

SUCCESS beyond the SILOS

INNOVATIVE PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES ARE REDEFINING THE COMMUNICATIONS PROCESS BY TEARING DOWN THE WALLS BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT FACTIONS: AGENCIES, SALES, MARKETING, AND PUBLIC RELATIONS.

More and more pharmaceutical companies are breaking out of their siloed structure to reach their audiences more efficiently and more cost-effectively. Squeezed on all sides by regulatory requirements, physicians who spend little to no time with sales reps, consumers inundated with information clutter, and a less than adoring public, companies face stakes that are higher than ever. The pharmaceutical industry can no longer afford to be off-message — not even once — in this exceedingly competitive marketplace.

This month's Forum discusses some of the challenges, best practices, and benefits witnessed by industry leaders who are acting as change agents in advancing the silo-busting trend.

Tearing Down the Walls

Leaders discuss some of the numerous challenges to breaking the siloed culture of most pharma companies, such as ownership, accountability, trust, receptivity, leadership, and culture, to name just a few. Our experts advocate for meeting these challenges head on, because the rewards of an integrated team are both financial and emotional.

NAYAK. FOREST LABORATORIES. The biggest challenges are determining who owns the content and overcoming the worry factors, such as: "What's my role? and, What's my team's role?" During a brand integration initiative, no one wants to relinquish ownership, especially if he or she is used to simply working within their own silo. What we have found is that everyone's role remains intact even if we strategically expand. The integration allows everyone to showcase what they've been working on, as well as provides an opportunity to offer up ideas that can expand the business from the agency side. Even in the integration process, it is necessary to have one leader who will make sure the message is consistent.

STERN. EMD SERONO. One of the big challenges is building a platform for communica-

tions and developing a level of trust and accountability. When things are going great, everyone gets along. But the minute the team doesn't hit its numbers, everybody starts pointing fingers at each other. It is unacceptable for people, especially at a senior level, for example at the VP or director level, to assign blame to others on the team. When the business misses a target, managers need to assess the situation and identify what is not working and determine the best path forward. It is at this time that leaders need to pull their teams together and not divide their teams by assigning blame. At EMD Serono, we are structured as a business unit that unites us around a common goal and ensures visibility across the therapeutic area franchise to the business strategy. From a marketing perspective, much of our credibility has to do with taking a lot of steps to involve sales in the marketing strategy. We have marketing tactical meetings with our sales reps and marketing managers. Our product managers have a marketing advisory council that incorporates sales people, who provide valuable insights and field testing before sales aids are finalized. Through these monthly meetings, sales reps have direct communication and give input to the product market teams.

BOGAN. BEST PRACTICES. I think everybody

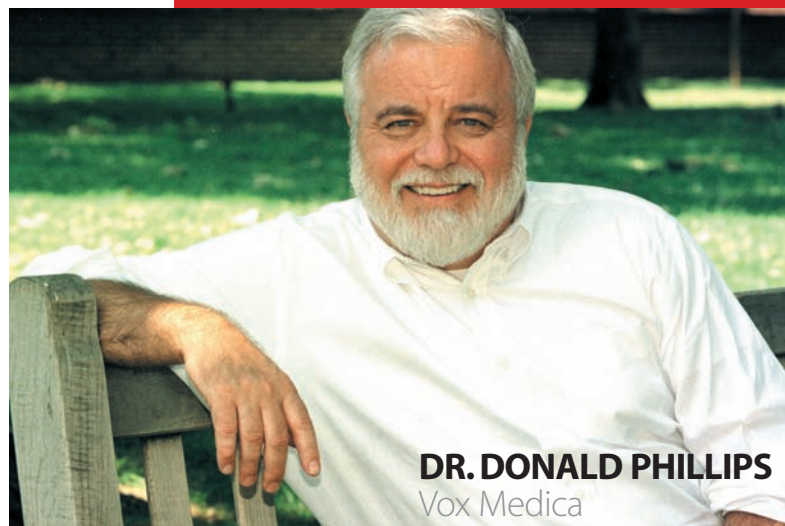
OUR MARKETPLACE AND THE NUMBER OF AUDIENCES WE HAVE TO TALK TO HAVE BECOME INFINITELY MORE COMPLEX.

It's a vastly different marketplace and the pharma industry is still modeled as if it were dealing with the marketplace of 20 years ago.

hopes there may be a perfect group, team, or structure that will make the collaboration of work between these functions easier. Sadly, there are no silver bullets. Our field studies have found that companies are struggling with trying to determine how they can make their collaborations more effective within their given structure. Everybody also hopes or believes that there will be a technology or a tool that will suddenly work like magic and be the Holy Grail that makes cross-functional collaborations easier, but there is no perfect tool. It's about people, about communications, about process excellence, about clear roles and responsibilities, and about how companies encourage and incentivize people to work together and cross functionally.

PHILLIPS. VOX MEDICA. Our marketplace and

the number of audiences we have to talk to have become infinitely more complex. The number of people who influence the prescribing chain is so much more complicated. We have physicians who in many cases have lost their prerogative to control prescribing, we have payers, we have provider networks, we have employers, we have government agencies, municipal, state, and federal, and we have legal entities such as the Department of Justice, states' attorneys general, OIG, HHS, and CMS. All of these individuals influence the type of messaging and communications that can be transmitted. And all of these individuals influence prescribing. It's a vastly different



DR. DONALD PHILLIPS
Vox Medica

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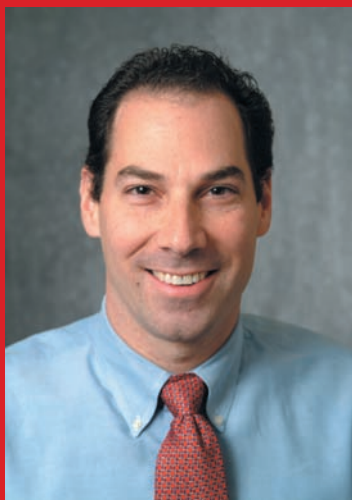
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DAVID STERN
EMD Serono

IT'S VERY IMPORTANT TO WORK WITH SENIOR MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE COMPANY to determine the terms of communication and interaction.

marketplace and the pharma industry is still modeled as if it were dealing with the marketplace of 20 years ago.

O'DONNELL. INVENTIV. Often the biggest challenge is how receptive clients are to working in an integrated fashion. Pharma companies frequently are siloed to the point where they are looking for only one service from an agency and are not prepared to take on the more broad-reaching solutions.

HOLLAND. SUDLER & HENNESSEY. One of the biggest challenges is how to redefine the metrics for success and the metrics for cooperation. Another big challenge is defusing the confusion. Team members who are facing change wonder what their role will be and they aren't sure how they are supposed to be working across channels. From the agency side, we know that it's not about making everyone into a generalist. We still need people with special skills.

PERREAULT. CSL BEHRING. Everybody is trying to operate efficiently in this environment so we have to make sure that when we put people and resources in place there is clear accountability for what needs to be developed and who is in charge of what piece so that the right people are driving the execution. One challenge is making sure that people deliver on what we're trying to accomplish in the organization. I would say the bigger challenge is to have the right people in the right place. For cross functionality to work, people need to be able to collaborate. This is a different type of culture and some people can make the shift and some people can't.

TURETT. EDELMAN. Companies have to break down barriers and have a diverse group of stakeholders at one table. People can no longer operate in silos — marketing, medical affairs, corporate communications, public relations, and so on. All have to come together to participate in one process.

Best Practices

The smaller and more flexible the company, the easier it is to implement cross functionality. But our Forum experts, who represent many different aspects of the pharma industry, believe that all organizations can benefit from a more open

approach and they share some of their best advice on how to accomplish this goal.

PHILLIPS. VOX MEDICA. Pharma companies hire PR companies, advertising agencies, medical communications shops, promotional education specialists, and so on. Companies will hire different vendors in each of these areas to develop a message, but maybe they need to start looking at companies that can provide a comprehensive and unbiased point of view on what's the best way to get the message out.

BOGAN. BEST PRACTICES. There's no one best practice. Many practices and approaches can help: it's about people, process, technology, tools, training, and orientation. By identifying all those elements — and fitting them to their culture and operating model — companies can begin to coach, train, and communicate among team members how to function more effectively. It's important to develop some specialized training and specialized roles for people to gain practice and experience in these cross-functional roles. Then additional stages can be implemented, such as formalizing project management skill sets, developing project management specialists, and implementing different types of cross-functional team training. Companies also need to determine what type of initiative the cross-functional team will be responsible for: is this a launch team, a development team, a brand team, or a new initiative team; and what is the life cycle of the team.

PERREAULT. CSL BEHRING. Integration is not only about the internal resources but also about the integration of all the communication elements a company is putting out there. We integrate all of our Websites globally within the company so that the product Website feeds back to the corporate site and the corporate site feeds into the product sites, which in turn feed into the patient Websites and patient e-mail communications. With this type of integration, we get the most bang for our buck and we get our voice level up in the marketplace. Almost 99% of doctors use the Internet for medical information these days, so if a company doesn't have the right content, the right presence, the right links, and the right updates it isn't going to make the best impact possible.

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NIKHIL NAYAK
Forest Laboratories



NAYAK. FOREST LABORATORIES. We started by developing a message platform and then we invited small groups to attend brand integration meetings. From there we expanded what we needed to do because ideas emerged from these meetings that we hadn't thought of before. We got everyone together and decided who gets to take on which projects. We started breaking down the communication barriers and these sessions allowed everyone to have their input. Sometimes the problem with agency silos is that because only one person goes to the meetings, others don't get to communicate with the brand team. In larger pharma companies that have established silos, people have their developed competence and that's it. At Forest, we tactically implement a rotation — not for a launch brand — for our product managers so

One of the reasons we made the change to cross-channel communications is that we wanted our agencies to communicate like we ask our brand managers to communicate. **THEIR ROLE DIDN'T CHANGE, BUT IT BECAME MORE CONSISTENT WITH OUR GOALS.**

they get the opportunity to have new experiences. Sometimes the rotation occurs six months after launch and because our people communicate with one another we don't miss a beat.

TURETT. EDELMAN. First and foremost, companies need to be on board with having their agencies collaborate. Once there is company commitment, it's best to appoint one firm to be the project manager — not to lead the project, but rather lead the process, which is essential to a successful project outcome. When we know we'll be working with several agencies, the first thing we do is encourage a right-from-the-start, in-person, all-agency meeting to determine a process for working together.

STERN. EMD SERONO. When I launched a DTC product at another company, we had different agencies — professional agencies, consumer agencies, PR agencies, online agencies, and agencies of record — and we would bring them in monthly and they would each report on what they were doing. It was very positive because they would share ideas with each other and they would work off something another had said. Cross-functional communication is really important, but realistically it depends on the nature and size of the brand. A smaller brand doesn't always have the budget to have that many agencies to engage in monthly strategic meetings. Often the initiatives are more tactical in nature: direct mail, online, and so on. It becomes the responsibility of the product manager to be the champion and ensure good cross-functional communications.

HOLLAND. SUDLER & HENNESSEY. Once the cultural part is figured out, the next step is to make sure the staff understands all the other disciplines. They need to understand what the

other functional areas are and what they can accomplish. We hold master planning meetings that bring all of the different disciplines together in one room; we invite team members from the agencies and communication companies, and the client is there as well. We have a day-long agenda that spans every discipline and identifies what the projects are and how they are progressing. Each discipline provides a status report and everyone picks up elements from the discussions. Ideas from promotional work or medical education can, for example, be leveraged in public relations or sales training. This one, well-orchestrated day creates a lot of synergies.

O'DONNELL. INVENTIV. Too often clients approach cross functionality from solely a cost standpoint when they should be thinking how to connect with the various audiences they want to reach by reducing the number of participants by removing the silos. There are consumers, payers, buyers — a whole series of connections that need to be made that demand more and better results.

The Drivers

There are many reasons to break down silos — cost savings, technology advantages, efficiency. Internal and external influences are lining up to create the perfect time for pharma companies to bust out of old behaviors. Our Forum experts discuss the motivating factors they have encountered while riding the silo-busting wave.

TURETT. EDELMAN. There are a couple of forces that are driving the busting of silos. With companies in the business of health under intense scrutiny, there is a call for greater transparency and, as a result, greater collaboration in all areas, including marketing, education, clinical-trial recruitment, even pricing. These new dynamics call for a different communications environment in which stakeholders want to interact more with companies and brands.

PHILLIPS. VOX MEDICA. Technology is driving this turn of events. We have the ability now to gather, provide, and interpret data that allow



INTEGRATION IS HARDEST WHEN THE ORGANIZATION IS MASSIVE, although it's not easy for a small organization either. If metrics can be tied into success, it's a lot easier.

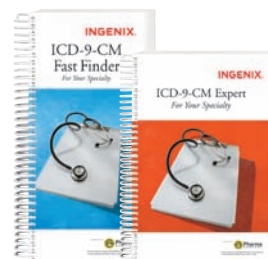
PAUL PERREAULT
CSL Behring

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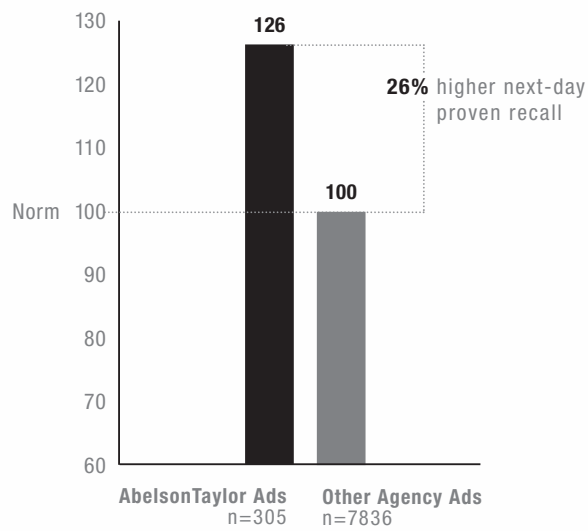


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CHRIS BOGÁN
Best Practices

THERE IS NO PERFECT RULE FOR IDENTIFYING DECISION-MAKING RIGHTS. It's the absence of any clear rule that is the most problematic in cross-functional communications.

plines and their desire to work together to create a collaborative solution for a client.

The Benefits

No one loses in an integrated, cross-functional operation. The benefits touch everyone: the patient, the client, the company, the agency, and the healthcare industry as a whole.

PHILLIPS. VOX MEDICA. I think everybody would benefit from a cross-functional approach. And I do think some of this is going to be forced on the pharma industry, especially if the healthcare industry is to change. Pharma companies are going to have to think differently about their business. Companies will need to get out of the habit of driving all brands as hard they can, all the time.

HOLLAND. SUDLER & HENNESSEY. Silo busting is for the good of the brand and the good of the client. As an agency, we have to ignore silos in favor of the brand. The disciplines are not going to disappear if integration is implemented. The ultimate goal would be to have an evolution that puts individual interests aside in favor of the brand.

STERN. EMD SERONO. From a companywide standpoint, we benefit from cross functionality. Since we've implemented this integrated approach in our business unit over the past two years we have seen a positive impact on the growth of several of our promoted brands, so the results speak for themselves. To gauge the results of our efforts, we did some message recall testing, and the results show the reps in the field are delivering the message much better now than they were two or three years ago. We aren't just talking about it; we're getting results from our efforts.

NAYAK. FOREST LABORATORIES. The biggest benefits come to the brand teams, even more than to the agencies. We benefit because we get the consistency we are looking for and we never have to double back to check if communications are on message. Agencies may worry

for message control and effective decision making. We couldn't have considered breaking down the silos 15 years ago.

PERREAULT. CSL BEHRING. Our need to be more efficient with our dollars was a driver, and we have to make sure our efficiencies translate into company and brand recognition as well as increased sales. The Web has the ability to reach unique audiences and part of what's driving our culture is our ability to make sure the right information is available for rare and serious diseases.

NAYAK. FOREST LABORATORIES. Technology is helping to drive change because it makes it a lot easier to communicate, but in general the overall feeling is that there are so many ways to market products. The best way to avoid a me-too campaign is to communicate and come up with new ideas. New ideas within a small silo can only be so diverse and unique. Once we start talking about projects and ideas that span two or three different areas, we create more ideas.

O'DONNELL. INVENTIV. Technology is an enabler but not the driver. Technology allows for every player who is working on a client solution to get up to date on what is happening on the project and to communicate easily and share information. The driver is the team, whose members represent the various disci-



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LOUISA HOLLAND
Sudler & Hennessey

Thru.

MANAGING THE FLOW OF CRITICAL MESSAGES

they will become obsolete or that competitors or other firms will discover how they operate. But agencies must look down the line and recognize that the more and more they communicate the better the brand does and the bigger their roles become.

TURETT. EDELMAN. I think the public benefits most. We're in a business that is focused on people's health, bodies, and lives. There's nothing more intimate or important than when companies come together and build programs that represent many different perspectives. We use what I call the "triple win" of health: achieve the project objective; create a satisfying experience for everyone involved, including third-party organizations, the media, and others; and bring value to society.

Change Agents

The influencers, the leaders, the catalysts of change will come from inside and outside of pharma companies. All players need to be involved to further the seismic shift needed to break down the walls of communication. Our experts predict who they think will be the change agents.

TURETT. EDELMAN. There must be a shared responsibility for change. The relationship between company and agency is changing from a client-vendor arrangement to a partner relationship, which is essential. At the same time, the person employed by the company is going to have to be the ultimate owner.

O'DONNELL. INVENTIV. I think some very enlightened brand managers or brand franchise managers will step up and overcome the individual silos that operate within the pharma world; they will understand there is a better way to operate. I find that the procurement professionals have a unique perspective. They can challenge the status quo on what takes place because they work with various types of suppliers — agencies, public relations, med ed, and so on. They can challenge the brand managers' thinking in different ways.

PERREAU. CSL BEHRING. Leadership teams have to believe in the idea, and they have to have the right leaders so everybody understands what is being done and why it is important. Equally important are the people below the leadership team who also have a big role in driving change. They are the people who have to work together. The heads of e-strategy, the people who implement projects in R&D, the people who are charged with product public relations and with

corporate communications, the brand managers and the product managers, all need to understand the importance of not only the Web, but how it connects with the rest of the company. Frankly, there are a lot of product managers who think, 'Well, I'll just put up a product site,' and they don't necessarily recognize the implications or linkages or how communications need to be integrated for optimal benefit. So the e-strategy team needs to sell this concept to the global organization to achieve global e-communication integration.

HOLLAND. SUDLER & HENNESSEY. Hopefully ad agencies will continue to help support and lead clients in this effort. We could play a very exciting role. I also have experience with some very enlightened procurement departments that are getting involved and closing the loop behind the scenes. And that makes for a great collaboration.

Cultural Changes

By nature, the industry's culture is not traditionally conducive to cross-channel communications. The larger the company, the more difficult it is to embrace collaboration, but it is not impossible. Our experts outline the steps they have taken to prepare their companies and the industry for embracing cross-functional teamwork.

PERREAU. CSL BEHRING. We are a good-sized company, but we're still nimble enough to be able to use our resources efficiently and try to collaborate internally. I can understand when someone who works at a company headquarters with thousands of people sends an e-mail to the person who works in the next cube over; because he or she doesn't know who the other person is. Our culture is based on first mover advantage, innovation, and internal collaboration with our stakeholders so we can have one voice going out to the customers. The silo-breaking process is something I've been into because of my experience working in big pharma. We make sure that everyone knows what everybody else is doing. For example, it is important that the corporate, product, and disease awareness Websites and the marketing and corporate branding for our products are all integrated into one area.

NAYAK. FOREST LABORATORIES. Culturally, we've always had brand team meetings but we had never done it across ad agencies,

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except when we're getting ready to launch a product, but by then it's too late. We have start-

ed to change this process and are developing message platforms much earlier. This is a new

Sound Bites from the Field

PHARMAVOICE ASKED EXPERTS WHAT THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS ARE FOR ACHIEVING A SUCCESSFUL CROSS-FUNCTIONAL COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY BETWEEN ADVERTISING, MARKETING, SALES, AND PR.



ANNE DEVEREUX is CEO of LyonHeart, New York, a healthcare communications company that provides advertising, promotional programs, and

nontraditional communications for clients in the pharmaceutical, proprietary, consumer, diagnostics, hospital, and biomedical segments of the industry. For more information, visit lyon-heart.com.

“The single most crucial element in an integrated campaign is an empowered client who has the experience and authority to prioritize and select target audiences. This is rare. Most clients are structured with separate expert and management responsibilities in each of the different fields: consumer marketing, professional marketing, direct marketing, medical education, and more. It could be risky for single leadership responsibilities to be given to someone without experience across these practice areas. But our rapidly changing world necessitates these changes. Doctors see consumer advertising. Consumers are more able than ever to understand communications to professionals, or at least understand more scientific language. And consumer awareness is now driven by online and peer-to-peer communications as much as traditional media. Those interactive worlds bring us all closer together, necessitating empowered clients and completely integrated agency partners.”



MICHAEL DU TOIT is Executive VP, Marketing and Client Services, at Digitas Health, Philadelphia, a full-service health digital marketing agency that

serves clients in the pharmaceutical, biotech, and medical-device industries. For more information, visit digitashealth.com.

“Digital is the cement across the silos. Every customer vertical has a piece of digital, so uniquely this channel gets to see every strategy and gets to be a part of the conversation. Through digital lenses, we are able to provide input across different silos and keep strategies consistent. The move toward silo busting tends to be more of an evolution rather than a revolution.”



LISA FLAIZ is VP, Group Director and National Pharmaceutical Practice Lead, at Avenue A | Razorfish, Philadelphia, an interactive services agency that helps companies use the online

channel as a marketing and business tool. For more information, visit avenuea-razorfish.com.

“To achieve a truly integrated communications process, brand managers need to take steps to get all internal stakeholders aligned and comfortable with the ‘new’ media consumption habits of consumers. Under the current media landscape, it’s possible to engage consumers through a variety of channels, and many consumers are either opting out of more traditional channels in favor of emerging technologies, or expecting emerging technologies to extend the brand experience for them. This means that companies have to be willing to experiment, and to think about development and production of creative assets in a broader sense than they currently do so that they work as programs. Collaboration among offline, online, and PR agencies may be the key to success, but without establishing internal buy in, early, companies may never see this goal come to fruition.”



TAMMY HAMILTON is VP, Marketing and Communications, at Science Oriented Solutions, Kennesaw, Ga., a full-service commercial-side medical affairs group providing outsourced

MSLs and medical communications services. For

more information, visit publicishealthcaremedicalaffairs.com.

“Consistency, consistency, consistency — the most important element in cross-channel communications is consistency in the corporate message that reflects a sound point of view, as if speaking with one voice. It should be recognized, however, that each internal discipline has its own unique perspective and individual goals, and that there may be multiple messages from each of these disciplines. The challenge becomes meshing these together to achieve the overriding corporate objectives. By communicating internally and focusing on the overall objectives, these individual goals can be met while still maintaining one consistent voice. For example, the message from medical may focus on increased patient safety, while the sales message may center on patient ease of use. But the overriding corporate objective, which encompasses each of these messages, is focused on patient compliance. By positioning these individual messages to be in line with the overall corporate objectives, communications are consistent and therefore more easily heard, trusted, and accepted by the target audiences.”



BOB HARRELL is the Director of Global eMarketing for Shire Pharmaceuticals, Wayne, Pa., a global specialty biopharmaceutical company.

For more information, visit shire.com.

“I believe the biggest factor is the client-side project lead. The agencies will collaborate well — or not — based on the tone established and the behavior modeled by the project owner within the pharma company. That person is accountable for the success of the project, which includes managing performance within and across the various agencies. At the inception of the project, this means setting the playing field for the

model and one that is being readily accepted in the sense that we're being proactive. In the past,

agency partners with very clear roles, boundaries, and rules of engagement. The leader must then remain actively engaged throughout the project as facilitator, communicator, and where needed, as an honest broker to resolve any conflicts or misunderstandings that may arise. Essentially he or she needs to maintain 51% of the vote and facilitate work across the sub teams rather than turfing this responsibility to one of the account leads. Otherwise, if the agencies are on their own to negotiate boundaries, it's an abdication of responsibility that makes it harder for everyone to get his or her work done. If you've ever been a part of one of those leaderless projects, you know how it feels. And as the client lead, it's tantamount to putting everyone on the island in Lord of Flies and just hoping for the best. //



ROBERT NAUMAN is President of BioAdvisors Network, Cary, N.C., a community of experienced pharmaceutical professionals working together to solve key business issues and create organizational change that maximize revenue and minimize cost. For more information, visit biopharmaadvisors.net.

// It's easier for the small and midsized companies to implement silo-busting measures, and for them, it is more of a necessity rather than a strategy. The critical success factor is having the right person in place to lead. A company needs someone with more experience and leadership qualities than an associate marketer. It's a great idea that is long overdue, but there are complex operational challenges in making it work. With larger pharma it is much more difficult to implement because of the large number of people and dollars involved. //

we just relied on the senior leadership team on the brand to review materials and make sure they were consistent. If they weren't, then they would get sent back. We find that this method causes more work and slows everything down. It wasn't a huge cultural change, just something we could have done sooner.

O'DONNELL. *INVENTIV.* We have an enlightened top 10 pharma client that will never go back to a siloed manner. The company has gone through an internal transformation. Not one of the members of the brand team will ever go back to the old way of working. But it is difficult for a brand team to try this approach if the culture is not there or if the business is not set up to support it. The nature of brand teams is that individuals coming from different organizations, such as sales and marketing, don't always have the same motivations or goals. Working collaboratively requires risk taking and a willingness to break the old molds. But once people have participated in a successful cross-functional team, they will never go back.

BOGAN. *BEST PRACTICES.* Pharma has known for years it can't bring a drug to market effectively without some level of cross-functional activity. As big pharma gets bigger, the growth of resources has created a growth of bureaucracy that makes it much more complex and now is the time to break down the silos. I think people who work in a pharma company would say they have been working for years to break down silos, so it's not as if the industry doesn't understand the need for this. The challenge is determining the tactics and the small things that make an impact. Communication and influence skills are essential for change agents who work across functions. Pharma understands conceptually that it is important, but making it happen is very complex. It means identifying and cultivating new skills — often soft skills — in the people who assume these roles.

STERN. *EMD SERONO.* Active management is necessary. At EMD Serono, we encourage employees to share information and actively communicate with their teams. While e-mail is great and easy, I'm a big believer of the importance of walking into somebody's office to find out what's going on and I expect my managers, my VPs, and my directors to do the same. Our product managers have opportunities to informally present information to me or to our chief commercial officer at quarterly meetings. ♦

PharmaVOICE welcomes comments about this article. E-mail us at feedback@pharmavoices.com.



TOO OFTEN CLIENTS APPROACH CROSS FUNCTIONALITY FROM A COST STANDPOINT

when they should be thinking about reducing the number of participants by aligning the silos to work more effectively to reach the audience.

WILLIAM O'DONNELL
inVentiv



COMPANIES HAVE TO BREAK DOWN BARRIERS

and have a diverse group of stakeholders at one table. People can no longer operate in separate silos for marketing, medical affairs, corporate communications, and public relations.

NANCY TURETT
Edelman

When the walls come down between R&D and marketing



The better the different teams can work together early on and communicate during the development process, the better chance the company has to create a more competitive product when it reaches the market.

Elio Evangelista
Cutting Edge Information

A crucial relationship within pharma that needs cross-functional communication is the one between development and marketing. For the past decade, companies have been implementing structures that facilitate this communication, sometimes by assigning a marketing professional to follow the projects moving through R&D, according to a report by Cutting Edge Information.

Bridging the gaps in communications can keep the scientist focus on developments that improve the company's portfolio. The marketer's role is to help prioritize leads by their market viability, something a scientist may know or care little about.

"When a researcher works on a product he or she doesn't always have the end in mind," says Elio Evangelista, research team leader at Cutting Edge Information. "They don't always consider the marketability of a product. The researcher might find something useful but if it's not in an area that the company is focused in, it may end up sitting on a shelf."

On the other hand, marketing does not always understand the process of science, Mr. Evangelista says. For example, marketing might want to fill a hole in the portfolio and question why the scientists can't make a drug for that particular need.

Getting both teams on board early on to share information during drug development is crucial. PharmaVOICE has been covering cross-functional teams and bridging silos for several years. And it appears that companies are restructuring their development teams to include marketing very early in the process, according to the results of a Cutting Edge report.

"The most basic thing companies can do to bridge that gap and increase communications is to put marketing personnel on the research side — not necessarily a full brand team; a liaison is a great place to start," he says.

BENEFITS

One of the greatest benefits from an early-stage integrated approach is a more

strategic focus with all members working toward the same goal. If the research side is starting to develop drugs that are not fitting the needs of the portfolio, the commercial side can step in and question the drug's marketability.

"Marketing can keep development on track with research, which will increase the company's business position," Mr. Evangelista says. "This is a 'begin with the end in mind' approach. (See chart to right.)

CULTURE CHANGE

There is a big cultural gap to overcome before integration can be successful. While R&D and marketing are both very creative, they are creative in different ways. Marketing always has the business position in mind and focuses on filling a market need, whereas on the scientific and research side, it's about what science can do or if there is a science need to be filled.

"Reiterating the business case and the strategic elements of the therapeutic categories within the company can go a long way in bridging the gap," he says.

SENIOR-LEVEL BUY IN

Senior-level support is always important in all of the functions throughout the business. When the leadership supports an initiative everyone else gets on board. But senior-level support is often reported as one of the reasons why the integration process has failed.

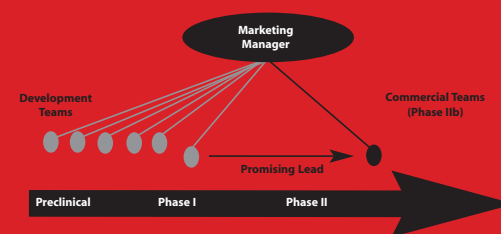
"Change agents are needed to change the culture of a company, and just as important is getting the right personalities to be leaders of those two groups," Mr. Evangelista says.

A BUSINESS CASE

The increase in communications can eliminate unnecessary work and improve the business going forward. For example, if marketing discovers that a competitor is going to launch a similar drug and knows that the competitor's drug is slightly different from their

Begin with the End in Mind: Marketers on the R&D Team

Early commercial input drives market-oriented product development during preclinical and early clinical stages. The project team starts thinking in terms of strategic brand needs: what kind of performance is necessary to compete with current drugs? What kind of profile will make the product competitive when it actually reaches the future market? By asking forward-thinking questions, the early-development team focuses on building a commercially appealing target product profile. The marketing manager also builds a background with the product to understand what a future brand team will need to do to shape the market's thinking. His or her familiarity with the drug eases the development-to-marketing transition and prevents loss of knowledge when the formal commercial team forms just before Phase III.



Source: Cutting Edge Information, Durham, N.C.
For more information, visit cuttingedgeinfo.com.

product, they can take that information to research and create an advantage when it comes time to design clinical trials.

"In this scenario, marketing needs to work with the R&D team to create protocols that can capitalize on the product's attributes," he says. "By designing trials with more end points in mind, the company will be able to create a stronger product label and a more competitive product."

Mr. Evangelista warns that a company needs to make sure that there isn't a free for all with its communication; this can be dangerous from a regulatory standpoint.

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