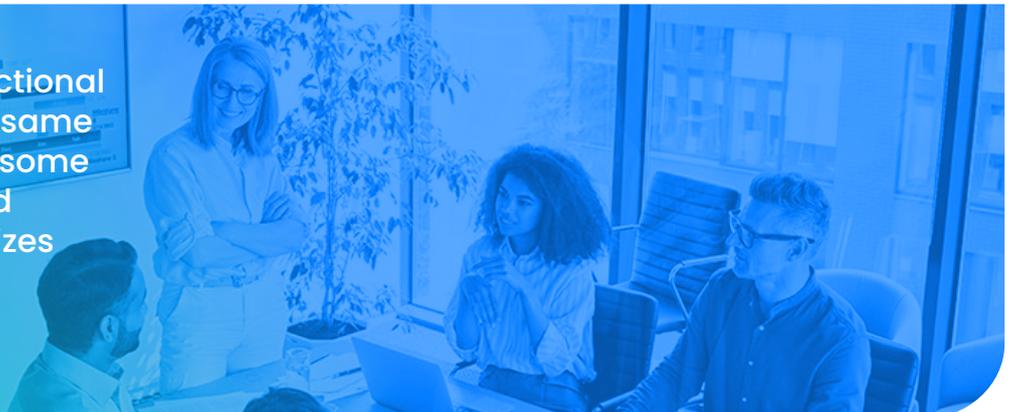


6. Define shared metrics and KPIs

Developing specific, measurable, shared KPIs will further reinforce an integrated approach. The metrics utilized could span across multiple dimensions, that truly measure value and impact in a unified manner:

- **Reach:** How many HCPs are viewing our data and publications?
- **Engagement:** How many HCPs are taking further action (e.g., navigating to view further content, or sharing with colleagues)?
- **Impact:** Are we increasing HCPs' levels of awareness and knowledge, as a result of having viewed our publication? Is our data enhancing perceptions of the scientific advances in the therapeutic area, understanding of an asset's role in clinical practice, or confidence using it? Are we impacting better patient outcomes?

Aligning cross-functional teams to track the same metrics and share some KPIs creates shared goals and incentivizes collaboration.



Reference

1. DeTora LM, Toroser D, Sykes A, et al. *Ann Intern Med.* 2022;175(9):1298–1304.

First steps: a checklist for Publications teams

The preceding solutions can take time to implement, but Publications teams can be a catalyst for change by initiating cross-functional connections and conversations. Here, we provide a checklist of questions that Publications teams can ask – both of themselves, and their cross-functional colleagues – to begin rethinking how data are disseminated:

Checklist Questionnaire	Yes	No
• <i>Do we have visibility of the wider Medical Communications strategy and how our Publication plan aligns?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>Have we clearly and proactively communicated our Publication plan to all relevant Medical Affairs stakeholders?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>Have we set regular cross-functional clearly defined meetings to ensure alignment and allow adjustment of our Publications and Medical Communications strategies accordingly?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>Have we allocated sufficient budget for innovative formats beyond mandated deliverables like PLS?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>Are we clear on the differences between congress/journal data extenders and pharma-owned dissemination tools, and do we have governance in place to use them compliantly?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>Have we identified digital and omnichannel opportunities to amplify the reach of our publications?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>Have we involved our regulatory teams and aligned with them early enough in the process?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>Have we created and agreed on KPIs and impact measures to track the integrated success of our data dissemination?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

By addressing integration challenges head-on and adopting a strategic, unified approach to scientific communication, pharmaceutical companies can significantly enhance the visibility and real-world impact of their scientific publications. The aim should not merely be to publish but to ensure the right audiences engage with critical scientific insights effectively. The importance of this cannot be overstated given the ultimate goal for all of us is to drive better clinical decision making that improves patients' lives.

To continue the conversation and collaborate on bespoke integrated strategies that drive publication excellence and innovation that works, please contact us at: info@primeglobalpeople.com

Let's create impactful solutions together!



Empower your science to change more lives faster.
info@primeglobalpeople.com