

Smart WILL WIN!

The more this industry changes, the more it stays the same. The companies that apply their intelligence to winning the transactional nature of our business will ultimately succeed. Whether you study the pharmaceutical and biotech industry from the top down or the bottom up, you will find that applying the good business principles that have existed for decades is still necessary for success:

Conduct timely and broad-based market research to segment your customers

We have to remember that we are in business. While the transaction for most of us is a recommendation by an HCP to get a prescription filled, and not a sign on the dotted-line contract, the same principles of sales still apply. You have to decide where you are going to open up your “stores,” or what we call sales territories. Not all towns/cities/states are the same in our business. You will not know how the market in each of these localities will accept and react to your brands until you put in the work to conduct solid market research. I am not saying you need to pull in a couple hundred people, sit behind the glass, and listen to them as they hear your messaging, positioning, or pricing strategy. But technology is our friend now, and this can be accomplished quickly and cost-effectively. These insights will influence your decisions much more than being in every city with a certain physician specialty or density. By segmenting your customers, you can build a bottom-up target list and territory alignment that is built on potential for your product, not someone else's. There are many companies that do this for you, and there are others that help you to do it yourself. I learned what I know about this from Lenny Vicciardo, CEO of Noetyx LLC (www.noetyx.com). We recommend him and his company to most of our clients who don't already have a targeting optimization partner identified.

Develop an appropriate commercialization strategy to maximize your ability to invest in these costly assets

Having a representative in front of an HCP is still the most effective way to deliver a product message. But is it the only effective way? Absolutely not. Technology has become our friend, and opportunities exist to find new and unique solutions to get your brand messaging to targeted HCPs. Most organizations have tactically used teledetailing platforms,

Contributed by



PETER MARCHESINI
Chief Operating Officer
Alamo Pharma Services

PHARMA COMMERCIALIZATION IN 2017 WILL BE DOMINATED BY TWO BIG IDEAS AS PRICING PRESSURES CONTINUE TO MOUNT: EFFICIENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY. THIS EMPHASIS WILL CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INNOVATION IN OPTIMIZING YOUR SALES FORCE.

certainly for white space or leave of absence (LOA) territories, but how do you use it to make your most effective assets even more effective? Create a collaborative solution that takes $1+1=2$ and makes $1+1=3$ or more. An entire article could be written on this subject, but there are companies that are already doing this. We are currently exploring other avenues including one by a company we collaborate with, The Perpetual Ideation Machine (PIM) (www.perpetualideationmachine.com), and an innovative product called EMBED. I have asked Philip Storer, Innovation at PIM, to spell out this creative idea we will be piloting with a few of our sales teams in 2017.

Storer says: “Pharma commercialization in 2017 will be dominated by two big ideas as pricing pressures continue to mount: efficiency and accountability. This emphasis will create opportunities for innovation in optimizing your sales force. Let's look at the facts: 62.5% of the nearly \$71 billion being spent on commercialization is on detailing physicians whose accessibility rate has dropped from 47% to 44% in the last 12 months alone. The situation is even more dire in specialties where we see much of the growth in pharma. For instance, only 27% of oncologists — a breathtakingly small number — are

accessible to a rep. Pharma commercialization looks a lot to us like the cab industry did to Uber.

These market dynamics are driving our clients to ask a series of the same questions. How do we use the Internet to create a sales force that is on demand, where and when a physician wants them? How do we use technology to overcome access barriers? How do we innovate our way into filling a brand's white space? How do we optimize the spend on our existing sales force?

These questions led us to the development of EMBED. EMBED places your sales force directly on your website using a powerful and business rule — driven form of live chat. But this isn't simply compliant live chat powered by call center employees. What makes EMBED truly special is our use of crowdsourcing technology to connect HCPs with the member of your existing sales force who has the capacity to take the conversation. This is rep-to-HCP communication for a new world. Relational. Efficient. Value-driven. On-demand. Anywhere. Anytime.”

There are so many factors to consider when building a high-performing, effective sales team. For purposes of this discussion, and I'll focus on just a few.

Do you build it yourself, do you outsource, or both?

The right answer is yes. My simple answer from a financial standpoint to an emerging company is that you should not own anything that does not drive revenue during your first three years. And for the things you outsource, retain control. There is a reason why there are so many companies to choose from when it comes to outsourcing. The right partner can help you do more than you can do yourself. If you are lucky enough to have brands with patent protection and perhaps a few different indications, and that are for patient populations big and small, it is your obligation as a business to optimize the return on this potential. A smart outsourcing partner can help you identify the right ways to do this, while allowing you and your company to focus on the strategic things necessary to reinvest your returns. As a provider in this space, we try not to be all things to all people. Sometimes one of our competitors truly is a better fit for a potential client, and sometimes we are. My job is to put my client in the position to reach their maximum success. After all, the clock is ticking, and if we do our job very well they will come back for other opportunities. There is not a cookie-cutter approach that is an optimized solution. Each company and brand has its own pathway to success, and we help them find it, either strictly through our company or through a combination of companies that have specific expertise to drive the optimized

result. Launching a company and a brand is hard. Most struggle and miss their forecasts. Our job is to optimize the brand's potential right from the start. Find a way to optimize each segmented and targeted HCP group. This is done directly or through thoughtful collaborations with other service providers or other pharmaceutical and biotech companies. A good partner will help you put this puzzle together. If it takes you six to nine months to reach an identified group, it is too late.

Hire talent based on your specific needs, not what you had or did at your last company

It is hard to find the right talent without pressing the easy button. Having built many teams, you find that there is no substitution for hard work. However, all too often we are asked to hire people who worked for this or that pharma company. Sometimes you will have success doing that, however, there are no wrong answers, just levels of being right. If you have not been out in the field with a rep in the last nine months, your understanding of the brand experience of the HCP and the patient is flawed. The coordination that has to occur from the top down and the bottom up in a pharmaceutical company is as complicated

as ever. The skills needed by a representative to sell for a one-product start-up organization is much different than being representative number 397 for a larger sales force. Through your recruiting efforts you need to develop the profile you need to compete with your brand(s). Do they possess the necessary traits and attributes to lead at this company this year and beyond, or are you paying for past success based on a totally different situation? Make sure they pass the "here and now" question.

Pilot new ideas and be opportunistic in finding prescriptions.

Your product may have several indications. Are you getting your fair share of business with each of them? If not, how can you?

Have you asked yourself the following question? If I captured the entire market for my brand for all of the indications my product has, how much would that be? Your job is to find a way to capture as much of this number as possible, while still maintaining optimized profitability. Anyone can figure out the big circle opportunities and segments. A true partner will help you solve for the small and medium opportunities and understand who and what can get you in front of those HCPs.

A true partner will help you feel and look "bigger" in the marketplace while limiting your spend. Smart wins here too.

A true outsourcing partner has seen it done many different ways and will help you uncover these opportunities together. They understand your pain points and financial pressures and know that their job is to not only keep you in business, but to make you a success.

The world we work in is evolving. Take the time to lift your head up to see these current changes and to look to the horizon at what is coming down the road. While some of the old plays will work, optimizing your results will require you to adapt your business practices to take advantage of what the market is willing to give you and then work toward removing any obstacles in your way to ultimate success. ^{PV}

*Through outsourced partnerships and internal capabilities, **Alamo Pharma Services** offers pharmaceutical and biotech companies a viable commercial solution partner to either co-market with existing teams or launch a stand-alone team.*

For more information, visit alamopharmaservices.com.

We're revealing a smarter approach to your commercialization needs

Don't let exteriors fool you. Inside this charming Victorian home is a team of experienced pharma veterans who have come together to build exceptional sales forces. We're a professional team that's also approachable, bringing a personal touch to optimizing your outsourcing opportunities.

Visit AlamoPharmaServices.com and let's have a conversation about how we can help you build a strong foundation and structure to tackle whatever commercialization challenges you face.



The place where your company will grow.