**AT A GLANCE:** Digitas Health was tasked with driving awareness for their client’s Multiple Sclerosis Drug.

They had to circumvent the traditional brand centric advertising approach by instead digging into the conversation from a different angle, looking at the conversation as it relates to MS, not the drug, to better understand the vernacular as it relates to the larger MS community. By gaining an understanding of the struggles of the MS patient journey, Digitas Health was able to create content that not only resonated with the MS community, but was powerful enough to be shared among the community, spreading the word organically about their MS drug.

**CHALLENGE:** Traditional Advertising Approach to Social Research Doesn’t Work in Healthcare Marketing

Digitas Health, a health and wellness focused agency, was tasked with driving awareness for their client’s Multiple Sclerosis drug. When digging into the conversations around the drug itself, they discovered that a traditional advertising approach wouldn’t work for this client. A traditional “advertising approach” looks at how people talk about “Brand A” vs “Brand B”, but in this case didn’t yield much conversation or insights because the limited keyword set gave little insight into the identity of the audience and how brands could connect with them.

Digitas Health decided they needed to take a step back and look at the conversation from a different angle to find the insights they need to drive a campaign. Ultimately, they needed to understand what people care about in order to create stories worth sharing for their client’s campaign. They decided instead to do more broad categorical research to identify how people talk about MS. What they found in the MS conversations unearthed insights that would shape the stories they told and how they approach content marketing for the healthcare marketing space moving forward.
Incorporating keywords that reflects the audience’s language transformed the analysis

**SOLUTION:** Content Versus Advertising Approach to Social Research Helps Digitas Tap into the MS Community

The agency reframed how they looked at the conversation, doing their social research from a content perspective versus a traditional advertising perspective. Key business questions they asked were, “what are people saying about MS?” How are people feeling about MS? Where are people talking about MS? What opportunities exist where their client’s drug can support MS patients?”

By digging into conversations around the disease and the larger disease community versus the MS drug brands, they were able to unlock valuable insights around how people talk about MS and the vernacular used, helping them better understand the journey of managing life after diagnosis.

Their observation led to insight, helping them discover the larger MS Community online, and what is most important to them. Some of the core facets of coping with MS include:

- Managing life after diagnosis, and finding resources for the new normal
- Tapping into the “Invisible Illness Community” and the “Spoonie” metaphor
- Describing Invisible Symptoms

"My fingers and toes were numb, and I would find myself dropping objects. I was 21. I felt really tired and out of shape—like I was rapidly aging."

Medical Limbo-I am a 30f mother to a wonderful 6 year old boy, and wou... 16h %
dangerouspanda23
I never knew it could be possible to be THIS sick for this long, and still be expected to take the wait and see what happens approach. I am usually a very positive person, but this past year is killing me. I have had weird issues on and off (More...)

First symptoms of Multiple sclerosis Nov 3%
Darkshadow3942
I’m 18 years old and I only started getting my symptoms earlier this year. It started several months ago. I just started noticing that my right hand was slow. I didn’t know how to explain it to my mum, but normally I can type pretty fast, but (More...)
RESULTS: Sponsored Content Mimics Engagement Rates of Viral Organic Content and Spurs New Content Framework for Digitas Health

Unlocking these valuable insights gave Digitas Health the ammo to create highly engaging content that really connected with the MS community, homing in on the Invisible Illness Community, Daily Life After Diagnosis, and Representative Symptoms of MS, that got widely shared among the MS community. While these were actually sponsored posts, the helpful content struck a chord with the MS community and was widely shared, resulting in amazing engagement rates that mimic the rates of viral organic posts.

Unlocking insights creates widely shared content

As a result, this patient centric content led their team to identify a sequential structure for all content moving forward, helping them to leverage reach and drive their business goals more efficiently, ultimately resulting in a higher click through rate while reducing overall cost per click.
The “Behavior Chain” framework was developed using NetBase, following a framework that allows them to inspire, empathize, model the behavior, trigger the ask, and support the success of the audience they are trying to support and reach. This model was hugely successful for their MS campaign, resulting in 155% decrease in cost per click, 42% decrease in cost per engagement and 20% decrease in cost per impression. These stats prove that the most effective content strategy is based on the data right in front of us, if only you know how to look for it.

“What’s great about NetBase is that social data is the only way we can understand people and what they’re going through without the filter of introspection. Every other research method relies on asking somebody on how they think about a topic, with the social data from NetBase we get to understand how people think without that filter and that’s incredibly valuable.”

—Michael Leis, Chief Content Strategy Officer—Digitas Health

155% decrease in cost per link click

42% decrease in cost per engagement

20% decrease in cost per impression

ABOUT NETBASE QUID

NetBase Quid is the next generation consumer and market intelligence platform, delivering contextual insights to reveal business trends, connect with consumers, and understand the story behind competitors and the market. The platform uses advanced artificial intelligence to process billions of indexed resources across all forms of structured and unstructured data, empowering our brand, agency and consulting services customers to make smart, data driven decisions accurately, quickly and efficiently.

NETBASE QUID CUSTOMERS INCLUDE:

Coca-Cola
Spotify
United
T-Mobile
Yum!
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American Airlines
Hyundai
The New York Times

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