



PHARMA'S NEW CONSUMER-GRADE IMPERATIVE.

BLUF: Pharma does not have an omnichannel, sales, or field performance problem. It has a value realization problem. The industry is operating in a consumer-grade world, but its commercial system is not built for it, leaving significant value on the table. Commercial leaders can close that gap by elevating Customer Excellence as the fourth pillar of commercial leadership and redesigning the system to ensure prescribing intent consistently becomes realized patient and commercial impact.

By Wayne Simmons



Forward. The Industry, The Opportunity, and The Gap.

Pharma and life sciences is an industry defined by really large numbers. It serves large and diverse patient populations, engages vast networks of healthcare professionals across countless specialties, and manages increasingly complex portfolios of therapies. These efforts are orchestrated through global commercial and medical organizations operating at extraordinary reach. Layered on top of this is an expanding mix of personal, digital, and non-personal channels, all governed by regulatory frameworks that shape not only what can be communicated, but how, when, and by whom engagement occurs.

When these forces converge, what emerges is an interaction-dense operating environment where every exchange carries weight. These interactions are not merely commercial touchpoints. They influence prescribing decisions, shape care delivery, and ultimately affect patient outcomes. The stakes are clinical, emotional, and commercial, all at once.

Within this complexity lies one of the most significant and often overlooked opportunities in the industry, one of the few that can simultaneously advance patient outcomes while unlocking meaningful commercial value.

From the vantage point of operating inside large pharma commercial organizations, it becomes clear that this density of interactions represents more than operational complexity. It represents untapped clinical and commercial potential. Every interaction is an opportunity to reduce friction in the daily realities of healthcare professionals and their teams, to bring clarity to increasingly complex decisions, and to support patients in ways that extend beyond the moment of prescribing. In a global healthcare system under growing strain and scrutiny, these moments of support, clarity, and continuity matter more than ever.

The commercial implication is equally profound.

Pharma does not have an omnichannel, sales, or field performance problem. It has a value realization problem. The industry is now operating in a consumer-grade world, where expectations are shaped by the most seamless and intuitive experiences in everyday life. Healthcare professionals and patients bring those expectations with them, whether consciously or not. Yet pharma's commercial system was not built for this reality. It remains optimized to influence prescribing decisions, not to ensure those decisions consistently translate into therapy initiation, sustained adherence, and real-world outcomes.

The result is a persistent gap between intent and impact. Value that has already been earned, in the form of prescribing intent, is too often left unrealized as patients encounter friction across access, fulfillment, and adherence. This value leakage is not a marginal issue. It is structural, and it is material.



Forward.

Closing this gap requires more than incremental improvement and played-out playbooks.

It requires a reframing of how commercial performance is defined and delivered. It requires elevating Customer Excellence as the fourth pillar of commercial leadership, alongside Launch, Marketing, and Sales Excellence, and redesigning the system itself to ensure that prescribing intent consistently becomes realized patient and commercial impact.

For me, it was precisely this scale and complexity that made pharma so compelling.

Coming from consumer industries such as retail, financial services, and hospitality, I repeatedly encountered the same observation: pharma was the last frontier of customer experience. Not because the industry lacked intent or capability, but because experience as a discipline did not fit neatly within pharma's uniquely demanding regulatory, clinical, and operational realities, or its complex customer ecosystem.

After working within the commercial core of this global industry, that perspective has only deepened. It became clear that approaches borrowed from other sectors could not simply be applied to pharma. They lacked the structural alignment required to operate within its constraints and to deliver meaningful impact at scale.

What is required is not adaptation, but “rebellion”, a break from the orthodoxy to reimagine, reframe, and redesign a model purpose-built for pharma. One that integrates directly into commercial systems and enterprise success formulas, and reflects the realities of regulation, clinical complexity, organizational structure, and the lived experience of healthcare professionals and patients.

This playbook is written from that perspective. It reflects an outsider's lens, shaped by insider experience, and grounded in work alongside commercial, medical, and business leaders navigating real-world constraints. It is offered with humility and with respect for what the pharma commercial model has achieved.

Most importantly, it is offered with conviction that the future of pharma will be defined not only by the breakthrough science it creates, but by whether the experiences it delivers are worthy of it.



Wayne Simmons | Your Customer Excellence Partner.

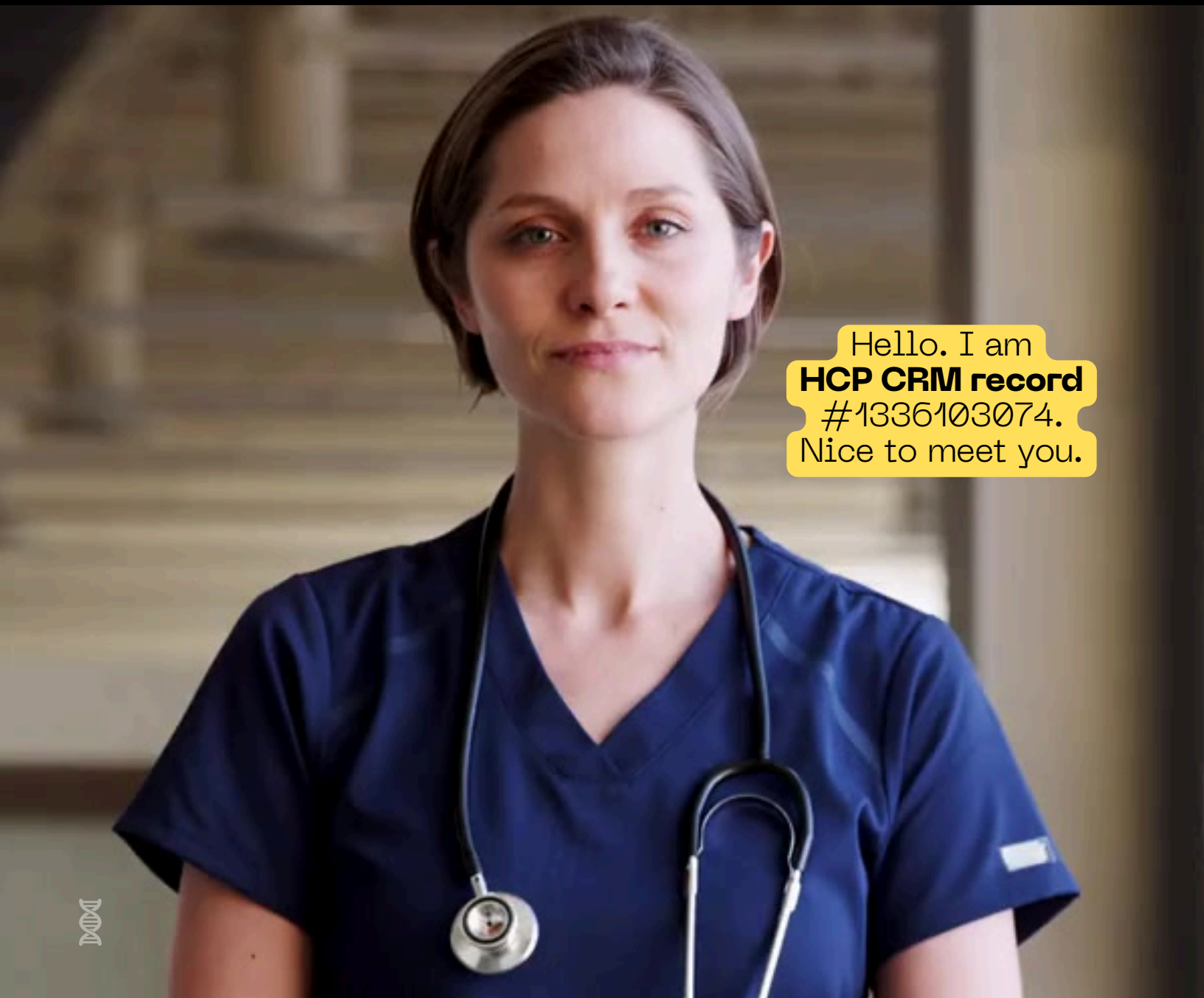


Dear Pharma,

So, you think you know me?

Yes, I'm a proud healthcare professional...but I am also a consumer in my "Other Life." I no longer separate my professional expectations from my personal ones. The experiences I have with Amazon, Emirates, The Ritz-Carlton, and others has set the bar for what "good" feels like *everywhere* for me. I don't simply *like* these experiences. I trust them. I depend on them.

My message to you is simple: *I bring those same expectations and that same standard into every interaction I have with you. No more free passes.*



Hello. I am
HCP CRM record
#1336103074.
Nice to meet you.



Introduction.

Redefining Scientific Value Through Her Consumer Lens.

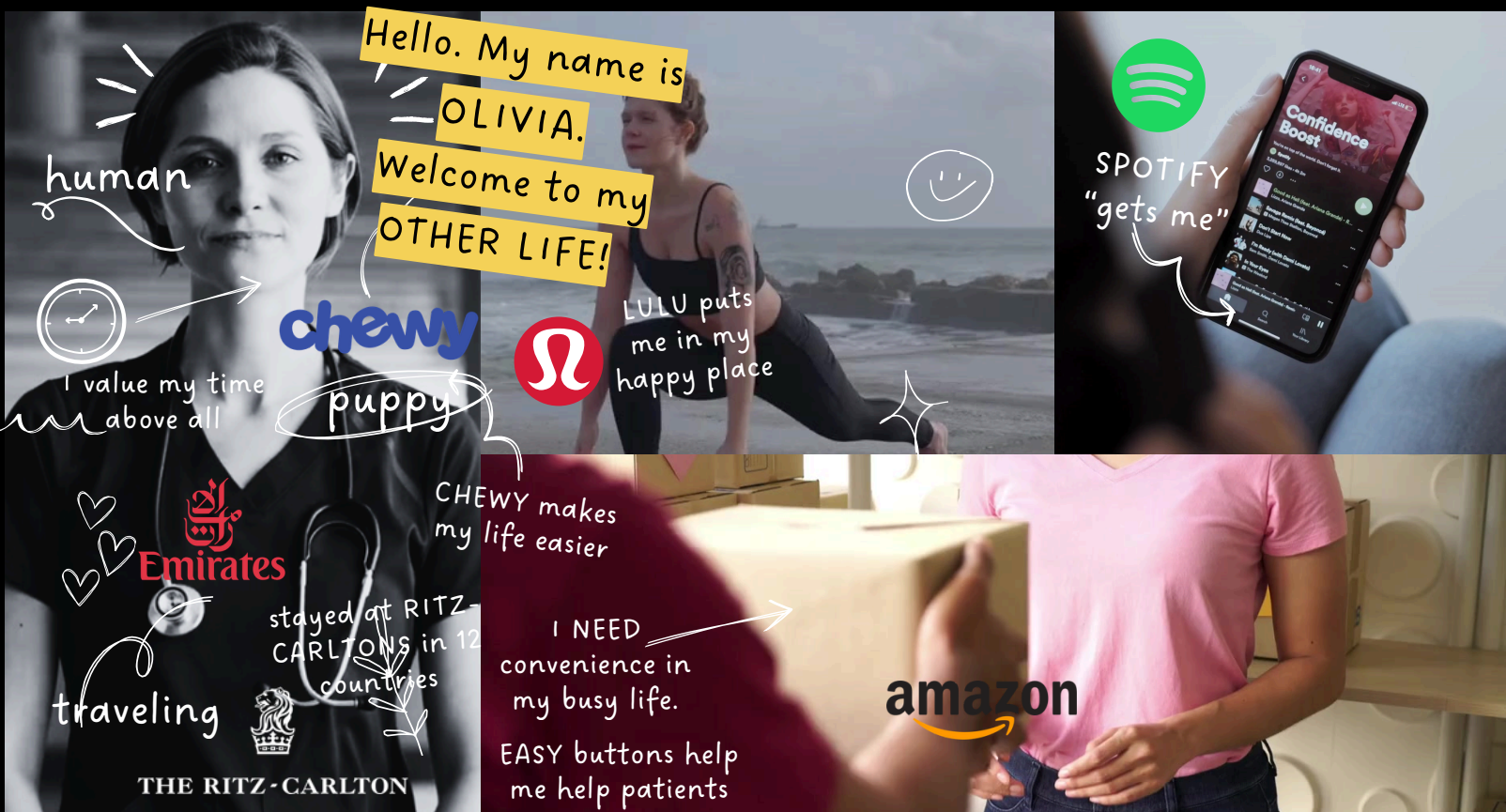
The standard of interaction and engagement for our healthcare professional is no longer set by traditional pharma players or even by other healthcare organizations. It is set by the world she lives in. A world that knows her. Every experience she encounters in this “Other Life” reinforces what good feels like. Ease. Anticipation. Coherence. These are no longer exceptions. They are expectations. When pharma interactions fall short, they feel increasingly out of step with the rest of her life.

This should not surprise pharma and life sciences leaders. The industry already operates under some of the most demanding standards in the global economy. Across its sectors and sub sectors, pharma has institutionalized three defining disciplines. The **evidentiary standard** that governs scientific rigor. The **precision standard** that governs manufacturing excellence. The **trust standard** that governs corporate and brand reputation. These standards are non negotiable. They are deeply embedded into how decisions are made, how risk is managed, and how value is protected.

Crucially, a **fourth standard** has now emerged. The **experiential standard** that governs how pharma companies, brands, and science show up in the real world.

What has changed is not the healthcare professional, but her point of comparison. Her expectations now travel seamlessly across personal and professional contexts. The consumer experiences that shape daily life now shape how scientific value is interpreted, how access is navigated, and how care is ultimately lived.

This is the new HCP Customer Context.



The New HCP Customer Context is central to the underlying dynamics of pharma and life sciences.

It is the lens through which clinical intent becomes human impact and commercial realization, or fails to do so. Experience increasingly shapes how HCPs make sense of scientific value, how confident they feel acting on it, and whether prescribing intent ultimately progresses into real-world care or stalls within the complexity that follows.

Experience has become the throughline between intent, impact, and realization because it is the lived expression of that context. Organizations that lead will treat experience as one of the three foundational elements of the enterprise value proposition, alongside product and brand, while recognizing it as the mechanism through which care is delivered and value is actually realized. Not as a nice-to-have initiative, but as infrastructure. Not as an add-on, but as a governing belief that determines whether intent consistently translates into action.

This is not a trend or a passing phase. The age of Experiential Commerce has arrived, and pharma and healthcare more broadly are no longer insulated from it. Economic value is shifting away from an exclusive reliance on tangible propositions toward intangible forces, where effort reduction, orchestration, and continuity increasingly shape decision-making. These forces influence how HCPs evaluate options, rationalize trade-offs, and determine which therapies feel most credible, workable, and worthy of action in real-world practice. They also determine, more directly than ever, whether that action is sustained.

Like any consumer, HCPs have already recalibrated their expectations. The experiences that shape their daily lives now serve as reference points in professional interactions. Speed and convenience signal respect for time. Attention to detail reflects seriousness of intent. Relevance translates into institutionalized empathy that builds trust. These are no longer aspirational benchmarks. They are the standards against which every pharma interaction is judged, and increasingly, the conditions under which prescribing intent is either reinforced or quietly eroded.

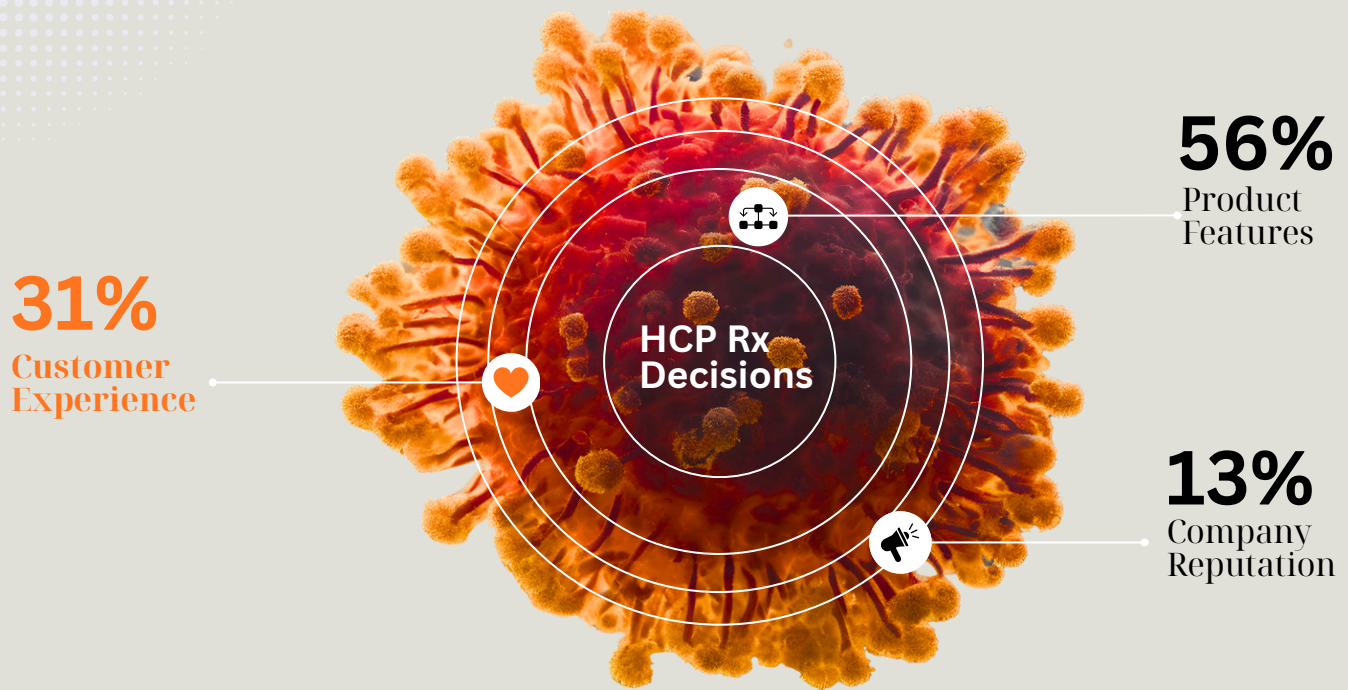
The next era of commercial leadership in pharma and life sciences will be defined by how seriously this context is taken and how deeply it is embedded into enterprise operating models, commercial systems and success formulas. The question facing leaders is no longer whether this shift is real, but whether their organizations are prepared to meet this elevated experiential standard.

When they are, the brilliance of their breakthrough science will finally be matched with the world-class experiences worthy of it, and the value they have already created will be fully realized.

Welcome to Pharma's New Consumer-Grade Imperative.



Figure: Customer experience influences one-third of HCP Rx decisions.



Adapted from Source: DT Consulting: The State Of Customer Experience In The Global Pharmaceutical Industry, 2025: HCP Interactions | 6,020 HCPs across 13 countries and eight HCP specialty areas.

“Customers crave immersive and seamless end-to-end experiences integrated into lives and workflows as they strive to achieve their desired outcomes. With this realization, in a CXE the experience becomes the proposition, an essential element in the offering and value exchange with customers, and a primary variable in corporate growth engines and value creation formulas. Consistent with the core attribute of building and delivering ideal experiences, CXEs treat brand-aligned experiences as a core differentiator that shows up, alongside core product and brand propositions, as a decisive factor when customers are trying to make life cycle decisions.

—The Customer Excellence Enterprise

The Anatomy of Pharma's Value Leakage Ladder.

The **Value Leakage Ladder** illustrates how value, once earned at the point of prescribing, progressively erodes across barrier-heavy journeys. It exposes the hidden friction, fragmented ownership, and breakdowns in continuity that prevent clinical intent from being fully realized as real-world patient and commercial impact, compounded by experiences that fall short of consumer-grade expectations.

At its core, it reveals that pharma often does not have a demand, sales, or field performance problem, but a **realization problem**. Conventional remedies remain anchored in optimizing interactions through coaching, training, and channel execution, but they are not designed to ensure progression across the journeys where value is ultimately won or lost. Nor will interventions focused on improving sales performance move the needle, because they are misaligned with the nature of the problem.

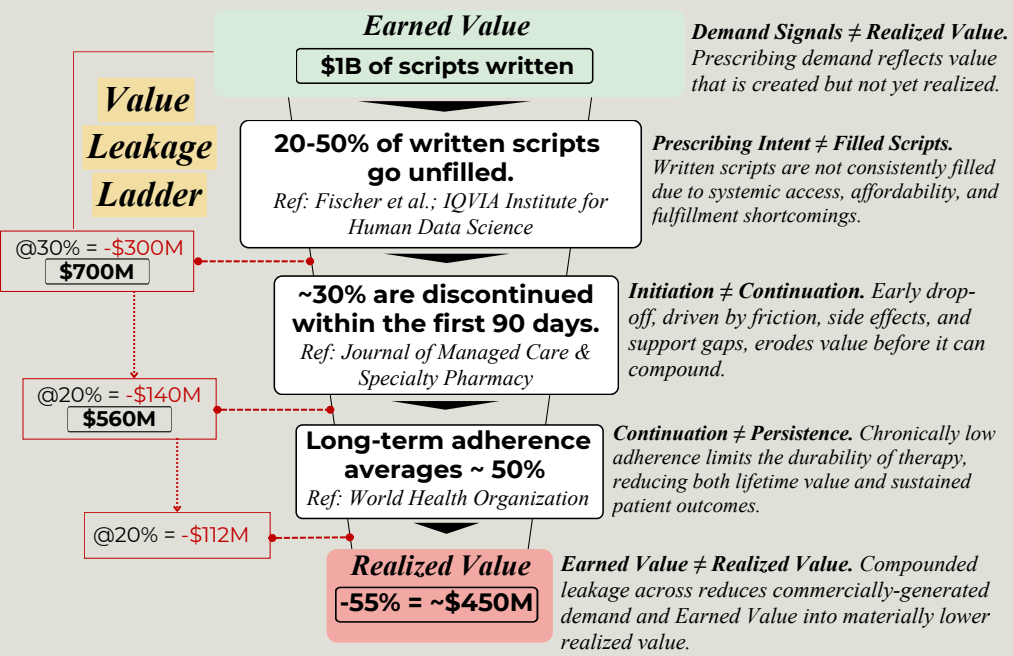
The ladder reframes the clinical and commercial stakes, highlighting how value that has already been earned is too often left unrealized in a consumer-grade world that increasingly demands continuity, simplicity, and support.

Closing this gap requires a new mindset, a new lens, and a new system. Customer Excellence provides that shift, establishing the operating logic needed to ensure that intent consistently becomes impact.

Strategic Question. With up to **55% of value going unrealized** in some therapeutic areas, is the pharma commercial system structurally optimized to capture the full value of prescribing intent, or inadvertently designed to leave significant value on the table after it is earned?

Reflected in the **VALUE LEAKAGE LADDER**, significant earned value, in both patient outcomes and commercial impact, is lost after the script... **...representing the BARRIER-HEAVY JOURNEYS that define the pharma commercial arena.**

Entry Condition: Scientific innovation, aligned to purpose, generates clinical confidence, prescribing demand, and commercial potential.



Diagnosis. Journeys are managed as disconnected stages, allowing friction and drop-off to break continuity and stall progression from intent to realized impact.

Path-to-Prescribe (P2P)
Transforms clinical belief into prescribing intent, setting the path for patient and commercial impact.

Path-to-Fulfill (P2F)
Converts intent into initiated therapy, turning decisions into real-world action.

Path-to-Adhere (P2A)
Sustains therapy over time, ensuring outcomes are achieved and value is fully realized.

Case for Change. Instinctively defaulting to conventional remedies --coaching, sales leader turnover, field force retraining, etc.-- targets sales performance, not the structural nature of the problem, leaving it fundamentally unaddressed.

Strategic Question. How do we optimize our commercial system to remove barriers and ensure prescribing intent consistently becomes realized patient and commercial impact, rather than continuing to optimize discrete interactions that fail to address the core problem?

Practiced. Proven. Published. A solution for modern commercial leadership.

The point of view advanced in this paper is grounded in research and practical application. It has been progressively developed, tested, and deployed inside two of the most complex global pharma organizations, where commercial models must function within scientific, regulatory, access, and field realities. In these environments, conventional *Customer Experience* as an adjacent initiative evolved into *Customer Excellence* an embedded commercial solution.

This work is formally codified in ***The Customer Excellence Enterprise: A Playbook for Creating Customers for Life***, published by John Wiley & Sons. The perspectives in this paper extend that foundation, applying its core principles to the specific forces reshaping pharma and life sciences.

This solution is further grounded in leadership experience of the author within **consumer-intensive, service-led industries**, where experience quality directly drives competition, growth and brand performance, and reinforced by academic rigor developed through designing and teaching curriculum in the first graduate-level Master of Science program in Customer Experience Management at the Eli Broad College of Business, Michigan State University.

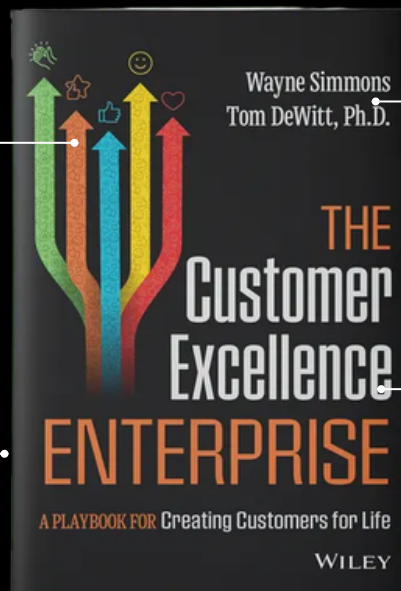
Together, these dimensions establish a novel commercial solution for pharma and life sciences that is both technically sound and operationally proven.

Built for Post-Pandemic Commercial Reality.

Selected for publication to address why traditional CX models broke down and what replaces them.

Written for Enterprise & Commercial Leaders.

Designed for CMOs and commercial leaders responsible for performance, not CX theater.



Elevates Experience into a Commercial Asset.

Repositions experience as a repeatable driver of growth, not a program or measurement layer.

Unifies Brand, Product, and Experience.

Introduces a system-level model that closes the gap between promise and delivery.

Figure. An Unapologetically Commercial Interpretation of Customer Experience. reframes traditional customer experience into a commercial operating system, positioning experience as a driver of growth, differentiation, and enterprise value.



The commercial rules are being reset.

What is unfolding is not a gradual evolution, but a reset of the commercial rules. Driven by a fundamentally changed HCP customer context and a corresponding shift in how decisions are made and acted upon, pharma has entered a new reality where historical models are no longer sufficient. Expectations are now shaped by the most seamless and intuitive experiences in everyday life, yet the commercial system supporting the industry was not designed for this world. It remains optimized to influence prescribing decisions, not to ensure those decisions translate into therapy initiation, sustained adherence, and real-world outcomes.

This misalignment has created a widening gap between intent and impact. Prescribing decisions are made, but too often they fail to progress through the complexity that follows. What appears as an engagement or performance issue is, at its core, a *realization gap*, where value that has already been earned fails to be fully captured. The consequence is material, reflected in unrealized patient outcomes and significant commercial value left on the table.

Like any true inflection point, this moment will either amplify risk or unlock advantage. That outcome will not be dictated by market forces alone, but by whether leaders recognize the structural nature of this gap and take bold action to close it.

Many organizations will continue to pursue familiar paths, delivering scientific innovation through ways of working and operating systems that are increasingly misaligned with the realities of modern care delivery and the modern consumer. In doing so, they will widen the gap between clinical intent and lived experience, mistaking activity for progress and optimization for transformation. Tech-led transformation will further obscure the issue, as digital platforms, omnichannel strategies, and even generative and agentic AI are applied to optimize interactions rather than ensure outcomes. These tools can improve visibility and efficiency, but they cannot resolve a problem rooted in how the system itself is designed. As a result, fragmentation persists, friction accumulates, and scientific excellence is constrained not by evidence or efficacy, but by the experience surrounding it.

A different path is now required and possible.

Customer Excellence introduces a fundamentally different way of thinking about commercial performance, elevating experience to a core driver of value realization. As the fourth pillar of a modern commercial model, alongside Launch Excellence, Marketing Excellence, and Sales Excellence, it provides the structure needed to ensure that intent consistently becomes impact.

The new customer context is not emerging. It is already here. Pharma's consumer-grade future is present, accelerating, and unforgiving of half-measures. Whether organizations respond with incremental improvement or a fundamental redesign of how value is delivered will determine who closes the realization gap and who continues to leave value on the table.

This starts when leaders confront an important question:

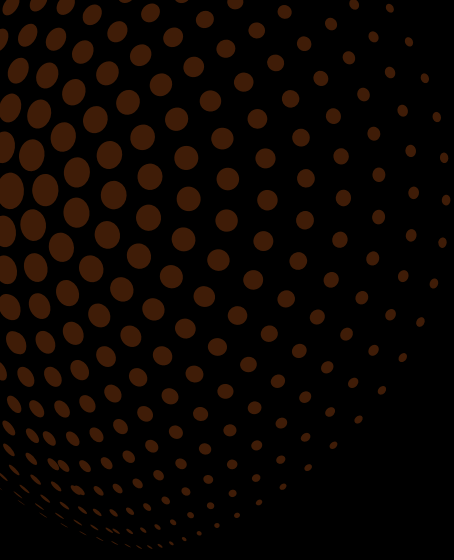


How's your science really showing up in the world?

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