Agencies Ahead of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers in **ONLINE RESEARCH**


Elys Roberts

The gap between agencies and their pharmaceutical clients, coming on the heels of a major increase in global acceptance of online research within the pharmaceutical industry, is on first reflection an unusual one because agencies and manufacturers work together so closely, says Elys Roberts, President of Medefield America.

Despite increased reliance on the Internet, market researchers who work for pharmaceutical companies continue to lag behind those who work for agencies. A new report by Medefield finds that both comfort and perceived credibility of online research ranked higher among agencies, which conducted 63% of their quantitative research online, while manufacturers, during the same period, used the Internet for 43% of their surveys. Agency professionals credited the Internet with providing higher quality data than phone interviews.

The report is based on a comparison of the Medefield 2006 Market Research Trends Study, which analyzed responses from 122 market research executives at 20 global pharmaceutical and biotech manufacturers, and a separate study, conducted simultaneously with 107 professional market researchers at agencies around the world.

The gap between agencies and pharma clients is particularly noticeable in markets such as Japan, where 23% of the U.S. and European agencies used online research while only 4% of the pharmaceutical companies, located primarily in the United States and Europe, did the same.

Some pharmaceutical staffers are motivated to continue using the phone — even when they are aware of the benefits of Internet data collection — to keep their studies consistent.

Access to physicians is one area in which all the respondents agree. Doctors consistently prefer the convenience of completing surveys online to the phone.

Consumers Reveal **TOP PHARMA WEBSITES**

A study by Manhattan Research, ePharma Consumer v6.0: The Future of Integrated DTC Marketing, has revealed the top pharmaceutical product Websites as visited by U.S. adult consumers who then requested a prescription from their personal physicians. The product site rankings are based on an online consumer research study of 4,965 U.S. adults. In addition to the product site rankings, the study provides data on more than 100 pharmaceutical product sites, consumer site satisfaction, site search rationales, tools and features desired on product sites, and specific consumer actions taken afterward.

TOP WEBSITES

Top 5 product sites with highest percent of visitors requesting Rx after visiting site:

1. cialis.com
2. viagra.com
3. purplepill.com (Nexium)
4. lunesta.com
5. allegra.com

Top 5 product sites driving Rx requests after visiting site (prescription volume):

1. ambiencr.com
2. allegra.com
3. wellbutrinxl.com
4. lunesta.com
5. purplepill.com (Nexium)

Note: Among product sites with fewer than 1.5 million U.S. adult consumer visitors in the past 12 months.

Source: ePharma Consumer v6.0, Manhattan Research, New York. For more information, visit manhattanresearch.com.

The **PAIN MARKET OUTLOOK** to 2011

Pain-related disorders affect millions of individuals of all ages across the world's most developed economies. Pain management continues to represent a major problem for patients and healthcare professionals, providing an opportunity for pharma companies to align their product pipelines to satisfy the unmet needs of this growing patient population, a report from Business Insights finds.

The study finds that within the pain therapy market there remains a substantial unmet need for drugs with improved efficacy and superior side-effect profiles. But with few novel drugs in the pipeline, companies are very much dependent on reformulations of existing drugs targeting better drug delivery, more convenient dosing schedules, and specific patient populations.

Between 2001 and 2005, the global pain market expanded at a CAGR of 7.9%, accounting for a net growth in sales of $9.6 million. While the pain market has experienced several years of continuous growth, in 2004 and 2005, sales dropped by 7.0% because of the withdrawal from the market of Vioxx and Bextra. Sales in this drug class plummeted by 66.2% in 2005.

Currently, the pain market is led by the anti-convulsant class, which accrued sales of $11.6 million in 2005, with the majority of revenue being derived from off-label use.

Pfizer's current dominance of the pain market is forecast to continue through 2011 because of the evolving success of its blockbuster drug, Celebrex, and the recent launch of Lyrica, which promises market success comparable to its predecessor, Neurontin.

Generic Drugs Threaten **$100 BILLION IN U.S. AND EUROPEAN** Pharmaceutical Company Revenue

More than $100 billion in revenue from major branded drugs is under threat from new generic products as patents expire in the next five years, according to Generic Competition 2007 to 2011, a report published by Urch Publishing. The report finds that during the period from 2007 to 2011 an average of 10 drugs a year will lose patent protection in the United States. With a decline in the number of NCEs approved, there is clear evidence that the loss of revenue from patent-protected drugs will impact the growth of the industry.

The loss of revenue to generic substitutes is a major influence on the financial performance of ethical R&D companies.

The most severely affected companies are Merck and Pfizer, which both face the potential erosion of more than 50% of their 2005 revenue, while more than 40% of the revenue of Bristol-Myers Squibb, Takeda, AstraZeneca, and Eli Lilly is under threat.

"There is a considerable difference between the top 20 pharmaceutical companies in both the number of products and the amount of revenue under threat from the potential introduction of generics," says Dr. Peter Norman, the report's author. "Neither Amgen, which currently markets biological products,

nor Merck KGaA, whose portfolio is primarily mature products, face any threat from generic competition, while Roche, Bayer-Schering, Abbott, and Schering-Plough face limited threats to their revenue."

$9.8 BILLION IMPLANTABLE/ INJECTABLE DRUG DELIVERY MARKET Set for Healthy Growth

Led by the strong growth of biotechnology drugs requiring novel delivery technologies, the injectable/implantable drug delivery market reached revenue of $9.8 billion in 2006, according to Drug Delivery Markets, Second Edition, Vol. 2: Implantable/Injectable Delivery Systems, a new market research study from Kalorama Information.

The market is dominated by implantable, sustained-release, and targeted-injection drug delivery systems with manufacturer revenue of about $7.3 billion in 2006, an increase of 6.3% compared with 2002 sales. Growth continues to be fueled by the introduction of biological therapies, including blood modifiers and insulin products, with the sector projected to reach $9 billion by 2010.

Implantable technologies have been successfully used in administering anticancer therapeutics and the administration of high drug doses in traditionally inaccessible areas, such as the central nervous system, bone tissue, and beyond the blood-retinal barrier.

Substantial Rise Predicted for PEDIATRIC RESEARCH COSTS

The average cost to complete pediatric research on already marketed prescription drugs, conducted in response to a request from the FDA, increased nearly eight times between 2000 and 2006, according to the Tufts Center for the Study of Drug Development. The increase, in nominal dollars, from $3.93 million in 2000 to $30.82 million in 2006, is consistent with the general increase in cost, length, and complexity for developing new drugs.

The analysis found that during the first 10 years of an FDA program that seeks to encourage pediatric research, such studies have been undertaken on more than 100 diseases and conditions, leading to new labeling for 120 new or already approved drugs for use in children.

To improve U.S. labeling of prescription drugs for children, the FDA has, since 1988, managed a program that asks pharmaceutical companies to conduct pediatric studies on marketed products in exchange for six additional months of market protection, known as pediatric exclusivity, for all of its products that contain the active ingredient being studied.

The Best Pharmaceuticals for Children Act, which authorizes this program, is due for renewal in October.

The study found that efficacy/safety studies, the most resource-intensive and expensive type of study, now account for 40% of all pediatric studies conducted, up from 25% in 2000, and that the time required to complete a study and submit a final report has nearly doubled since 2000.

The mean number of patients required for studies in response to an FDA request was up 178% between 2000 and 2006, and the mean number of studies per request rose 60%.

Follow up

BUSINESS INSIGHTS, London, is a market analysis company. For more information, visit globalbusinessinsights.com.

KALORAMA INFORMATION, New York, a division of MarketResearch.com, conducts independent market research for the life-sciences industry. For more information, visit kaloramainformation.com.

MANHATTAN RESEARCH LLC, New York, is a healthcare market research and services firm. For more information, visit manhattanresearch.com.

MEDEFIELD, New York, provides online fieldwork services to pharmaceutical market research, consulting, and healthcare communication agencies. For more information, visit medefield.com.

TUFTS CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF DRUG DEVELOPMENT, Tufts University, Boston, provides strategic information to help drug developers, regulators, and policymakers improve the quality and efficiency of pharmaceutical development, review, and utilization. For more information, visit csdd.tufts.edu.

URCH PUBLISHING, London, provides business information to the pharmaceutical industry. For more information, visit urchpublishing.com.