

LETTERS



Digital Training

With the emergence of digital technology as the fastest-growing means of delivering brand marketing and messaging, digital training is one of the best investments agencies can make to address the increasing pressures and speed of change cited by so many of your experts in the April article: On the Client's Side.

As much as I do agree with the body of the article, being a coordinator myself, I just wanted to underline those points.

When it's tough to find time in the day to meet with the industry leaders who are shaping technology, the constant challenge is how to build a digital training program that moves beyond the usual show and tell one-off.

This past February, Saatchi & Saatchi Healthcare Communications Group tried a new approach. We brought technology leaders together under one roof so our brand teams could learn about the latest in digital technology in a concentrated, efficient environment. Personal tech trainers from Google and Yahoo helped some 350 staff members brainstorm client solutions with applications from sources ranging from Sermo to Toonboom. This innovative training program was a success among both agency leadership and staff, so we are planning another Tech Fit event this summer.

It is important to note that without fluency in the latest technologies, agencies lack the perspective to incorporate the digital space as one of many critical vehicles in a strategy-driven brand marketing program. And while strategy will always come first, pharma companies — as well as other manu-

On The Client's Side

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SAATCHI & SAATCHI HEALTHCARE COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

facturers and service providers across the healthcare continuum — have certainly embraced the idea of new media. But we still have a long way to go to build a digital experience that truly is sustaining as it is useful to customers. Agencies with the expertise to do this, as well as integrate the experience efficiently into a comprehensive brand campaign, will be best positioned to create the kind of successful partnership that all agencies and clients continually seek.

Sam Welch

PRESIDENT

SAATCHI & SAATCHI HEALTHCARE

COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

In-Field Strategies Best Practices

For stakeholders involved in the brand sustainment process, in-field strategies have become more educational rather than promotional because of regulatory changes and guidelines implemented by the OIG.

Sustained performance is most effective in a motivating environment where both sales representatives and sales management achieve higher levels of performance with fulfillment and customers become committed to the brand message.

Sales representatives must have the skills and tools to add value during every call. By developing strong customer relationships, representatives can engage in more in-depth conversations to uncover points of differentiation. Alignment to these unique needs can be driven by sales managers who can drive successful implementation of sales efforts and accountability in the field.

As marketing creates the most impactful brand messaging initiatives with many customer touch points, sales representatives can also become credible sources of value by leveraging unique follow-up opportunities in the field.

When interviewed, healthcare providers said in addition to unbiased clinical information, the most valuable service a pharmaceutical company can offer is to create innovative educational

strategies for them and their patients. With the rapid development of technology, the idea of delivering engaging learning initiatives using many different platforms in the field and with customers, is now widely embraced.

Celeste Mosby

VP, LIFE SCIENCES

WILSON LEARNING WORLDWIDE

Year in Preview

What's Hot and What's Not

As we enter into the second half of the year, it's time once again to start to think about the trends that have impacted business practices in the first half of 2008 and what market definers are expected to influence the remainder of this year, 2009, and beyond.

Experts are already predicting major changes in salesforce models, marketing practices, research and development processes, technology advancements, in fact there is no area of the life-sciences industry that will not be held up to greater scrutiny and analysis.

As in the past, we welcome the insights and views of thought leaders from around the industry. We value your contributions and look forward to hearing what you have to say. So please forward us your thoughts on what's hot for inclusion in the November/December Year in Preview issue.

The deadline for submissions is Sept. 1, 2008. To submit your hot topics, please e-mail tgrom@pharmavoic.com, subject: Year in Preview.

