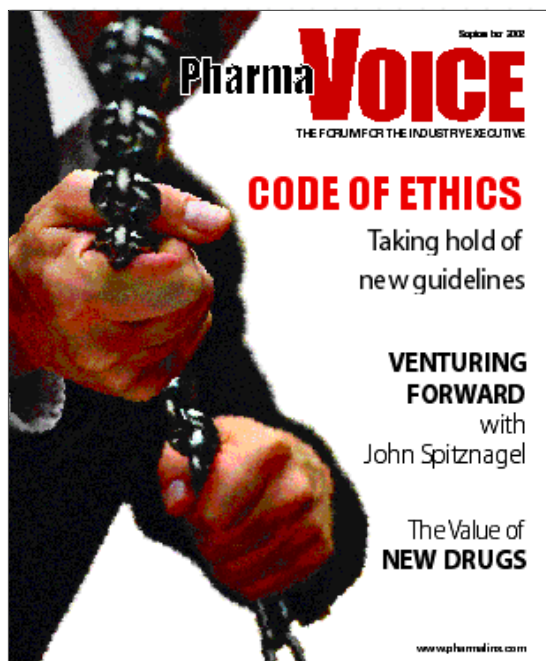


LETTERS



Where Are the Patients?

Our industry spends a lot on physician promotion, medical education, and DTC but do we really have better informed/educated patients?

— *Joseph Loftus*
HEALTHED

appears 18 times — isn't that a bit scant bearing in mind that the focus message of the marketing code states — "This code is to reinforce our intention that our interactions with healthcare professionals are to benefit patients and to enhance the practice of medicine"?

Granted that it is important that as an industry we inform, educate, and empower healthcare professionals, but the true unfulfilled need is to facilitate better patient outcomes and enhance physician counseling efforts through effective health education. We are all part of the healthcare system — think about how much time you spend in the physician's office and how much health information is provided to you? Isn't it time to think about the patients' needs?

Our industry spends a lot on physician promotion, medical education, and DTC but do we really have better informed/educated patients? Medicalliance Inc.'s white paper report within the article has a great quote from

Dr. Zhanna Kalikhman: "What I really value is unbranded educational information for my patients ..." Now that is what we are talking about here!

Joe Loftus
VP, MARKETING
HEALTHED

Missed opportunity

I applaud the fact that PharmaVOICE has highlighted the importance of the new PhRMA Voluntary Marketing Code, but I would be remiss if I didn't ask: "Where in this article is the discussion about the benefit of the new code to the patient?" In reading through this 11-page article, the word "patient" only

Struggle for Survival

With the rise of generics and managed care, the competition among new drugs entering a crowded marketplace has created a struggle for survival. As part of that struggle, marketing tactics have moved into the front lines in the war between drug options. In the race to win that war, however, some companies have substituted guerrilla tactics for marketing techniques. Some of these tactics are disturbing, raising doubts about the industry as a whole.

Political forces also are at work. Government officials, responding to questionable or unethical practices, seek to demonize all pharmaceutical companies. In so doing, they threaten to handicap an industry whose lifeblood has been the delivery of new treatments that cure life-threatening diseases.

Not to be outdone, the press also has zoomed in on the issue, making us daily fodder for consumers nationwide.

The combination has resulted in an explosive array of regulations that will affect us all, giving the entire industry a black eye. While some regulations are needed to curb these excesses, the backlash may prove more dangerous than the problems it seeks to cure.

To navigate these currents — and to rise above the storm that some have created — it is necessary for all responsible marketers to rally together. It is only by demonstrating that good marketing is effective marketing, and that deceptive practices are ultimately doomed, that we will be able to restore to the industry the honor and pride it once had.

Rich Levy
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
ADAIR-GREENE INC.

What's Your Opinion?

YOUR YEAR IN REVIEW

Myriad events — from new regulations to economic factors — have played a part shaping the life-sciences industry in the past year. PharmaVOICE wants to know to what events industry trends have had the greatest impact on your strategies, executive positions, and/or industry sector.

PharmaVOICE will print "your year in review" in the November/December 2002 issue.

WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?

Please e-mail your comments feedback@pharmalinx.com.

