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Pfizer’s Biopharma Global Chief Marketing Officer Drew Panayiotou is ‘Radically Obsessed’ with Listening to Patients

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For Drew Panayiotou, working at Pfizer comes with an enormous perk: the potential to change the world.

That’s why he took the role as the company’s first Biopharma Global Chief Marketing Officer. “Our organization has the power to bring breakthroughs for billions,” says Panayiotou, who joined Pfizer in the fall of 2022. “My job as CMO is to help our organization better understand our healthcare providers and patients so that we can meet them where they are with the information they need at the moment they need it.”

Marketing, today, is largely driven by technology and data. And in healthcare, providers and patients are relying on technology more than ever, which allows new and different connection points for businesses such as Pfizer. That, says Panayiotou, will drive the organization’s marketing strategy. “The best marketing is high-touch and

high-tech. So we have to understand technology and data and how to deploy it in our work in order to be at the forefront of technological innovation," he says.

And at the heart of it all is the individual. "We have to be radically obsessed with the voice of the patients. That means we must understand how care is provided and delivered today, we must voraciously listen, and we must deploy tools to healthcare providers and patients so we can take those insights and serve everyone in the best possible way."

Panayiotou's vision is guided by more than 30 years of marketing experience, with roles at companies that include Johnson & Johnson, The Coca-Cola Company, Best Buy, The Walt Disney Company, and, most recently, Verily Life Sciences (a subsidiary of Alphabet), where he served as Chief Marketing Officer.

Angela Hwang, Chief Commercial Officer, President, Global Biopharmaceuticals Business with Pfizer, says that Panayiotou brings extensive experience and enthusiasm to this new role. "Drew's insights and diverse thinking will help us elevate the cutting-edge capabilities we need to deliver against our purpose—breakthroughs that change patients' lives," she says. "As our first ever Biopharma Chief Marketing Officer, Drew adds an expertise that will allow us to completely reimagine our approach to marketing. By bringing Pfizer into a new era we can help patients, customers, and healthcare providers in exciting, innovative ways."

Panayiotou has been driven to work hard and solve problems since an early age. His parents immigrated to New York City from Greece when he was a child. His father was a chef, and so Panayiotou spent a lot of time working in kitchens, where he saw how joyful his father was when he was doing what he loved. That, in turn, set him on a quest to find his own passion, which involves using technology for the greater good. Throughout his career, he's focused on ways to glean better insights that lead to deeper understandings about consumers. It helps him guide businesses to make a more significant impact. As a part of the pharmaceutical industry, Pfizer is particularly well-positioned to make a difference in someone's life by the very nature of its work in healthcare.

"I think one of the most important things we're going to do at Pfizer is to innovate new ways to connect with patients and healthcare providers, reimagining the ways we help them to access our breakthrough therapies," he says. "And at the same time, we'll do the work to improve some of the existing ways we already interact with people."

More broadly speaking, Panayiotou is eager to be a part of an organization that has the power deliver breakthroughs that change patients' lives.

"As I step into this role, I am thrilled to be part of a company that is already rethinking everything along 'lightspeed' ways of working. At Pfizer, we are creating a seamlessly integrated marketing function that unites data and content at an unprecedented pace, enabling us to stay ahead of the curve and deliver to our patients. To achieve this, we're building new capabilities and assembling a team of diverse talent to help bring this vision to life," he says. "Breakthroughs at a company like Pfizer can literally change the world. I can't imagine a better place to be."

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