BioInformatics
A SCIENCE & MEDICINE GROUP COMPANY

Mastering Your Life Science Customer's Expectations

From Marketing to Overall Experience

Life scientists engage with their suppliers every day — from receiving marketing materials in their mail (both physical and digital), to advertisements on social media, to purchasing products, and working with their suppliers' customer service and technical support teams.

All of these experiences contribute to a customer's perception of a life science brand. Understanding expectations and trends at these customer touchpoints is vital to maintaining customer loyalty. We are experts at mapping the life science customer journey.

Here are some highlights from our reports:

- Marketing and Advertising
- Purchasing and Customer Service and Technical Support
- The Overall Customer Experience

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AWARENESS

DISCOVERY

RESEARCH

PURCHASE

DELIVERY

SERVICE

CHECKOUT

Marketing (19-014)

The customer experience of a life science brand can begin before a customer makes a purchase or interact with a sales representative at a conference.

Marketing materials like catalogs and pamphlets sent to departmental mail boxes, or printed product guides, and some collegial discussions sometimes may be a first experience. Or, perhaps, a blog post by an influencer - a social media mention by a scientist or two about the product may be the introduction to your brand.

Our analysts found that while digital media offers both expanded reach to new potential customers, and increased range for word of mouth, potential drawbacks exist in that negative word of mouth can spread quickly online and scientists tend to see their "digital" peers as more trust worthy than marketing materials provided by suppliers.

Digital media also offers more opportunities for new kinds of marketing content and customer engagement. Live streaming, and other video content, are now easily accessible to customers across the world. Live streams can aid in building a more authentic and immediate connection between a life science brand and its customers.

Advertising (18-014)

While advertising is only one component of your marketing strategy, it is crucial to consider many of the same factors when purchasing or working to design an advertising strategy. Scientists spend an ever-increasing amount of time online when looking at research or work-related content. Similarly, they spend more time online looking for research or work-related products. These factors drive their engagement and consumption of more online life science related advertising than print based life science advertising.
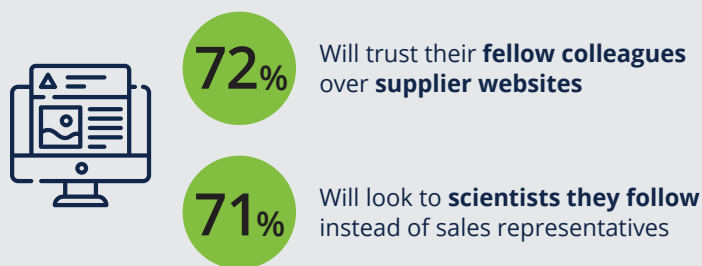
Online advertising can be an annoyance for some scientists, especially if ad designs are flashy, disruptive, or simply creepy. Page placement, in terms of what kinds of pages are used to show your advertising, as well as what location on the page, may also increase annoyance with advertising. Understanding what attributes of advertising are unwanted, as well as what attributes lead to higher click-through rates can help increase the return on investment in even a small campaign.

Maximizing the reach and effectiveness of online advertising and understanding the perceptions of customers who are interacting with or receiving your advertising is crucial to promoting your brand and products effectively
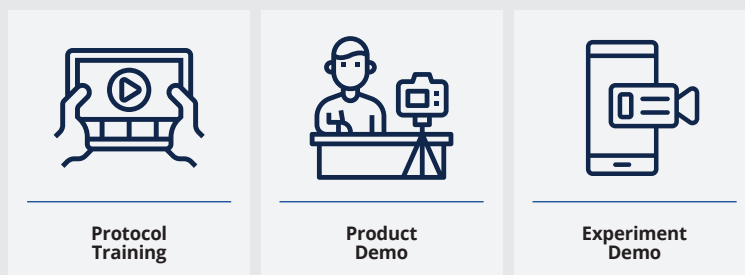
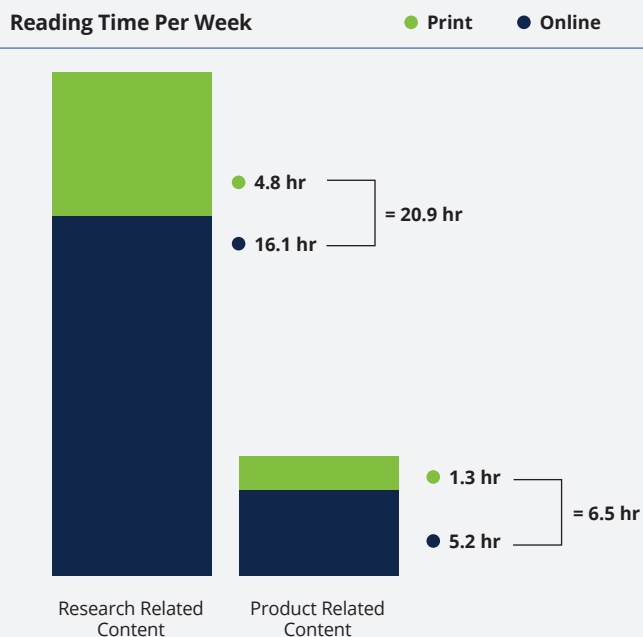**Driving Brand Awareness:** Marketing & Advertising

Where do scientist most often get information about a product?

72% Will trust their **fellow colleagues** over **supplier websites**

71% Will look to **scientists they follow** instead of sales representatives

Live Streaming can Make a Difference – Scientists are Most Interested in:

Protocol Training

Product Demo

Experiment Demo

Why is it important to know how your customers are obtaining information and their preferences?

Reading Time Per Week   ● Print   ● Online

● 4.8 hr
● 16.1 hr   = 20.9 hr

● 1.3 hr
● 5.2 hr   = 6.5 hr

Research Related Content

Product Related Content

Scientists allocate little time to reading product related content both in print and online - therefore it's important to engage them in the short time they are exposed to your brand's products.

Customer Purchasing Journey (19-016)

Once you have informed scientists about your product, either through direct or indirect marketing, they may be interested in purchasing from you. In order to capitalize on this interest in anything from reagents to instrumentation, and turn it into successful sales, it's important to understand how scientists experience the process of purchasing from their suppliers, what particular decision points exist, and what institutional barriers may be in place.

When it comes to converting awareness and interest into action, scientists can be uniquely difficult to capture. Scientists, like many other consumers, commonly consider more than one supplier prior to a purchase. They are also likely to identify and evaluate alternative products before a purchase. Scientists use a variety of different purchasing channels to buy their products, and different methods to place their orders. At each of these points, the potential exists for your brand or product to move out of consideration, and to be replaced with a competitor's product. Understanding the mix of methods used to purchase items as well as how items are assessed and evaluated can increase the likelihood of your product being purchased.

While the customer purchasing journey may appear to be difficult for an individual brand or product, careful consideration of a scientists' experience and navigation of the purchasing process can help set your brand up for success, even in a crowded market. Optimizing the purchasing channels your products are available through, the ways that a scientist can get information or evaluate your product, and how easy the purchasing process is for them can even help you gain customers who may not have considered you initially.

Scientists' purchases are also constrained by institutional or employer rules, which influence their purchasing overall. Many scientists report restricted purchasing to preferred or approved vendor lists, with these lists requiring negotiation from a variety of stakeholders to expand.

Scientists additionally may be required to use some purchasing channels such as e-procurement. While reasons behind the implementation of these e-procurement systems vary, academics and those working in industry use e-procurement for purchasing, but knowledge about e-procurement systems among scientists remains relatively low.

Number of Supplier Scientists Consider

43% 1-3 Suppliers
05% 5-6 Suppliers
02% 7-10 Suppliers
26% 3-4 Suppliers
26% 3-4 Suppliers
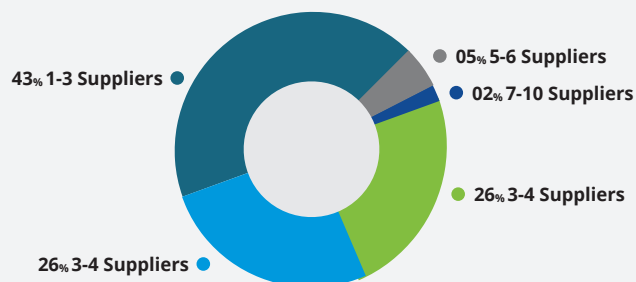
Scientists commonly consider alternative supplier from who to purchase. Scientists from Asia-Pacific region are more likely to consider between 1-6 suppliers before reaching a decision.

Evaluation - Common Reasons Scientists Choose NOT to Evaluation Products from a Given Supplier
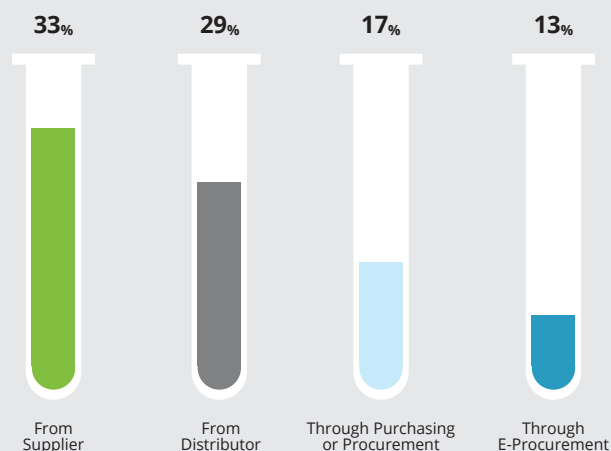

Routine Purchase | **Previous Experience with Product** | **Preference Products**

Scientists are likely to identify and evaluate other products form a given company before a purchase (i.e. different types of available centrifuges)

Methods of Recent Purchases

33% — From Supplier
29% — From Distributor
17% — Through Purchasing or Procurement
13% — Through E-Procurement

Understanding the mix of methods used to purchase items as well as how items are assessed and evaluated can increase the likelihood of your product being purchased.

Customer Service and Tech Support (19-015)

After purchasing products and services, scientists will inevitably need either your customer service or technical support for products that they purchase from you, regardless of what they bought. Understanding the reasons that customers reach out, customer experiences, and customer expectations with these touchpoints, is key to building positive word of mouth as well as retaining and satisfying your customers.

Across a variety of different product types, scientists report only a fraction of their issues to either customer service or technical support. They are most likely to contact customer service or support through email or phone, in order to have their issue resolved through the suppliers dedicated support or service department.

Scientists also see help to resolve their problem quickly as the most important quality of both types of service and support. They also expect to have competent and capable personnel working to resolve their issues.

Providing customers with fast, easy ways to report their issues and representatives who are capable of addressing these issues without needing additional levels of support is key to keeping them happy with the support they receive.

Scientists are also interested in having access to interactive tools from suppliers to resolve their issues, such as live or real-time chats or webinars. Scientists see these online tools as useful, and may allow them to achieve a faster resolution of their problems and avoid needing to directly contact a supplier through traditional means. With scientists spending more time online for research and searching for products, these tools may work better with their workflow.

Understanding scientists' needs and expectations regarding customer support and technical service is necessary to build long term loyalty to your brand as well as positive word of mouth.

While these aspects may be easy to forget behind a product, service, or technology, they represent a way to ensure the success of your brand. Poor customer service may jeopardize relationships with individual scientists, as well as their employers and institutions. Service represents a sizeable portion of revenues for many of the largest suppliers; with the emergence of third-party service contracts, offering poor or inaccessible service can compromise service revenues, such as parts and service fees.

Customer Service: Product and Tech Support

How Important is Post-Production Customer Service?

Over **HALF** of life scientists would likely refrain from purchasing from your brand again if they experience **ONE** bad experience.

Why is this Particularly Important to Note?

20% Only **20%** of either non-technical issues **are reported**

What do Customers Value Most in a Tech Support or Customer Service Representative?

The top 3 qualities of responsive tech support or customer service representatives were:

1. Competent/Capable Personnel

2. Ability to Understand Problems Quickly

3. Accurate Problem Recognition

The Life Science Customer Experience (19-018)

The overall customer experience of a brand is made up of many different touch points where scientists encounter your brand, from marketing, to sales, to product design, to customer service and support. These touchpoints, taken all together, build an experience of your brand for scientists.

Understanding individual aspects of your customer experience that need improvement, and how your experience compares to competitors. Benchmarking aspects of customer experience also allows for identification of areas of improvement and possible ways to improve customer retention and attraction of customers.

Life science customer experience data collected over time also allows you to understand trends in customer experiences and expectations, not only when it comes to your brand, but with other major brands as well. Trended data also allows measurement of initiatives to improve and work on touchpoints across several years.

Pre-Purchase Experience			Product Experience		Post-Purchase Experience	
Awareness	**Knowledge**	**Selection**	**Product Integrity**	**Service**	**Support**	**Satisfaction & Loyalty**
1.2	**6.2**	**0.8**	**36**	**12.8**	**10.2**	**35.1**
-0.1 Industry Avg.	5.3 Industry Avg.	1.8 Industry Avg.	34.5 Industry Avg.	12.9 Industry Avg.	9.7 Industry Avg.	36.7 Industry Avg.

Our analysts at BioInformatics studty these various touchpoints and create a scorecard for each company. The sample scorecard shows how you compare to the industry average.

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