



rare **AIR**

Fresh thinking for elevating rare disease marketing

**M=RGE**

# a modern take on proven principles

## Tighter timelines. Smaller budgets. Bigger goals.

Today's rare disease marketers are expected to achieve more with less. The good news is, you don't have to start from scratch. We'll take a fresh look at 3 tried-and-true tenets of rare disease marketing to see how new solutions to age-old challenges can make a real difference for your company and the community.



### 1 | DIAGNOSIS + IDENTIFICATION

Searching for Zebras



### 2 | COMMUNITY + PARTNERSHIP

Finding Common Ground



### 3 | IDENTITY + TRUST

Building Brand Trust

DIAGNOSIS + IDENTIFICATION

they look  
for horses.  
we find  
zebras.

As rare disease marketers, we want to invest in initiatives that lead to the best possible outcome for our brands and the patients we serve. That often starts with improving the time to diagnosis—one of the most difficult challenges to solve, especially in the least prevalent conditions.

HCP awareness and education remain critical. But as we look for new ways to identify patients for treatment, we shouldn't underestimate our ability to reach patients directly. With modern platforms that leverage AI and anonymized health data, compliant and cost-effective outreach to high-volume audiences is now within reach. And for the thousands waiting for an answer, the knowledge we share could put them one step closer to the treatment they need.



Time to Diagnosis of Rare Disease\*

**7 YEARS OR MORE**  
for 28% of all patients



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\*Disorders, N.O.f.R. Barriers to rare disease diagnosis, care and treatment in the US: A 30-year comparative analysis. 2020 [Last accessed 2022 5/09]; Available from: [https://rarediseases.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/NRD-2088-Barriers-30-Yr-Survey-Report\\_FNL-2.pdf](https://rarediseases.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/NRD-2088-Barriers-30-Yr-Survey-Report_FNL-2.pdf).



COMMUNITY + PARTNERSHIP

# the high road to **common ground**

Demonstrating commitment to the patient is essential to building relationships in rare disease. That's especially true with advocacy groups, who need to know you're invested in more than your bottom line. It may seem like a leap of faith. But prioritizing the needs of the patient above your own will go a long way to opening up a seat at the table to discuss partnership opportunities. And by taking the high ground, you'll have earned your seat.

Once there, finding common ground is the key to unlocking more productive relationships. By approaching advocacy with an open mind and pushing beyond a surface-level understanding of each other's goals, it's possible to discover more significant initiatives that have a more profound impact on the community. By working together, you'll have accomplished something more valuable than either could have alone.



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## IDENTITY + TRUST

if you  
build it,  
trust  
will  
come

**It shapes reputations. Drives decisions. Increases loyalty.**

Yet despite its outsized role in rare disease, research shows that trust is in decline among Americans.\* Brands, as a product's outward expression internalized by customers, are vessels for building trust. But for too many rare disease marketers, branding remains an underutilized asset.

To maximize its value, the brand should be a primary focus throughout the product's life cycle—from initial brand strategy, architecture, and identity through brand launch, ambassadorship, and ongoing stewardship. With care and craft, the best brands create stories and experiences that do more than simply achieve marketing goals. They inspire belief in the possibility of rising above the limitations of debilitating conditions. And in rare disease, sometimes that's what the community needs most.



*In healthcare, benevolence is the most important dimension of trust.*



**DENIS O'KEEFE | EVP, Executive Creative Director**

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\*MERGE National Healthcare Trust Index.



# MERGE

## Storytelling Technology



As a full-service marketing agency, we merge storytelling and technology to promote health, wealth, and happiness. Focusing on rare disease and oncology, our team of life science experts works alongside out-of-category innovators with deep digital expertise.

We're driven to make a difference. And we believe the best way to do that is by helping our clients create more modern marketing systems. Built for storytelling. Fueled by technology. We're launching rare disease marketing into the 21st century.

Learn more at [mergeworld.com](https://mergeworld.com)