

# The Pharma Marketer's Guide to Advertising to HCPs

**CONTACT**

800.941.8409

[sayhello@adfirehealth.com](mailto:sayhello@adfirehealth.com)

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# The New Age of Healthcare and the HCP-Pharma Relationship

The healthcare industry and healthcare professionals (HCPs) are changing. Younger generations of HCPs and the COVID-19 pandemic are bringing technology to the forefront of an industry that's historically relied on in-person meetings and other traditional communication tactics.

This evolution is shifting the HCP-pharma relationship and what they expect from sales reps. Before COVID-19, 64% of meetings with pharma sales reps were in person.<sup>1</sup> Now, 65% are virtual, and 97% of HCPs want this to continue.<sup>2</sup> With in-person meetings and communication losing their luster, age-old HCP engagement strategies won't be as impactful; if you're going to continue hitting your revenue targets, you must change the way you think. At the center of this evolution is programmatic advertising—an industry in itself undergoing its shift, most recently with the gradual elimination of third-party cookies.

This ebook covers all of these changes and dives into how you can use programmatic advertising to navigate the challenges that come with them.

## CASE STUDY



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# A Shift Impacting Every Part of Healthcare

## Programmatic Media Budgets Increase as In-Person Meetings Decrease

In-person meetings with HCPs are on a downward trend causing pharmaceuticals to downsize their sales teams. While some HCPs want to go back to pre-pandemic in-person meetings, most won't.

**65%**

The percentage of meetings with sales held virtually during the pandemic. (Before COVID-19, 64% of meetings with pharma sales reps were in person.)<sup>1</sup>

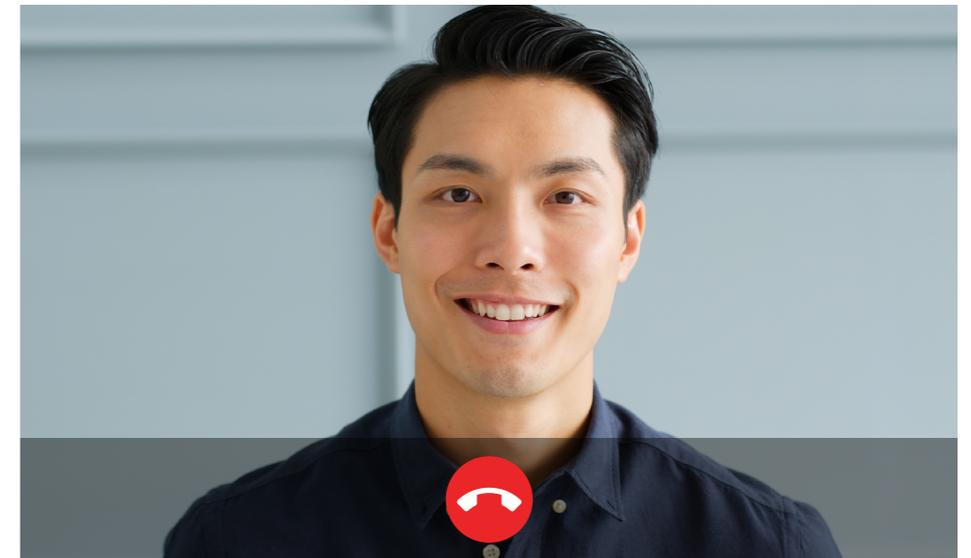
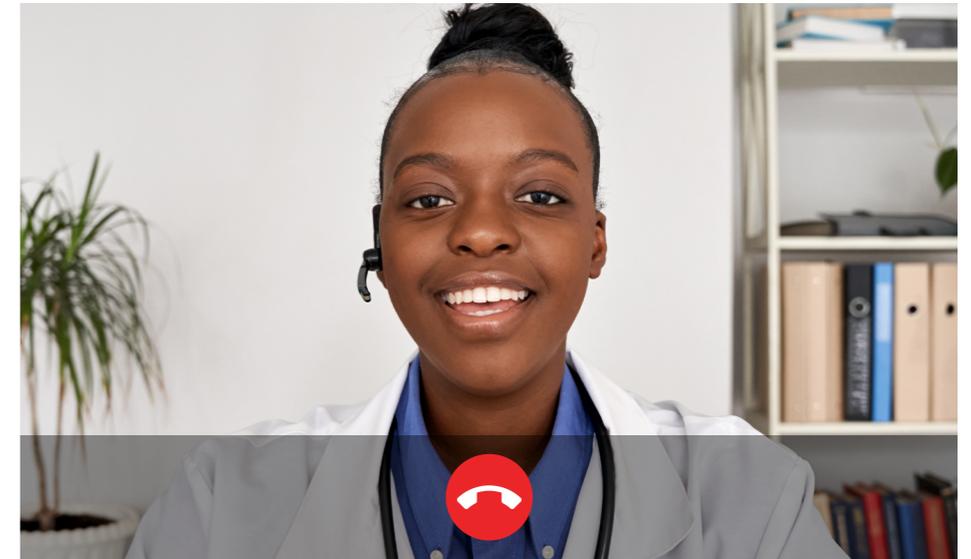
**97%**

The percentage of HCPs who want either all virtual or a mix of virtual and in-person meetings moving forward.<sup>2</sup>

**50%**

The percentage that HCPs think interactions with pharma reps will decrease.

Without having the ability to walk into offices and interact with HCPs, pharma teams will have to find other ways to engage them and hit revenue targets. For most teams, this will mean increased investment in programmatic advertising.



# Digital Connectivity Keeps Growing

As younger HCPs enter the workforce and older ones continue to adopt technology, the healthcare industry will proceed on its path to keep up.



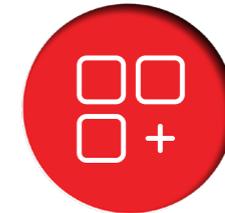
**85%**

The percent of Americans who own a smartphone.<sup>3</sup>



**62%**

The percent of US households that stream TV and movies.<sup>4</sup>



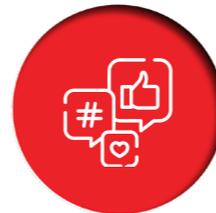
**3+**

The number of hours people spend using apps a day.<sup>5</sup>



**144MM**

The number of Americans who listen to podcasts.<sup>6</sup>



**72%**

The percent of Americans who use social media.<sup>7</sup>



**16+**

The number of hours that physicians spend using EHRs per patient visit.<sup>8</sup>

As you evolve your marketing strategy, you must consider these behavioral changes. Ask yourself: Which previous tactics no longer apply to the way HCPs behave? Which ones should we experiment with this year? Which ones aren't producing a return? This may look slightly different for everyone, but it all comes down to understanding your target audience and realizing that digital deserves a more significant piece of the pie than it ever has before.



# Mastering Programmatic Advertising with 1:1 Targeting

While the healthcare landscape is experiencing unprecedented change, your HCP engagement tactics must do the same. The most effective and efficient way to survive is by increasing your investment in programmatic advertising with this 4-step process.



## Step #1

Build an Audience with Reliable HCP Data



## Step #2

Embrace the Right Ad Types to Engage HCPs



## Step #3

Consider All Digital Channels HCPs Spend Their Time



## Step #4

Make Smart Optimizations Aimed at Performance & Efficiency

# Step #1: Build an Audience with Reliable HCP Data

Mastering programmatic advertising relies on your ability to build an audience of high-value HCPs. Unfortunately, you can't just throw together a few data points into an audience bucket and hope for success. Instead, you need to craft an audience with reliable HCP data. This will improve performance and reduce costs because you won't be wasting impressions on HCPs who aren't ready to convert.

This initial level of targeting granularity you can achieve with sound HCP data is a great start. However, you have options to refine it further.

## Location Targeting

Location targeting lets you advertise to HCPs based on their location. Want to promote a new drug for pollen allergies? Maybe it makes sense to exclude HCPs who live in areas where pollen may not be as high.

## Rx Targeting

Rx targeting lets you target HCPs based on their prescribing behavior. Want to increase prescription fills of a new drug that treats high blood pressure? With Rx targeting, you can focus your spend on HCPs who work in areas with higher blood pressure rates.

## Additional HCP Targeting

Reliable HCP data gives you a plethora of other targeting parameters you can use to scale your campaigns, including medical specialty and job title.

Whichever targeting parameters and technology you use to build your audience, remember that only clean and accurate will give you the results you're looking for. HCP data takes much of the guesswork out of audience targeting and puts your ad spend on the path to optimal performance and efficiency.

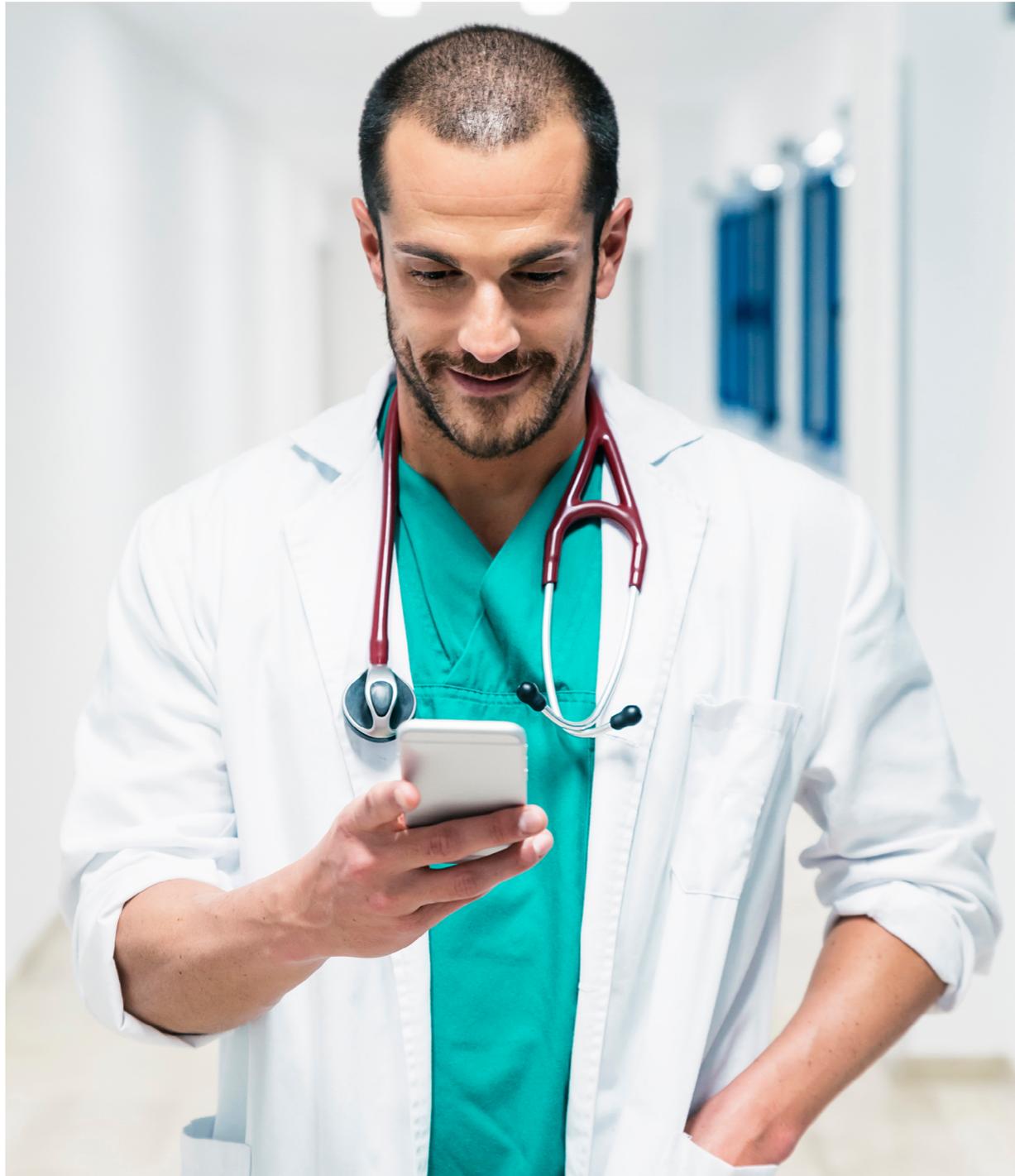
### CASE STUDY



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# Step #2: Consider All Digital Channels HCPs Use



Digital ads on the right channels are more impactful than those that don't. However, it takes more than merely placing ads on the same channels as everyone else. Instead, consider more forward-facing and emerging digital channels

## CTV & OTT Advertising

CTV and OTT advertising deliver content to HCPs when watching their shows and movies on CTV devices like Apple TV, Roku, and Amazon Fire TV or OTT technology like Hulu and Amazon Prime Video. With the surge in CTV and OTT—CTV households are expected to grow 82% by 2023—this presents the perfect time to engage HCPs, even when they're out of the office.<sup>11</sup>

## Audio Advertising

Audio advertising delivers media to HCPs while listening to podcasts, digital radio, and streaming music services like Pandora and Spotify. Like CTV and OTT, audio usage is on the rise—more than half of the US population listens to podcasts—giving you another prime opportunity to connect both in and out of the workplace.<sup>12</sup>

## Mobile & In-App Advertising

Mobile and in-app ads deliver media to HCPs when they're using mobile devices and apps. With the dominant role mobile plays in HCPs' lives, investing in mobile and in-app advertising is a great way to insert your brand messages into the digital environments HCPs naturally use in and out of the workplace.

### CASE STUDY



Learn How a Pharma Company Utilized CTV Advertising to Launch a New Migraine Drug & Lower CPCo by 15.9%

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## Social Advertising

Social advertising delivers media to HCPs using social platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. While we know social media eats into many HCPs' time, studies show that it's becoming a popular destination for professional reasons. In fact, 80% of HCPs use social media in their practice.<sup>13</sup>

## Premium Lifestyle Sites [Everywhere Else Online]

Historically, pharmaceutical marketers relied on endemic websites to reach HCPs, which is expensive. You can bypass the high cost of entry by experimenting with other types of advertising that can reach HCPs away from endemic sites but when they're still in the right mindset.

## Contextual Advertising

Contextual advertising delivers media based on a webpage's content. By crawling the website and using predefined keywords selected by the advertiser, you can provide relevant and cost-efficient ads next to contextually relevant content.

## Conferences

The advent of location-based technology is turning conferences, a historically offline advertising play, into a digital one. With location-based targeting, you can deliver ads to HCPs while they're at conferences and other industry events. Plus, the offline engagements you make with HCPs can improve your first-party data for future campaigns.



## Step #3: Embrace the Right Ad Types

There's nothing wrong with the fact that pharma marketing has always been synonymous with traditional display ads. Even during rapid ad tech advancements, conventional banner ads can still be an effective way to engage HCPs. However, as inventory rises and HCPs see more ads, you'd be wise to think outside the box.



### High-Impact Media

High-impact media engages HCPs with interactivity, like sound and video.

High-impact, interactive ads typically have a **3X** conversion rate compared to traditional video ads.<sup>14</sup>



### Vertical Mobile Video Ads

Vertical mobile ads deliver natural and full-screen ads on mobile devices, including smartphones and tablets.

Adfire Health's Vertical Video Ad Types Has an Average VCR of **~90%**.



### Outstream Video Ads

Outstream video ads appear in content feeds across the internet without interrupting the browsing experience.

People are **27.4X** more likely to click on video ads than standard banners.<sup>14</sup>

# Step #4: Tailor Your Message to Your Targeting Audience

Don't expect HCP campaigns to reach their potential if the creative isn't spot on. Here are five best practices to keep in mind when building out your creative strategy:

## Understand Your Target HCP

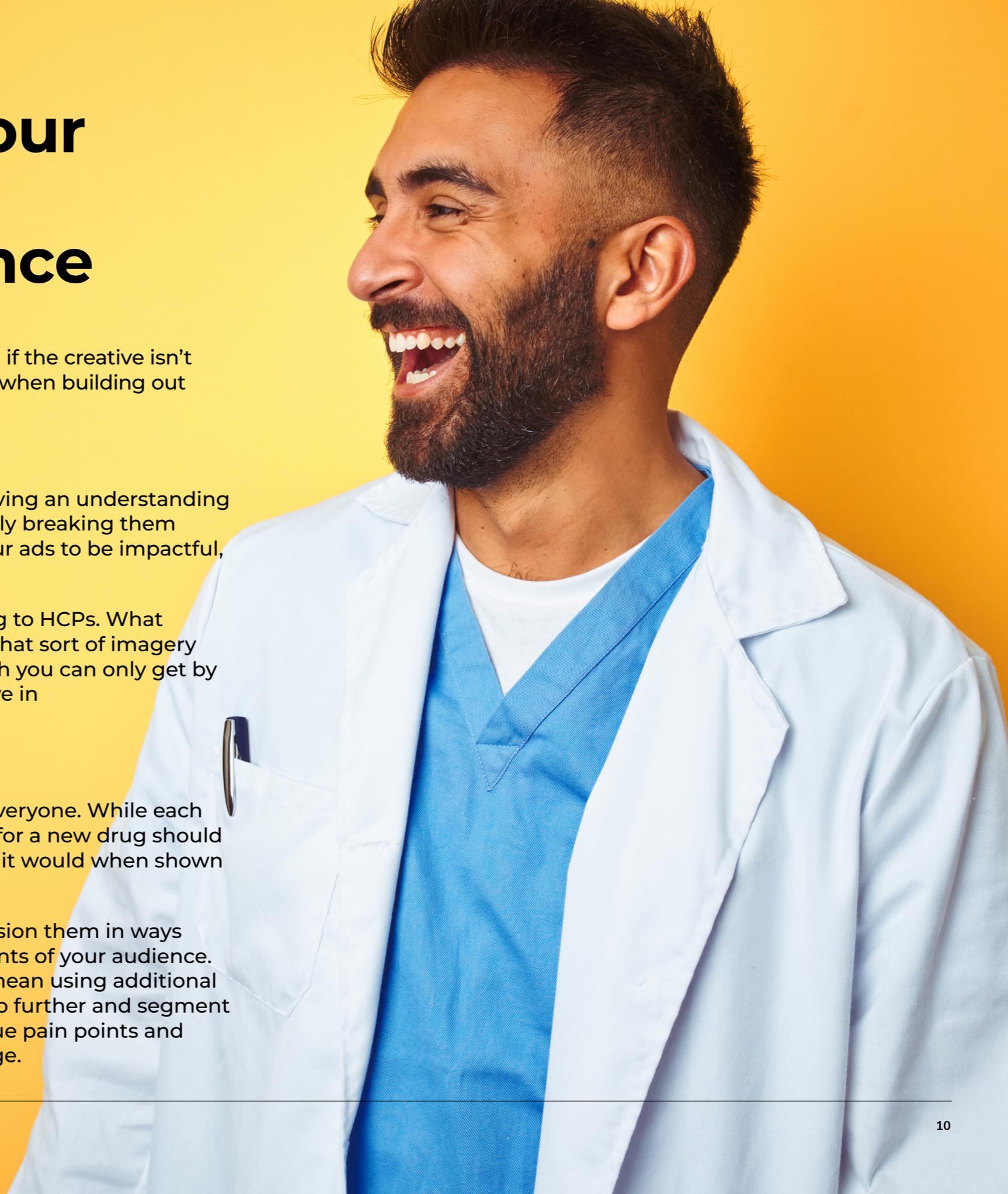
The first step of creative success revolves around having an understanding of your target audience. No, that doesn't mean simply breaking them down by medical specialty or demographics. For your ads to be impactful, the creative has to speak their language.

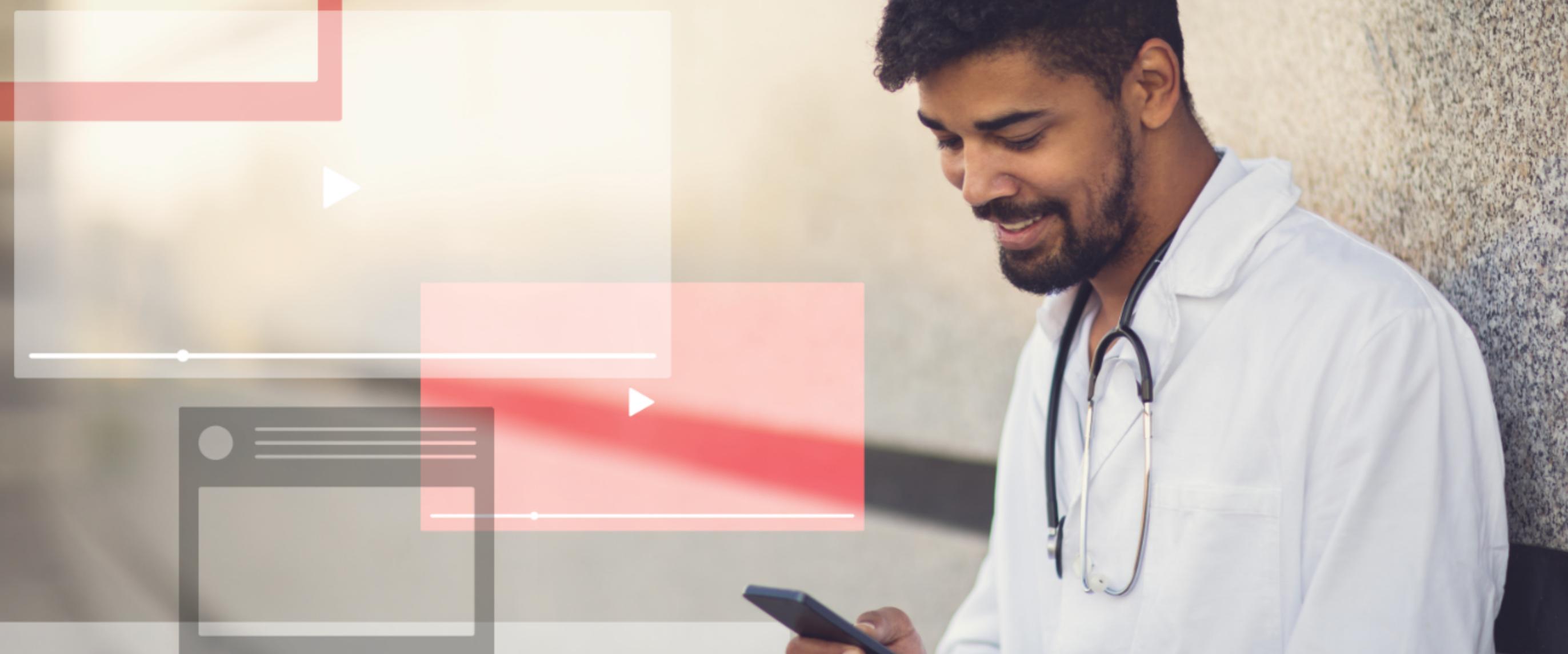
The best way to accomplish this is by actually talking to HCPs. What language do they use? What're their pain points? What sort of imagery will resonate? Understanding these nuances—which you can only get by talking to them—gives you the ability to craft creative in meaningful ways.

## Segment, Segment, Segment

You should never expect the same ad to appeal to everyone. While each HCP may fall into the same targeting bucket, an ad for a new drug should look different when presented to a pharmacist than it would when shown to a healthcare executive.

For this reason, you must segment your ads and version them in ways that make them more appealing to different segments of your audience. This doesn't have to be a huge lift—it could simply mean using additional imagery or copy. That said, you could take it one step further and segment your creative by medical specialty and use the unique pain points and needs of that HCP to tailor a more impactful message.





### **Get Straight to the Point**

Don't beat around the bush. HCPs are like everyone else: they're busy, which means they don't have much time to consume a message. They also see more ads than ever.

So, focus on 5-7 keywords with simple animations. What do you want them to remember? What's the most important part? What's going to make them think that your product has the potential to create lasting results? For this reason, power words can be adequate, as can quantitative stats. This also includes the call to action (CTA). Be clear about what action you want them to take.

### **Test & Experiment**

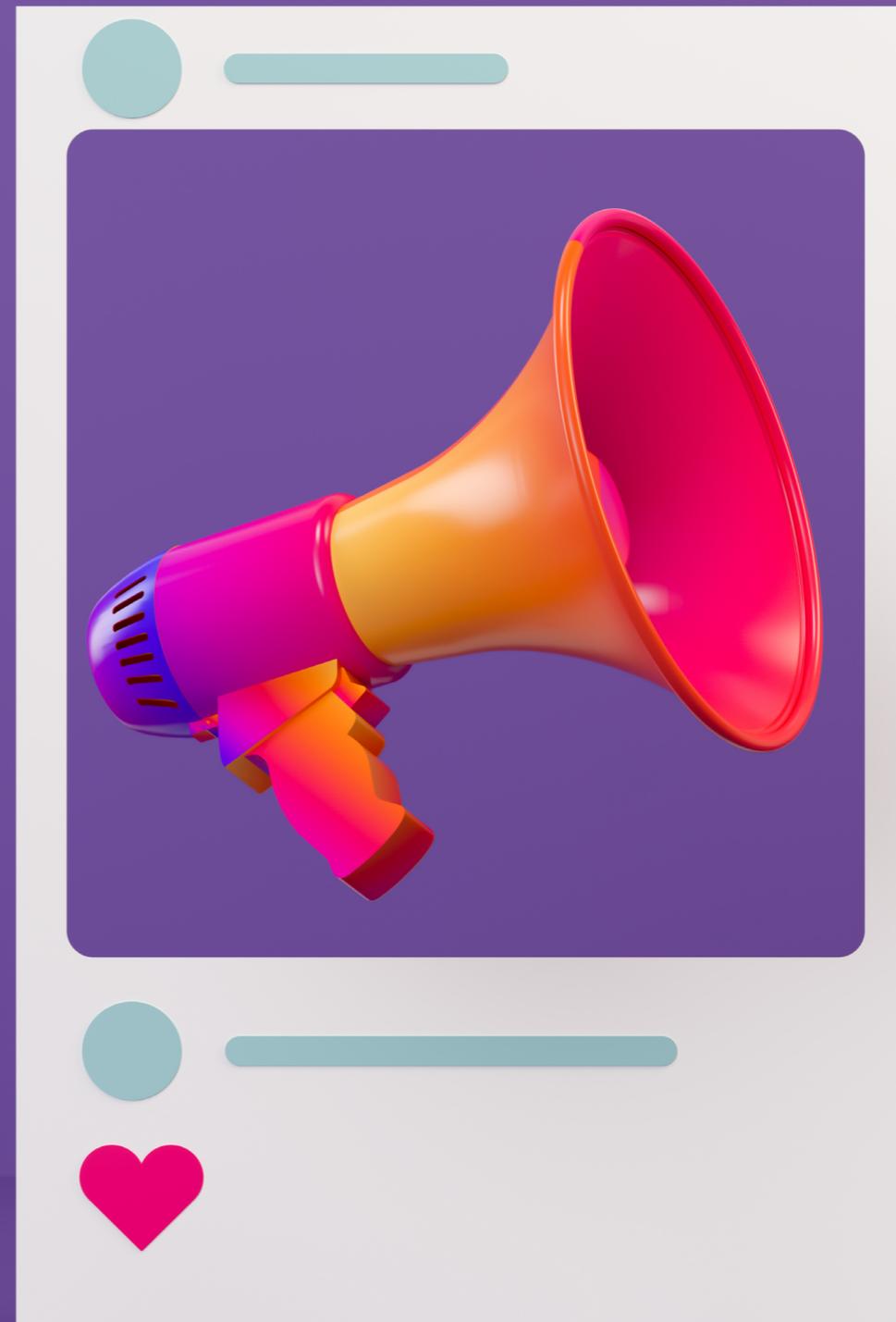
It's ok if an ad doesn't get the job done as you had hoped. Instead of dwelling on the loss of resources, learn from the experience. Ask yourself: Which part of the creative fell short? Was it the headline? What about the imagery? Were the animations too much?

While you shouldn't test every element at once—too many variables will make it tough to understand the results—going one by one will give you the insights you need to make smart, intelligent decisions moving forward.

## Be Relevant

This may seem like a no-brainer but focus on building your foundation around creative elements familiar to HCPs. Think about it: Aren't you more likely to stop scrolling if something you're familiar with catches your eye? Say, your favorite sports team. The same goes for HCPs.

For this reason, your ads should include medically relevant imagery, including doctors, relevant devices, and medical information. Your headline and targeting may be spot on, but if imagery doesn't capture their attention, they'll scroll past.



# Step #5: Make Smart Optimizations Aimed at Performance & Efficiency



Your success relies heavily on intelligent optimizations; no campaign reaches peak performance the first time around. In other words, getting the most out of your ad dollars requires you to keep your finger on your campaign's pulse and adjust different aspects of it when necessary.

Optimizing your campaign can come in a variety of ways. It could mean adjusting your creative and copy. If you're under pacing, maybe you increase bids. Maybe HCPs in a specific zip code are outperforming those in another. If this is the case, it might make sense for you to reallocate your budget and zero in on that location while pulling back on another.

## Here are a few more elements you can optimize:

- Ad types
- Copy
- Time of day and day of week
- Frequency
- Audience data source
- Bid multipliers
- Budgets
- Device

Making smart in-flight optimizations is critical. For starters, it helps you with economic scale. It can also help you zoom in on your "ideal" HCP, so you can allocate your budget more wisely—now and in the future—and make sure all of it is landing.

### CASE STUDY



Learn How an RX Drug Manufacturer Used Adfire Health to Achieve a 14:1 ROI

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## About Adfire Health

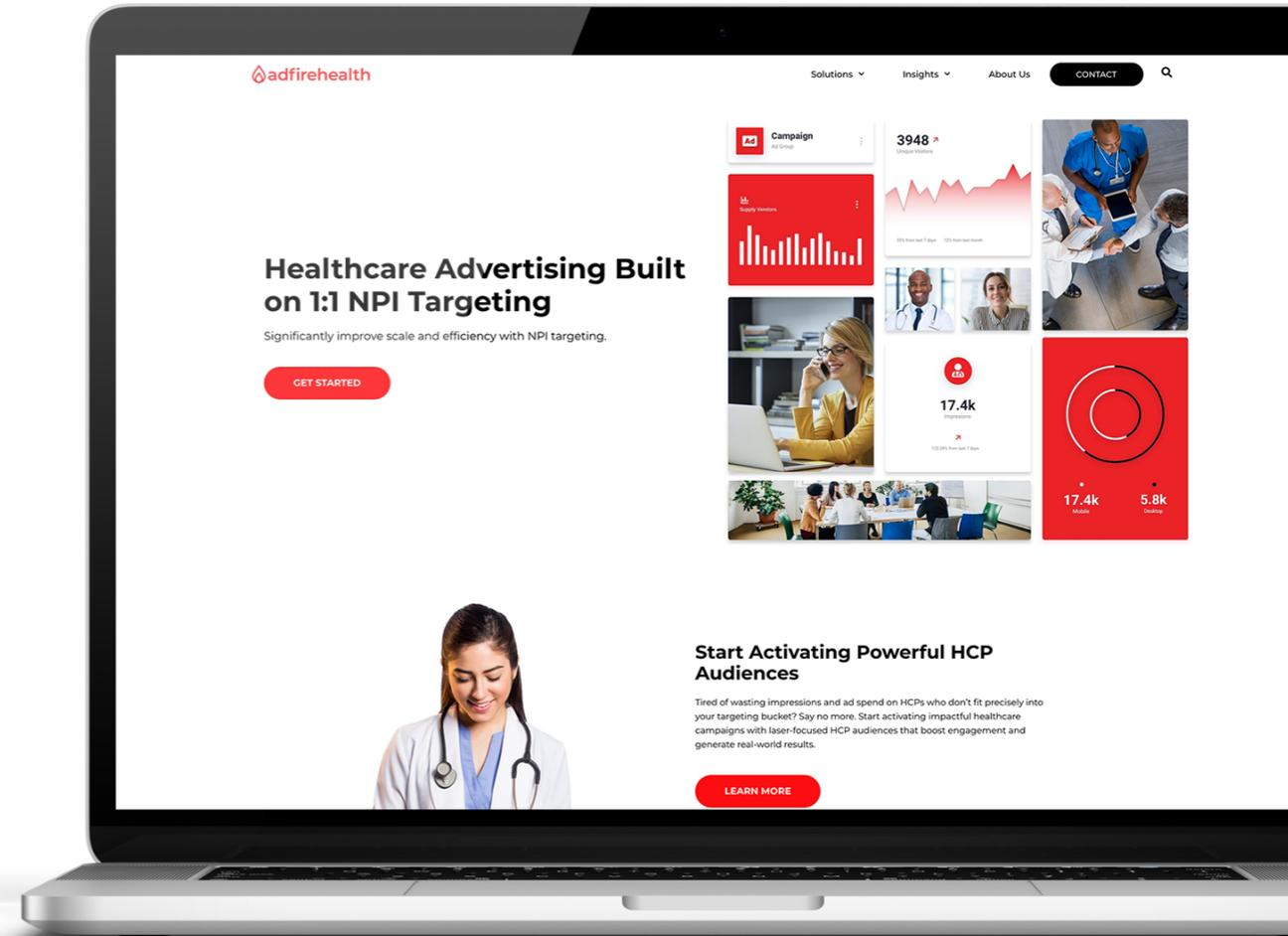
**Adfire Health is a healthcare advertising agency that offers programmatic, media, and creative services.** We want the potential of our clients' products and services to be realized. We know that the United States is arguably the most complex healthcare system in the world. We also know that there are so many good people who work tirelessly to improve healthcare by preventing illnesses, repairing injuries, and curing diseases.

**We want to help.** Here's how we do it. Using **our proprietary database** and 1:1 NPI-validated targeting, we deliver powerful messaging to the right people, at the right time. Rather than casting a wide net, we help you hyper-target specific audiences — the exact decision makers you want to reach.

What does this mean for you? Lower advertising costs with better results, more budget for R&D, and improved patient outcomes.

**That's how we help our clients empower possibility.**

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