

HOW WALGREENS IS USING PHRASEE TO BOOST VACCINATION RATES



Artificial intelligence.
Human language.
Awesome.



Walgreens

"It's just marketing; we're not exactly saving lives here."

If you've been in marketing long enough, you've heard this phrase around the office (usually when someone is freaking out about a deadline).

But in the case of Walgreens, these days, **its marketing actually CAN help save lives.**

As a key partner in the COVID-19 vaccine rollout, **getting information to its customers is critical.** But if its customers don't engage with its informative content, how many infections are happening that could have been prevented? For once, the stakes for its marketing team – and the world – are VERY high.

Luckily, Walgreens has some tricks up its sleeve to boost customer engagement.



If we only have one shot to get customers to engage and get a vaccine today, how can we put our best foot forward?



Brian Tyrrell, Senior Director,
Customer Marketing Platforms – CRM, **Walgreens**

It all starts with email

As Brian Tyrrell, Senior Director, Customer Marketing Platforms – CRM at Walgreens tells us, "We knew that our largest owned channel in terms of reach was our email channel. **We had the opportunity to communicate with 50 million customers there.** So when we started rolling out communications about testing, and now the vaccine, **it was never more important to ensure that these customers were opening that content.**"

Phrasee was the key to getting those emails opened and those customers engaging. With Phrasee, **open rates were boosted by 30%**, which meant 30% more people getting information about available vaccine appointments, which could mean up to **30% more Walgreens customers getting protected.**

Anyone familiar with email marketing knows that a 30% uplift in open rates translates to a **significant sales impact.** So even though Walgreens is on an altruistic mission to change healthcare for its customers, have the efforts also resulted in positive impacts for its bottom line?

The answer is yes. **"The impact is in the \$ millions."**



30%

average open rate uplift



\$millions

commercial impact

From opened emails to an entire customer experience

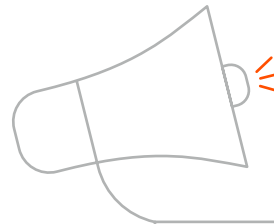
But along the way, Phrasee has partnered with Movable Ink, Adobe and Walgreens not just to improve open and engagement rates for emails, but to **improve the end-to-end customer experience**. It started with finding better ways to say the right thing. Because of Phrasee's deep learning, **it gets smarter with every send**. Over time, the learnings from Phrasee were shared with Walgreens's marketing team, which helped everyone create better content.

Brian looks back to the beginning of the pandemic: "In March of 2020, it was important that we **change our use of emojis**. We didn't want to use the red alarm bell emoji on an email that was about a deal anymore. If we were going to use that type of urgent emoji, we wanted to make sure that it was being used in a way that **matched the level of severity that was covered in the content**.

And so the folks at Phrasee helped us understand how customers were engaging with different parts of those subject lines, to know where to tone down, and where to tone up certain parts of our brand language. We also made everything much more simplified so that customers could digest the content of our emails as easily as possible.

So Phrasee helped us to simplify our emails, its team partnered with us on **altering our tone to make sure it was appropriate**, and to some extent, tone down some of the fun language that was providing very successful results in a promotional sense, but wasn't relevant during the time.

One of the most important elements here is that we **maintained a very consistent and authentic tone of voice**. We take a lot of this feedback loop that we get from Phrasee to roll back up into how we develop brand tone as a brand in its entirety. And so I think that consistency, and that authenticity is something that is a core part to the role we're playing right now."



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Movable Ink



Adobe

The future gets a shot in the arm

So what's next for Walgreens? **It won't rest until everyone has been vaccinated**, and it's bringing Phrasee along to help get it done. But the partnership has expanded beyond optimizing email subject lines – now Phrasee and Adobe are **helping optimize messaging throughout the entire end-to-end customer experience**.

"Phrasee's really good at subject lines. But what's next, how can we use this for app push messaging? How can you power the content within our emails instead of just the subject lines? So we're really expanding our partnership into other areas."

Walgreens can see that optimizing across the whole customer journey is important so that customers can get **consistent messaging at every stage**.

"When we talk to our technology partners, like Phrasee and Adobe, Microsoft and Movable Ink, if we only have one shot to get customers to engage and get a vaccine today, how can we put our best foot forward? And I've really appreciated the partnership that we've seen from Phrasee to aid in what's been a challenging year, and I think it's a **very optimistic future** we have collectively."



The last 12 months have expanded our team's mindset about what's possible when it comes to optimizing our brand language for both maximum reach and commercial impact. As we apply our learnings across all of our digital channels, with a laser focus on continuous improvement of our customer experience, I feel the best is yet to come where our partnership with Phrasee is concerned.



Brian Tyrrell, Senior Director, Customer Marketing Platforms, **CRM, Walgreens**