### Michael Roberts (00:09):

Welcome to the Health Connective Show. I'm your host, Michael Roberts, joined by our marketing manager, Ashley Hohensee. Our guest for this episode is Lindsey Dinneen. Lindsey is a fractional CMO working with multiple clients and was previously the brand engagement manager at Velentium, a medtech design, development and manufacturing company. She also has her own podcast called The Leading Difference, interviewing medtech leaders who are changing lives for a better world. Today we're gonna talk with Lindsey about marketing in the medtech industry, specifically how to translate engineer speak into effective marketing messages that position and brand your product for success. Lindsey, thank you so much for joining us today.

### Lindsey Dinneen (00:50):

Yeah, thank you so much for having me. I'm thrilled to be here.

Michael Roberts (00:54):

Absolutely.

### Ashley Hohensee (00:54):

So turning engineering terminology into marketing messaging I know is something that probably a lot of companies struggle with. Where do you see those breakdowns tend to occur in the process?

### Lindsey Dinneen (01:07):

Yeah, it's a great question. I think there are a few things that come to mind immediately. The first being sometimes we have sort of a lack of collaboration, and it's easy when you're, especially in a small company and probably wearing a lot of hats to kind of, in some elements silo yourself a little bit in your sort of division or your department. And it can be hard because you're doing so much to make sure that you're actually collaborating with others that really need to be a part of the process. So in marketing, translating those marketing messages, it's really important to have a really strong collaboration between the engineers, scientists, inventors, and the marketing and salespeople, because we need, as marketers and salespeople to understand the technical aspects well enough to translate them to normal people talk. But a lot of it is these conversations that we can have where we strengthen our collaboration.

### Lindsey Dinneen (02:07):

And I think that's a big thing that sometimes the lack of collaboration can be a problem. Another thing I see is not translating technical jargon. So there's, these people are so brilliant and I just love interacting with these engineers and scientists, and sometimes even for, for me, and I've had the privilege of being in medtech for a while now, but even for me, there are many times where I have to say, okay, hang on, I'm not familiar with that acronym. Can you please explain that? So being able to have the, I would say, humility to admit when you don't know something and say, can you explain it to me, maybe like I'm your grandma, or I'm a 10-year-old? And then we can take it and, and elevate it for the right audience. But making sure that we're being able to translate each other is really important.

#### Lindsey Dinneen (02:53):

And then I suppose that a third thing would be sometimes we might have a misalignment of goals. Sometimes the marketers are there and the salespeople are there to get the word out as quickly as possible, and we need to make sure that we're pausing that the engineers and the scientists, the

inventors, have the same goal in mind of we all wanna make sure that this messaging goes out because it's so important, otherwise we can't actually sell what we've created. Right? But at the same time, trying to align our goals to make sure that we're hitting the right points for the right audience.

### Michael Roberts (03:26):

There's a lot of things that you hit on there that definitely resonate. Ashley and I both work with Justin, who is the chief operating officer, chief technical officer for our company, and he'll start explaining something to us, and then it's like, yes, that all sounds good, <laugh>.

### Michael Roberts (<u>03:43</u>):

And I'm like trying to look stuff up and I'm writing down the different acronyms that are, he's thrown out there, and I'm trying to make sure that I'm like, then I can go back and ask him, okay, now I don't know what this one meant in this, but I've also been, at the same time, I, I've been in conversations with somebody as like a, as a salesperson, and they've said, oh, well, that this thing that you're talking about, it connects to the, you know, blah, blah, blah database. I go, yes, it does. And I like, later on, I'm like, I totally just faked my way through that conversation and I have to like, follow up with somebody and go, did I say this right? Do I need to go back and apologize and like say what this really was? And I was actually right in that circumstance.

### Michael Roberts (04:22):

But that humility and that willingness to like admit you don't know something, it's tough and it's, it's scary and it, and it feels like you're kind of letting somebody down when you do have to go, go through that. What can marketers do besides being humble enough? Like when we start having to kind of like get stronger on the technical side of things so that we, we understand enough. What kinds of resources do you recommend people do? Is it just a matter of peppering the engineers with enough questions or, or like what else can people do along those lines?

#### Lindsey Dinneen (04:53):

Yeah, I think it's really helpful to have, you know, that collaborative spirit and open dialogue between engineers and marketers. But I think there's a lot of stuff that we can do as marketers to elevate our own understanding. And it doesn't necessarily involve always badgering the, the engineers at our company. And so sometimes it's, it's things as simple as signing up for a webinar. There are so many great resources out there that are free. There are podcasts or webinars, there's articles. There's so many ways for us to increase our own understanding of the industry, the specific device, the impact that it has on patients. And so when we can take initiative and keep learning ourselves, I think that's a huge, huge thing. So I would say collaborating with the engineers in your company as well. But then on top of that, we can do our own growth and learning on the side.

### Lindsey Dinneen (05:47):

And there's, like I said, so many amazing resources out there that can really help us in that. One thing that I did when I first started in medtech was just as much as I could, deep dive, absorb everything. So whether it was getting on the sales calls with our salespeople and just being a fly on the wall, that really helped me understand more about the industry, about our company and our capabilities specifically. And then also, like I said, attending industry events, going to conferences, all of those things are so helpful and make a huge difference in that learning curve because it, it's a steep one if you're not familiar with it. But then I would also say, you know, you wanna develop maybe your own, or at least I

did, develop sort of a glossary of terminology and make sure that you also understand, so it's not just a matter of someone explaining it to you once, but you've taken the initiative to kind of write it down and then verify, did I get that accurate? Kind of like you would do in a perhaps a, a relationship where you're trying to relate to each other and you're, and that person is saying, Hey, here's what I feel about this. And you kind of repeat it back to them to say, did I get that right or Can you correct me along the way? So I, I think those are some good tools to help.

### Ashley Hohensee (06:57):

I wanted to touch back on, so you mentioned like translating terminology. So we actually have a sister company called P3 Practice Marketing, and we do a lot of marketing for physicians, um, content websites, those kind of things. So one of the things that sometimes we'll run into is a physician will get really stuck on bringing in the technical terminology. They're used to writing for their peers. So just like for a simple example, like they'll be like, no, it has to be the patella. And it's like, well, it's the patient, the patient knows it's your kneecap. Like <laugh> patient's not gonna know what that means. So sometimes we'll kind of have that back and forth. Do you ever see similar between marketing and engineering and creating the message and how do you handle that?

### Lindsey Dinneen (07:42):

# Lindsey Dinneen (08:40):

However, remember to your point about the kneecap versus patella, let's think about this in terms of what is our ultimate goal? Is it is our ultimate goal for a quote unquote normal person to be under, be able to understand what it is that we're selling and the, and the, the value that this product brings to the market? Or is it to kind of keep so high level that only maybe our peers in the industry will understand? And most of the time we're, we're trying to include a broader audience. So I think helping to educate, be very empathic with these amazing leader smart people and say "yes, and" right. So, and the the, and comes in too, sometimes we can, we can compromise a little bit. We can say, okay, here's our marketing message, which is a little broader, but also let's have a side white paper where you go into all of those details so that we have both, we've got the marketing broad messaging, and then we have for the people who are going to ask us all the detailed technical questions, they want to know everything behind the science of it, the peer reviews and whatnot.

### Lindsey Dinneen (09:40):

Maybe we can have a little bit of both. And I think that that's a, a healthy compromise that perhaps we can strike.

### Michael Roberts (09:45):

It's really interesting 'cause I could picture there being, I've been to a few different, like investor conferences and some stuff like that where, you know, the questions that the level of discourse can be very much on the surface of almost like patient understanding. Do all the investors get it? But you have some investors that, no, no, no, they specialize in medtech and they specialize very much in this field. And so if you can get into the science of that, you're gonna impress that investor who's more willing and more able. So I, I, there's an interesting like "yes, and" proposition there that that's, that's a really cool way of thinking about it. So we're talking about this like we're, we're trying to make sure that the patient can hop on board, kind of readily follow that. And, and I think that like one of the easy examples that we can kind of all think of, I'm doing air quotes like everybody can see me, but <laugh>, this is just an audio only podcast, but air quotes there saying like the easy example being like all of us having to take that covid test and trying to understand, do I shake the vial now?

# Michael Roberts (10:44):

Do I wait until do, where do I swab six times or seven times? And, and really trying to make sure that we understand all the, all the steps there, and that's patient instruction as opposed to marketing. But, but there are times where you really do have to get technical and the only way through it is just to be technical. So how do you, how do you help the patient or the end user at that point, whether it's the nurse in the hospital prepping something or whether it's the physician or whether it's patient? How do you handle that?

### Lindsey Dinneen (11:14):

Yeah, it's such a good question and I think that there's a lot of ways that marketers can help folks understand when, to your point, it really cannot be broken down into more simplistic terms. So I think one of the ways you can do it is through a series of visual aids. A lot of folks learn visually, and that's a great way to do it. So something like an infographic or a buyer's journey sort of graphic or image to kind of help people understand how the things connect to each other. You know, use of video is also very helpful. Sometimes even having a physician explain the process through video or explain the terminology is still gonna be a really useful way of learning. So I do think that there are, are ways where we can break it down into a little bit, at least more digestible pieces of information as someone's going through it.

#### Lindsey Dinneen (12:06):

And then, I mean, even with this, I think, you know, if you can do a simulation or something where you can kind of have like a, an interactive experience, that's always a really good idea. Like, click on this map for X, Y, and Z and then click here to, you know, so it kind of leads you through it. That's another good way to think about it. And then finally, again, even when we have to be very technical, we could always explain our terms so we don't have to stick with that high level <laugh>. I say high level patella, and everyone's gonna laugh about that because it's not that high level. But in terms of maybe, you know, somebody just doesn't remember what the patella is, then all we have to do is just do a little link, you know, hyperlink in our content that just says, you know, you click on it and it's just a brief explanation. Or you're looking at someone says, this is going to help TMJ, and nope, we don't know what TMJ is. So again, we just have a little hyperlink that just kind of helps explain it in a little bit more normal people terms is I guess how I would put that.

#### Ashley Hohensee (13:05):

So kind of going back to overall, like your strategy of crafting the message as marketers, you know, we're often having to speak to an audience that is different for, a different viewpoint from us, you know, may have different priorities, multiple different audiences. How do you figure out what kind of messaging each audience needs? What's your process for that? What level of detail, technical language they need?

### Lindsey Dinneen (13:30):

I think this goes back to probably a standard, well, what I hope is a, a bit of a standard approach to marketing and positioning. And that would be, you really have to understand who you're talking to. So the biggest thing is understanding who is the end user of your product and service or service, and then how do you speak to that person and their particular needs and desires? I remember talking to a physical therapist who was about ready to launch his own practice and he talked about how he just wanted to be kind of everything to everyone. And I said, you know what, I, I totally understand that you obviously can help everyone because of your skillset. However, the problem is we don't know how to translate that as end users. So we look at it and go, well, I don't know if this is for me, because it's not specific enough.

### Lindsey Dinneen (14:26):

Now, if he said, I am a physical therapist for women ages 30 to 40 who are trying to get back into athletic shape to train for an event or something like very, very specific, and he would know exactly how to message to to that demographic. And I would go, oh, I'm in that boat. I wanna, I wanna learn about this. I wanna go to you because you specialize in this. So I think sometimes understanding the, the end user and what they're looking for, what are their pain points, what are their concerns and understanding how to speak to them, that's gonna be a huge thing. So positioning is kind of part market research, part buyer persona. And so that's again, sort of looking at your ideal client, who, who is the person that will most benefit from this device that you're creating? And speak to them because their pain points are what's gonna resonate in your messaging as to how you can help that.

#### Lindsey Dinneen (15:23):

So I, I think that's really important. There's also the sort of standard marketing things you wanna do, such as A/B testing. You wanna try a couple of different things. What is actually speaking to people? We, maybe we run some ads and we say, okay, here's the first marketing message that we're gonna try. We think this is spot on, we're not sure, but here's the second backup just in case, and maybe this resonates differently. And then we find out. So it's, it's, I think marketing is so fun because it's such a blend of art and science. You have a lot of creativity and creative licenses. You are putting things together and your content and your designs, and then it's also the science behind it of, okay, but now we get to take these metrics and these analytics that we're gathering, that's feedback for us. That's fantastic data. So we don't wanna be afraid of the data because it's gonna tell us right from wrong <laugh>, for lack of a better word. So I definitely think being aware of your analytics as you're going through things, trial and error is just part of the game. But the biggest thing is understanding who are you ultimately speaking to? What are their pain points and how can you help solve that?

#### Michael Roberts (16:30):

With companies that have been out there for a little while, they've at least run something, they've run some kind of campaign, they've gotten some sort of idea of like, this sales message seems to be working, this one doesn't. Maybe there's messages are gonna ebb and flow, I think like as things like pandemics come along or things like major, you know, shifts in the healthcare scene and, and all of that

kind of stuff. And, but you know, you've got the startups that are out there and they're just, they think they've got their pitch. They think they've got something really like ready to roll. And every startup that I've had the chance to hear from that, you know, I've really been able to, they've pushed through, they usually talk about, hey, this was all the stuff that we learned after we got out there. We tried all these things <laugh> we learned along the way and we, we rolled with it. But this is, this is the kind of stuff that we had to adjust to. So whether it's a startup or whether it's a company that has been there for a while, what are you seeing working for branding, positioning, like getting these new products out there? What are the, the steps that companies really need to be going through and thinking through?

### Lindsey Dinneen (17:31):

Yeah, well you're speaking to my soul because I love branding. It's my favorite thing. And it's always so exciting. In fact, I, I often joke about that branding is my soapbox. So I'm like, so I'll go into this spiel and be like, okay, now I need to step off my soapbox here because <laugh>, I'm very passionate about it because I think it makes such a difference in, in how you appear to the marketplace, how you show up in the world, and how people recognize you for good or bad. 'cause you can do it both ways. So we wanna be really cognizant of our brand, make sure that things all align. So our, we've decided on a logo, we've decided on our colors, our fonts. We're not going away from those. We wanna make sure that the content we produce is consistently recognizable as our brand. We don't want it to be like, oh, was that their competitor?

### Lindsey Dinneen (18:23):

I mean, we definitely don't want that. So we have to be kind of aware of all of that. So yeah, I mean, I think that there's a lot that works really well for med tech companies in particular, but kind of applies, I guess in general to marketing best practices. And some of that would be things like having a clear value proposition. Again, our end user needs to understand exactly why this product at this time from this company is the solution for them. So there are a lot of competing inventions out there. So what makes yours different? And it, again, this is a good example of the needing to resonate with your audience. So it can't just be the engineer saying, well, it's got all these cool gadgets that no one's ever done before. And you're like, that's great, but what does that translate to for your end user?

#### Lindsey Dinneen (19:18):

So how can that person understand what makes this difference? Is it you're talking about the, the way that it's powered? Well, okay, but to the end user is the, is the advantage having a longer battery life or something like that? Like what for them is going to resonate? So I think having that very clear value proposition is a really good thing. You can also do creative things in your marketing, especially even if you don't have a large marketing budget. So thought leadership is such a good thing to do for companies, especially medtech companies. You all are the experts in your industry. You're brilliant. You've got years of experience, you have this expertise. It's sharing that and being open with that is, is such a big thing. And when you can position yourself in the industry as a thought leader, you're going to gain all this extra credibility for yourself, for your company, for your products, by being able to speak to it intelligently and thoughtfully and and whatnot.

### Lindsey Dinneen (20:20):

And so I think there are so many opportunities to exhibit thought leadership. You can sign up to be a sponsor or at least apply to be a sponsor at different industry events. And usually that sponsorship might come with a sort of a speaking opportunity. You can, you know, write articles. A lot of places need

content anyway. They'll be thrilled to have it, you know, especially if you're willing to do it for free. And then podcasts are another great source. And there's, there's a myriad of of ways to get involved in thought leadership without having to break the bank. So I think you've got your PR people, that's one thing, and that's really helpful as well. But you can also elevate your own brand and therefore the brand of your company by getting more involved in thought leadership opportunities. And then honestly, patient stories are some of the best ways that you can really make an impact on your potential customers because it's those success stories, those lives that you touched and changed and made better because of your invention.

## Lindsey Dinneen (21:21):

Hearing it from those people, that is by far your best marketing. You really want to share those success stories. Talk about the before, during, and after the procedure or whatever it is. So how has their life changed as a result? Or what did they experience before? That's different now. I think when we see that from say a person's perspective who has no knowledge of the industry, no knowledge of, of the device. If I do that and it pulls in my heartstrings, I'm like, oh my gosh, wow, I know a second cousin on my mother's side who also has this thing. Maybe this can help them. You know? So I think, I think sharing real life, true stories, storytelling is so powerful. So anytime that you can weave that into your marketing and your positioning, your branding, woo, it's golden <laugh>.

### Michael Roberts (22:13):

Very nice. So patient stories, if we're talking to patients directly, a hundred percent, like I'm, I'm with you, like, and I'm a sucker for them <laugh>, and I try to tear up night like not to tear it up too often, as I like, especially like companies that post that stuff to LinkedIn, like, that's not the right time, man. Like, I can't be like tearing up like during work hours and stuff. But so here's, here's the question for you though. Let's say that you sell something that isn't a tear jerker, that isn't like something that a bunch of people are gonna come out and go, man, can you believe the x y z product from this company? So I think about all of the different companies that are selling to hospital administrators, or they're selling to physicians, or they're selling to people. And your normal thing that you think about is like, well, we gotta have all the data. We've gotta show why ours is more cost effective. Why this why? And it's, it's such a like rational quote, again, air quotes that nobody can see a rational conversation that everybody's having, but we are emotional beings and story and all of that emotion still makes an impact. So how can companies that are in that position approach that and still be able to, to connect on some deeper level than just my numbers are as good as the other company's numbers?

#### Lindsey Dinneen (23:32):

Ha, yes. Which never works. <a href="#"><laugh</a> or I'll say rarely works. Yeah, I think this goes back to a couple of points. Having a very clear value proposition does really help because you've identified exactly what makes your product different from X, Y, Z competitor. So from a logical standpoint, you can say, well, you know, here's this company's product, here's our company's product. I mean, it could be as simple as a scalpel, right? Or something like that. But here's the difference between the two of them of them. And if you're talking to administrators and doctors who might be, their heartstrings might also be pulled by a patient success story, by the way, just because it's what is the end goal even of, of the use of this device? But say, you know, again, we were talking about a scaffold doesn't sound all that exciting, but what if you're talking about it in terms of, okay, but this particular scalpel is sharper, stronger, lasts longer, easier to clean, I don't know.

#### Lindsey Dinneen (24:32):

So here's those things and you're, you're talking to people who yes, that is still logical in terms of, okay, this will help me have a better operational outcome. It'll be easier to work with, it'll last me longer. So there, it's a, there are practical reasons, but there's still reasons that in, in terms of overall efficiency, it's gonna <laugh> if they're like a lot of folks who are very organized and practical minded, that is gonna pull on their heartstrings too, in the sense of you'll be speaking their language. So I think that you can still use the aspect of storytelling. You could still give an example of, say the difference that it made in one hospital when they used your scalpel versus the other one and the patient outcomes that improved, or just the efficiency that improved with the system that you've created or whatever. So I think you can still find creative ways to incorporate storytelling, but again, maybe knowing that this particular administrator's biggest goal is the efficient running of their hospital, then you speak to that and you say, okay, here's all the ways to do that. And you incorporate stories when you can. But I think it's a, it's, it can be similar. Yeah.

### Michael Roberts (25:48):

Yeah. Interesting. It's funny just because like, we so often talk about this in terms of like what the patient is experiencing and obviously like, I, I hope that we always keep that at like the center of, you know, these kinds of conversations, but there are so many things that happen outside of that patient experience and exactly what they're facing. So yeah, like being able to speak to all the people in the room. Here's just a thought that was just kind of going through my head. Like earlier on we, we were talking about working with engineers and I just wanted to get your, your read on this and what you think about it. So product developers, engineers, all of that kind of stuff, they are often having to deal with their own kind of like end user story. Right. So doctors, when they're going through the procedure, their pain points are this, this, and this, and we're specifically looking for a product a, a scalpel that's gonna fit their hand in exactly this way.

### Michael Roberts (26:39):

And it needs to fit their hand in exactly this way because of the following reasons. We were at a, I was at a, uh, a conference on surgical robots, the different tools that you could use. And so you kind of have like the big device that's out there, you know, like, uh, some of the big towers and everything where they do every procedure under the sun, you can use them for pretty much everything, right? But there are very specific cases where the form factor of that device doesn't work well for that procedure. It, it kind of gets in the way or it's too cumbersome or it's, it's too difficult to, to switch back and forth. So engineers very much get in the end user's frame of mind when they think about developing the product and like exactly how that's gonna fit. I've never heard any marketer talk about like comparing that to sort of like the marketing needs as well and like, is that a leap that might be possible for the engineers to kind of go, you remember what you did when you made the device? Let's do the same thing when we're talking about it so that we're talking about it from that same, same kind of idea set.

### Michael Roberts (27:44):

So just again, these are just things that being at all these different conferences that are kind of coming together in my head going like, would that work <laugh>, is that something that's possible? And like how might that help kind of bridge that gap?

### Lindsey Dinneen (27:54):

Yeah, I love that. I think that's a brilliant idea and would work so well because to your point, I, yeah, engineers, you know, we're, they're trying to solve a problem. They've identified a problem or a gap in

the market, something that doesn't exist and they're trying to figure out a way to bring this device to reality. And it does have to do with solving a problem. And that solving the problem is exactly to your point, the end user goal too. They also want this problem solved. So I think that's a perfect way of helping to even start the conversation of, okay, this is a great device. I see what you're doing. I wanna translate it into more marketing messaging rather than just technical jargon. Let's talk about why you decided to do this in the first place. What made you realize that there was a need for it? What problem are are you solving? Let's talk about that and, and get that messaging first. I think that's a great way to open a conversation and get that started. 'cause you're absolutely right. It's kind of the same goal for both.

### Michael Roberts (28:58):

Yeah, it's funny, like the way that we define creativity and the like the way that just like pop culture, I guess that kind of talks about creativity. The more time that I get to spend around engineers and people that are, are gifted in that way, like the more I see like, wait, no, that is all the same kind of creativity, it just comes out completely differently and that's not <a href="#laugh"><a href="#laugh">

# Lindsey Dinneen (29:31):

Oh, sure. I would love to. Thank you. So I am the host and producer of the podcast, the Leading Difference, which is sponsored by Velentium, and that's a medical device manufacturing company. And so with the leading difference, the goal has always been to help demystify the industry a little bit. I came in from an outside perspective just a few years ago, and I noticed this sort of hovering unfair stigma that people sometimes viewed the industry as those involved are in it just for the money, which I found was not the case and consistently not the case. So I always found that these people that I talked to were incredible human beings. I mean, just so caring, so compassionate, so brilliant, so creative to your point. And they are in it for really compelling reasons. Oftentimes it has a, it is a very personal story that has prompted them to solve a problem that they've seen or they just understand that, oh my gosh, this, this condition exists, but I could maybe do something to make a difference in it.

#### Lindsey Dinneen (30:39):

They're very driven by motives that are, are personal and very noble and I really wanted to share those stories with the world. So what I get to do is interview medtech leaders who are changing lives for a better world and talk to them about their personal history, their background, their struggles, what they've overcome to be where they are and what they love about medtech specifically, what drove them to it and why are they still here. So it's wonderful. I thoroughly enjoy every interview I get to do. These people are incredible and it's always an honor to talk to them.

#### Michael Roberts (31:12):

Awesome, awesome. And we'll definitely have the link and everything in our show notes after this, so definitely make sure to check that out. Lindsey, thank you so much for joining us today. This has, this has been great. We definitely always appreciate the chance to hear how other people are impacting the, this space that we're all a part of, <a href="#laugh"><a href="#laugh"><

#### Lindsey Dinneen (31:33):

You. This has been a pleasure. I appreciate it.

# Michael Roberts (31:37):

Lindsey shared a lot of great advice today about how marketers can translate technical information into messages that work for their audience and how to position a product in the market to appeal to your target audience. You can find Lindsey on LinkedIn, and you can check out her podcast, the Leading Difference, at theleadingdifference.podbean.com, or your favorite podcast platform. Thank you to our listeners for joining us today. For more on the Health Connective Show, please visit hc.show for previous episodes and Health Connective as a company.