

Pharma Finds a Voice

In a vertical that's essentially avoided sonic branding, a leading IBS medication builds a memorable mnemonic with creativity and data.

13%

higher recall

23%

more likable for CPG

11%

more authentic for CPG

Objective

In a sector as competitive as pharma, the brand looked to sound to help cement its standing as one of the leading IBS medications on the market. Building a great sonic brand — a huge driver of brand affinity and recall — was clearly a necessary part of that strategy. It was also a great opportunity to lead, since few brands in the sector have delved into sonic branding.

Their new plan differed from prior creative strategies in two fundamental ways. The first was that they needed to build something **specifically for audio**, as opposed to merely “borrowing” from their visual marketing. They were also intent on bringing more science to the creation of the sonic brand. While previous creative choices, e.g., around music, were based more on the opinions of stakeholders, they recognized that **they needed objective, quantifiable perspective from their target audience** instead.

For the creative itself, they needed to ensure the sonic brand projected a **welcoming, likable, and optimistic tone**, and that it would work with music in their existing ads. soundlounge worked with the team to understand and establish music elements and characteristics that would create a strong emotional resonance with the brand's target audience.

The mnemonic needed to connect easily and automatically, reflecting everything patients and HCPs know about the brand. It had to sound uplifting, optimistic, trustworthy, positive, empowering, and friendly.

Approach

The soundlounge team produced a creative theme to represent a journey of optimism, to encourage patients and HCPs to ask for the medication by name, and to reinforce the prescription product as an easy and accessible solution. To ensure that all of their decisions around that creative could be backed up by evidence, they leveraged the Veritonic Audio Intelligence platform.

- **Six mnemonic treatments** tested against each other and the CPG benchmark
- **Targeting: IBS patients**
- Testing components: **recall** and key attributes including **likability, optimism,** and sounding **welcoming**

We could not be more pleased to benefit from equal measures of art and science – deep science and analytics made the process much more objective, and, of course, there was plenty of great art to pull it through.

Sharon DeBacco, VP Product Promotion & Communication, Ironwood Pharmaceuticals

Results

While all versions scored high for likability among the brand's target, the creative "Ever Forward" was a clear winner in the group across all metrics.

- **13% higher recall** than the second-best creative ("Repeat")
- **23% above CPG benchmark** for likability
- **11% more authentic; 7% more optimistic** and welcoming
- 54% of respondents said they were likely to remember the brand after hearing the #1 and 2-scoring logos

Armed with proof of the best-performing creative, the pharma leader brought their winning audio logo to market in April 2021. Not only did they produce one of pharma's first sonic brands, they produced something that they knew resonated with buyers, bringing together creativity and empiricism to optimise their sound and create a comprehensive sonic identity.

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