



Leveraging Generative AI in Brand Planning: Insights From the Second Annual Pharmaceutical Brand Planning Survey

Sean Rapson, Managing Director, EVERSANA

John Kenny, EVP, Managing Director, Strategic Planning, EVERSANA INTOUCH

Tina Iglesias, SVP, Strategic Planning, EVERSANA INTOUCH

The integration of generative AI into brand planning within the life sciences sector is a burgeoning trend. Yet findings from EVERSANA's second annual survey of brand planning executives indicate that less than half are currently leveraging or intending to leverage generative AI for brand planning in 2024.

Our survey, which engaged 72 brand planning executives, now incorporates a standard query on generative AI usage, reflecting the growing significance of this technology.

Drawing from EVERSANA's firsthand experiences collaborating with clients and leading technology partners, we offer recommendations on effectively harnessing generative AI in brand planning:

1. Generative AI-sourced synthetic data should be considered as a good source of qualitative data for both patient and HCP research, especially useful for exploratory research, bullet-proofing your ideas and getting exposure to other perspectives to strengthen your forecasting.
2. Generative AI-sourced synthetic data should not be relied upon for quantitative market sizing, as there still continues to be critical issues of reliability, where synthetic quantitative data can deliver random and noisy results.
3. Incorporating synthetic patient and HCP panels into brand planning forecasting can boost forecasting accuracy, enabling marketers to explore various marketing scenarios and test audience responses to potential messaging strategies.
4. Further, consider how generative AI might be used to support, augment and even create new tactics, such as synthetic video.
5. Finally, a point on execution: medical, legal and regulatory review is a critical part of bringing ideas and concepts to market. Solutions, including EVERSANA's own, are helping ensure the accuracy and compliance of claims.

Beyond the realm of generative AI, this year's survey uncovered encouraging insights:

- 86% of leaders believe in the overarching value of brand planning output, with deliverables helping meet customer and business goals.
- 4 out of 5 respondents are sufficiently equipped and experienced to leverage digital capabilities as part of their brand plan, up a significant 15% from last year.
- While down 4% from last year, 78% of respondents still believe their brand planning reflected the latest in customer insights, including patients, healthcare professionals, payer organizations and other influencers.

However, as many of us can personally attest to, great opportunities remain to improve the efficacy and efficiency of brand planning, with problem areas resulting from significant year-over-year declines in the following areas:

- Just over half of respondents agreed that data and advanced analytics played a growing role in their brand plan compared to the previous year. This response was down 32% from the 2023 results.
- Only 1 in every 2 leaders agreed that a consistent approach to brand planning across brands and portfolios within their organization allowed for an efficient use of resourcing, including time and financial investments. This was a 21% decline compared with 2023, representing a worrying trend.

Further, in a sad state of affairs for brand planning during 2023 and opportunities for 2024, only:

- 54% agree with the statement "In comparison to peer organizations of similar size in the market, I consider our brand planning process to be significantly superior in efficacy and efficiency."

- 54% agree with the statement “We effectively measure success in terms of execution against our brand plan and market results.”
- 56% agree with the statement “Our external partners (e.g., agencies, market researchers, consultants) collaborated effectively and integrate their contributions for the betterment of the brand plan.”

What Is Brand Planning?

Brand planning differs from launch planning in a number of ways. Whereas launch planning is a one-time activity focused on building and creating a strategy and tactics for new products, brand planning is an annual, iterative, year-round process focused on refining and optimizing strategies and tactics for existing products.

Brand planning consists of the process, strategy and tactics that inform a brand’s evolution year after year. The annual brand planning cycle is complex, consisting of a situation assessment, strategy development, scientific narrative, communication platform and tactical plan and activation – all driven by a range of stakeholders across the organization (Figure 1).

The downstream impact of brand planning includes:

- Understanding of the market
- Brand and market revenue forecasts
- Annual functional budgets
- Lifecycle management strategy
- Functional team strategies (market access, sales, marketing, medical, others)
- Scientific and messaging platforms
- Channel mix and tactical plans
- KPIs and measurement

Brand planning is not easy, and companies can find themselves challenged by a lack of vision and focus, organizational silos and diverse stakeholder needs, communication breakdowns, overwhelming complexity and the need to manage multiple vendors.

Brand planning leaders must manage a multitude of stakeholders (Figure 2), and having so many stakeholders can lead to operational complexity, duplicated efforts and integration challenges.

Meeting the Challenge

EVERSANA’s Next Generation Brand Planning is designed to overcome these challenges. Our fully operational solution set is delivered by integrated management consulting, data and analytics, and agency teams. Through seven operational pillars, we can develop brand plans throughout the annual brand planning cycle, from initial planning to year-round execution and refinement (Figure 3).

Figure 1



Figure 2: Typical Brand Planning Partner Structure

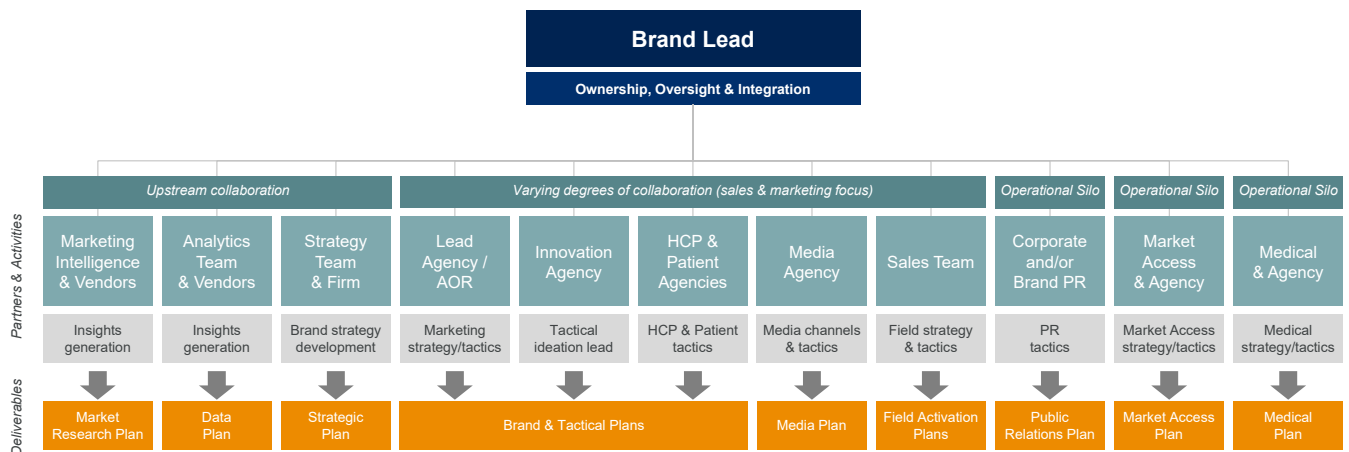
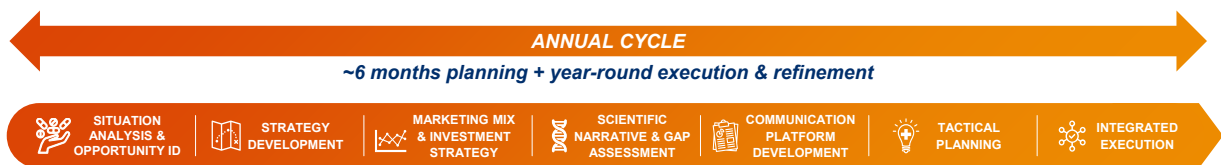


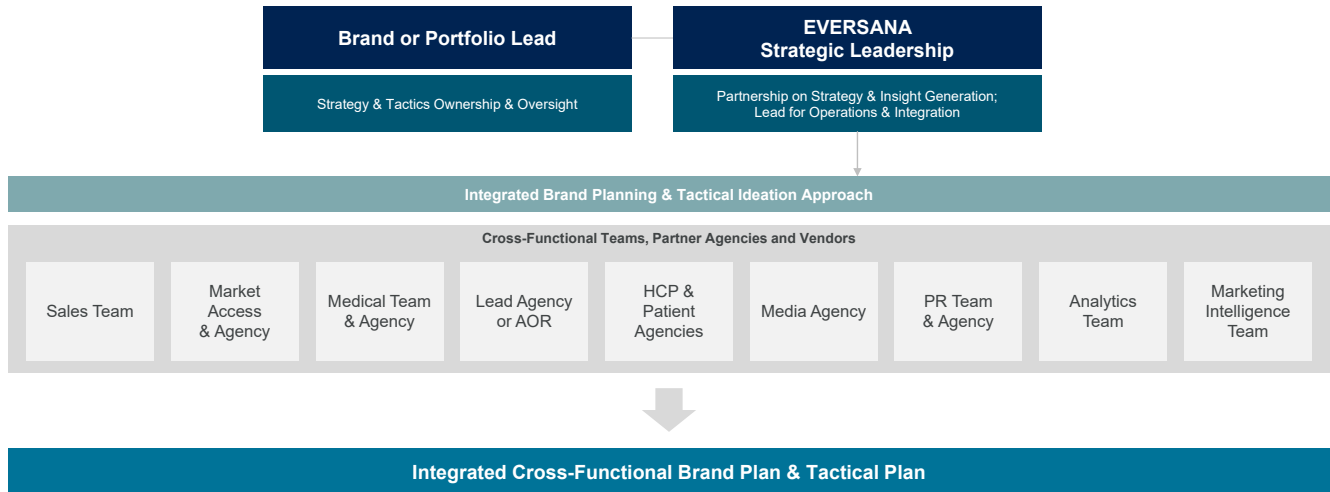
Figure 3



These operational pillars allow us to answer seven key questions that drive the brand planning process:

- 1. What is the market environment?** Characterize the market stakeholder impact and priority leverage points.
- 2. What priority levers can unlock potential?** Define integrated brand strategies to get and stay ahead in the market.
- 3. How should you invest for greatest impact?** Assess performance and craft optimal marketing mix and marketing strategy.
- 4. What data do we have and need to stand out?** Build target product profile and scientific platform and assess further data needs.
- 5. What will we say to convey brand value?** Craft the brand story and key messages and map objectives by audience.
- 6. How will we reach and delight our audience?** Focus tactical ideation on areas of greatest potential impact.
- 7. What will it take to activate and deploy?** Map the play-by-play for the year, and launch tactics into market.

Figure 4: Operating Structure for EVERSANA's Next Generation Brand Planning



Operating Structure

The operating structure for EVERSANA's Next Generation Brand Planning partners a brand or portfolio lead with EVERSANA strategic leadership to steer the integrated brand planning and tactical ideation approach. Bringing together cross-functional teams, partner agencies and vendors, this approach leads to the development of an integrated, cross-functional brand plan and tactical plan, resulting in efficiencies and cost savings (Figure 4).

Conclusion

Brand planners can often feel overwhelmed by the responsibility and not know where to start. They may be seeking a tactical plan that meets brand imperatives, or they may be struggling to gain alignment across agencies and peers. In situations like these, EVERSANA's Next Generation Brand Planning can be leveraged to partner experienced strategic leads with brand teams to seamlessly and efficiently guide the process, assist integration and enable focus that drives business results.

EVERSANA clients benefit from leaders who can facilitate the brand planning process while being able to execute in areas of need across insights, strategy (marketing, medical, market access), agency execution and digital capabilities, including generative AI.

