

Sales SHIFT

As sales models continue to morph in light of resource realignment, analysts say the most successful companies will need to have a good talent management strategy in place and will need to provide sales training commensurate with the rep's role in the future.

The future of salesforces has been top of mind for some time as the arms race accelerated and then decelerated, but it has taken particular prominence since Glaxo-SmithKline moved to base its sales representatives' performance evaluations on the value and service provided to customers rather than individual achievements of sales targets.

"This is a radical departure from previous practices, and one that requires substantial buy-in from everyone in the organization to be successful," says Ken Ribotsky, president and CEO of the Core Nation. "But it will not take the place of sending reps out to speak one-on-one with physicians, and we all know how difficult it is for them to gain access.

Mr. Ribotsky says there are, however, several ways to increase the chances for success: optimize the model of salesforce effectiveness; enhance training and sales call quality; and improve targeting and develop more effective selling strategies.

"Well-trained sales reps will still be needed to call upon the right customers at a high rate of frequency to deliver targeted and relevant messages, but companies will need to prudently prioritize their efforts," Mr. Ribotsky says. "Because healthcare providers have become adept at avoiding sales representatives, even when they come to deliver needed samples, a sales rep needs to be able to deliver a compelling discourse that can be started in 35 seconds, which could lead to a much longer and productive conversation. I am not talking about a summary of a core sales aid, but something that addresses a problem that keeps physicians up at night. Finally, the days of being able to reach every physician to be targeted in one specific region are gone. It makes sense to start by targeting those practices that are already using a brand and add value to make those relationships even stronger. This is crucial, especially in the face of increased competition from other brands in the same category and emerging generics."

In the future a pharma company's "portfo-



“Reps of the future will play the role of business owner, coordinating activities that solve the problems an office faces.”

LYNN PAOLICELLI / Dudnyk

lio" will not be limited to pills in a bottle or solutions in a syringe, according to Greg Barrett, VP of marketing, Daiichi Sankyo.

"Successful companies will offer an integrated suite of services designed to improve the health and outcomes of patient populations, and sales reps will need to understand how to effectively use this new portfolio," he says.

Furthermore, Mr. Barrett says successful sales organizations will need to have a deep understanding of territory, district, regional, and national profitability. Sales objectives will be tied to generating profit not just prescription volume. The efficient use of technology will be required to accelerate effective implementation of sales and marketing tactics. Finally, keeping marketing and sales connected in real-time will be a vital part of this new model.

The Future Role of the Sales Rep

Evan Demestihis, M.D., CEO of The Medical Affairs Company, says sales reps may not even be "sales reps" in the future.

"The role itself will morph into one of an educator and a partner with the physician," Dr. Demestihis says. "This new role will focus on information delivery, and more effectively communicate both benefits and risks of a drug. Only in this manner can the rep gain the confidence of physicians when it becomes apparent to them that the goal of the rep is not necessarily to sell as much medicine as possible and that for some patients a particular treatment might in fact be inappropriate."

Mr. Barrett says the sales rep of the future will use a truly integrated suite of goods and services that are designed to not only treat the disease but also to improve the overall health and outcomes of specific patient populations.

"In this new model, sales representatives will be partners in care with healthcare professionals," he says.

Darlene Dobry, president of Ogilvy CommonHealth Medical Marketing, agrees that sales representatives will need to take on a consultative approach to selling, becoming specialists in their respective areas.

"This approach will require them to have greater depth of training on the product, the category, and the customer's needs/psychographics, as well as elevating their level of service to bring value that extends beyond the brand," she says.

Breaking Down Barriers

The economy is creating limited opportunities for rep-physician face time, thereby pushing prescribers to nonpersonal resources, says Steve Gransden, VP, technical marketing, J. Knipper and Company.

"The most progressive companies are learning to connect their personal and nonpersonal activities," he says. "They are creating synergies and leveraging the expertise of their reps to increase the value of nonpersonal tactics. The successful salesforce of the future will in fact be integrated if not integral to the nonpersonal strategy. As this integration evolves, the skill set of the salesforce will expand to include expertise in multichannel marketing, technology, and analytics. They will become involved in managing the most effective mix of tactics to meet the economic challenges and personal preferences of their prescribers. And their value will continue to increase as their tool kit expands and their sales paradigm shifts."

Reps will be empowered to take a more strategic view of an assigned territory and be held accountable for achieving business goals, which will help overcome access barriers, says Lynn Paolicelli, VP, director of digital strategy, Dudnyk.

"Two factors contributing to these barriers include eroded trust and the pressure to see more patients," she says. "These challenges put more pressure on sales teams to deliver value to HCPs well beyond products and services."

"Reps of the future will play the role of business owner, coordinating activities that solve the problems an office faces and assuming responsibility for deciding when and where to expend resources for the best return on investment," she continues. "For reps to meet these new demands, their responsibilities will evolve to include skills such as strategic planning, data analysis, and business acumen. Training will be important, but hiring people who have the natural talent for these new responsibilities will be more important."

John Carro, senior VP, management advisor, TGaS Advisors, says as the search for sustainable change continues, sales operations groups will be called on to think more strategically and to find their own "efficiency frontier," the balance point between capabilities delivered and resources deployed.

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GREG BARRETT / Daiichi Sankyo



Knowledge is key, and according to Mark Samuel, managing partner at HealthAnswers Education, the best representatives will have outstanding knowledge about the therapeutic categories in which they compete as well as a strong grasp of the business/reimbursement issues surrounding the products in that category.

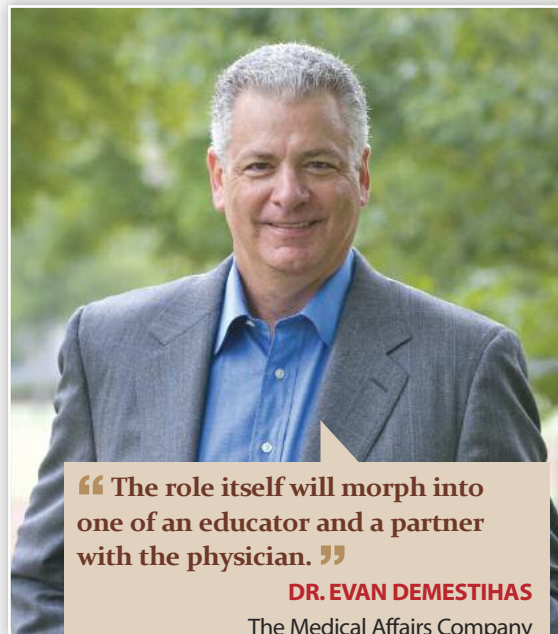
"They will need to understand the clinical and business challenges faced by the HCP office and provide service, much like a consultant provides," he says. "They will need to provide a well-balanced argument as to where their product is most appropriate and where it may not be, given the clinical and business issues at hand. They will also need to provide concierge services to that office for anything from samples to business/reimbursement, clinical information, and patient materials."

Philip McCrea, CEO, ClearPoint, says sales representatives of the future need to become ambassadors for their companies, not just their brands.

"Consultative and team-based selling will place representatives at the center of their teams by bringing solutions to healthcare organizations and patients," he says. "This shift will require radical changes to what, and how, reps are trained. Mobile devices and advances in blended learning models will provide important new approaches to delivering training when and where it will be consumed most effectively. Moreover, analytics and survey-based insights will enable organizations to respond more quickly to changes in the marketplace."

Providing this type of concierge service will require feet-on-the-street reps to sync up and reinforce the brand team strategies, which are integrated into the new physician workflow from electronic health records (EHRs) and e-prescribing (eRX), says Edward Fotsch, M.D., CEO of PDR Network.

"Reps can literally provide hands-on in-office demos for how medication adherence, education, and affordability services can be



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The Medical Affairs Company



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DARLENE DOBRY

Ogilvy CommonHealth Medical Marketing

SOUND BITES FROM THE FIELD ►

The Top Trends Impacting Salesforces



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1. Targeting undervalued physicians. As the limits on KOL interaction become more rigid, due to increased scrutiny on transparency and academic and legislative policies such as the Physician Payments Sunshine Act, pharma sales and marketing managers will rely less on national KOL-focused strategies and more on community opinion leaders (COLs). Though they may not be high-decile prescribers, COLs are the local and often undervalued physicians who measurably drive practice behaviors within their peer circles. COLs are typically less likely to be affiliated with institutions with restrictive policies, and therefore unlikely to trigger the restraints that have significantly limited some traditional KOL-focused initiatives. Establishing relationships with COLs will enhance the positive effect across sales and marketing initiatives, from speaker programs to managed care pull-through.

2. Leveraging physician social networks. To identify the most influential COLs by territory, specialty, and disease state, the industry will rely on more powerful analytic technologies and physician social networking methodologies. These laser-focused tools will enable even more cost-conscious brand teams to efficiently identify and engage with the inner circle of nonresponsive customers, via touch points with their closest influential peers. Leveraging these networks may help companies realize increases in sales numbers up to 40% over national averages. Further, by helping brand teams identify the connectivity between primary care and specialty physicians, these emerging social-networking models will help marketers better allocate their shrinking resources.

3. The move toward "shared-decision modeling." As traditional physician treatment decisions are placed more in the hands of payers and patients, influence-mapping technologies are evolving to help sales and marketing managers better understand the implications for this "shared-decision model" to the delivery of care: physicians will continue to drive the treatments for life-threatening diseases like cancer; payers will increasingly make the early decisions for chronic-care conditions, particularly those where newer, more expensive prescription therapies are not perceived as a significant advance over existing products; patient preference will account for the sales of more discretionary products, like cosmetic treatments or the so-called lifestyle drugs for aging boomers.

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1. Physicians' migration to hospital settings, many of which prohibit meetings with sales reps, is changing the landscape.

2. Expiring patents and generic competition will challenge return on sales investments.

3. Regulatory interpretations will define the interactions of sales reps with HCPs and directly impact the value they deliver. Often, sales reps are the brand in HCPs' eyes, and also a sign that manufacturers continue to stand by their products, so sales rep longevity and retention are key.

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1. Size follows two trends: growth in sales forecasts and target audiences. Where we see growing brands or expansions in target audience size, we'll see larger salesforces. Launches contain both — a forecast change from \$0 to something bigger, and a large target audience that needs to hear the message. Where we see launches, we will see growing salesforces.

2. Strategies have evolved from pure reach and frequency, which created large salesforces with low access, to more customer-centric approaches. The industry will struggle to implement these strategies because in many cases companies don't have the necessary insights to build knowledge of the customer's real-world environment. Most reps today have never rounded with a physician, or listened as patients present symptoms or wrestled with affordability issues. Companies trying to implement new customer-centric sales strategies will need to reconnect their people with the real-world challenges doctors and patients face, so they can approach sales discussions with the credibility and empathy required for physicians to believe them. Because the regulatory environment precludes direct physician-patient observation, research such as physician-patient ethnography will play a role in providing the insights reps need to execute customer-centric sales models.

3. Success will be based on helping customers find superior solutions for their problems. We all recognize that in the current economy, the appetite for ever-increasing healthcare expenditures is gone. Premium-priced, me-too products cannot command market share where less expensive alternatives exist. Sales strategies will succeed where companies develop data showing exactly where their brands offer superior value, and where promotion touts that positioning.



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1. The transformation of sales rep to concierge.

2. Compliance enforcement and regulations.

3. Doctors embracing alternative marketing channels to keep up with industry information.



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1. Physicians affinity for technology has made it possible to effectively reach the physician through digital outreach. However, the personal relationships reps have with their physician targets are key to success, and making live reps part of the nonpersonal activity, using a multichannel marketing mix to its full advantage, gives reps great flexibility in delivering value to the physician, directing information flow where and when the physician wants it.

2. The complexity of managed care has reduced target populations significantly. Physicians who may have been considered prospects based on their specialty, may not be able to prescribe a company's brand. Therefore, using analytics to better understand the targets early in the process, whether they are influencers or writers, will lead to a greater payoff of the sales investment.

3. As companies strive to become more efficient and work to develop products that will provide a future pipeline, they are finding that outsourcing both personal and nonpersonal sales efforts reduces their financial risk and provides the flexibility they need to respond to market forces. Some companies will look to outsource mature or smaller brands within their portfolio; some will cover brands and/or territories by outsourced telesales; some will leverage the technology of digital providers to create interactive content, video chats, and other digital promotion efforts.

accessed by physicians and patients from within workflow," he explains.

The sales rep of the future will be seen as a coach who is adaptable to many different types of customers, personalities, and situations, says Raoul Quintero, president, U.S. Sales and Service Organization, Maquet Medical Systems.

When it comes to training, he says his company has already begun to position its reps to become partners with their customers.

"Our reps are focusing on therapy selling rather than product selling," he says. "A sales rep's job is not to sell features and benefits of a product anymore. It is to focus on selling the clinical aspects of the therapy and product."

Because physicians have access to a wide variety of information, sales reps need to maximize the value of each sales call to avoid being just another channel.

"Sales reps must be equipped with the right tools for call planning, execution, and follow up," says Paul Shawah, VP of multichannel strategy, Veeva Systems. "For call planning, reps need an easy way to see all relevant interactions with that customer across all channels. This will enable a more informed discussion and allows the rep to deliver the next best message."

"With regard to execution, the sales rep must use technology appropriately to meet that call's objective," Mr. Shawah adds. "This could include asking probing questions, showing interactive content, or engaging a home office specialist via a live video call."

Melonie Warfel, director, life sciences industry solutions, Pegasystems, concurs that being prepared and focused on the related topic, demonstrating their ability to address

information, and educating the physicians quickly are the tools that reps will need in the future.

Ms. Warfel says sales reps will continue to play an educational role regarding new products, efficacy, labeling, reimbursements, etc., but their mode of interaction will change.

"Previously, this was primarily accomplished through in-person details, but as technology and access evolve, much of the in-person detail can be replaced by multichannel interactions," she says. "These interactions are remote, leveraging mobile technology, social media, and have the ability to deliver an engaging experience through various multimedia." **PV**



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Relationship BUILDING

Our thought leaders provide their insights as to how sales reps can make face-to-face interactions with physicians as meaningful as possible.

It's well-documented that the sales rep relationship with physicians is far from ideal. There are several best practices that can be employed in this new technological age. Our experts say to not only repair the relationship but elevate the connection to new levels.

According to Rick Rosenthal, VP of Verilogue, sales representatives need to quickly establish that they are sincerely trying to help the physician help his or her specific patients.

"Representatives can do this through asking questions, clarifying responses, and spending adequate time on understanding the physician's real-world challenges before launching into product messages," he says. "Physicians don't need solutions to problems they don't have, and representatives often rush to hit them with repetitive core messages as if that weren't true."

Mark Samuel, managing partner, HealthAnswers Education, says listening is one of a sales rep's best tools.

"The representative has to truly understand what the HCP needs and must practice active listening," he says. "Once the true needs are understood, representatives need to provide solutions in an objective way, by discussing them in a balanced and nonpromotional dialogue, not a 'detail' of all they know. They need to be honest about the pros and cons of their products and the other therapeutic options. Their performance in the office will be a direct reflection of the appropriate use of their knowledge of the clinical and business information and the message needs to be delivered in a way that matches the style of the HCP."

Greg Barrett, VP, marketing, at Daiichi Sankyo, says in addition to listening skills, sales reps need knowledge to engage their customers in a broader dialogue beyond a description of the product, which will bring greater value to the table.

"An effective sales dialogue requires strong active listening skills," he adds. "Representatives who do all the talking do so at their peril."

By closely listening to exactly what the customer is asking for, sales reps can understand and identify the problem or issue the customer is trying to solve, and in return, can more effectively address the situation at hand, says Raoul Quintero, president, U.S. sales and service organization, Maquet Medical Systems.

"Figuring out exactly what the customer wants, rather than just providing a litany of information, will go a long way in helping build the relationship," he says.

Evan Demestihis, M.D., CEO of The Medical Affairs Co., says the bottom line is that technical discussions require technical expertise; sales representatives must morph into educators, and to do that effectively, their individual backgrounds, experience, and training must be of a caliber that earns the physician's trust, confidence, and time.

"It has been clearly shown that if pharmaceutical company representatives provide value, then physicians make more time to see them," Dr. Demestihis says. "A recent trend is that more specialty companies are opting to have a specialized salesforce in lieu of following a more traditional sales model. Often

called clinical specialists, they are a blend of sales-type personnel with that of a commercially focused MSL. This team is composed of healthcare degreed individuals, capable of a peer-to-peer type interactions, but with an entirely commercial focus, communicating through science the benefits and need for a particular drug, device, or diagnostic.

"With newer, more complex and more expensive drugs and with personalized medicine playing a greater role in therapeutics, company representatives capable of serious, in-depth discussions on the cost of illness and the cost of treatment options are vital to provide meaningful physician interactions," Dr. Demestihis continues.

Experts say by understanding what types of patients the physicians are serving, knowing what their challenges are for delivering quality patient care, and finding out what types of new information are considered most meaningful, sales representatives can add value by helping healthcare professionals better understand new therapies, changing standards of care, warnings, and access channels.

The Office Connection

The ongoing challenge is making the most of the time that the sales representative has with the doctor while in the office — well-beyond making a sample drop.

With physicians and their staffs able to find so much information and tools online, the sales representative has to bring value to the table when he or she does get into the physician's inner sanctum.

Mr. Quintero says sales reps should know their therapies and products better than anyone else and should have more experience with their products than anyone else.

"In today's world where there is so much information online, sales reps should focus on being a therapeutic partner for the physicians they serve, providing them with the expertise, experience, and knowledge that they would not otherwise have access to, this will ensure the best support for physicians and ultimately the best patient outcomes," he says.

Mr. Samuel says a representative who has kept up with all current information can help busy HCPs and their staffs interpret the value in the material online and help to suggest how it applies to the patient types that they see.

"What HCPs can't get online are knowledgeable reps who can help to identify knowledge gaps in the office and provide additional information through their company's clinical or business staff," he says. "With the use of new technology, such as tablets or iPads, much of this can be at the representative's fingertips, often allowing for a quick solution to an issue that an office may face."

Mr. Barrett says speed and specificity are what physicians need when they are looking for accurate answers to specific questions — and while some issues can be addressed via online tools, the companies that offer clear and comprehensive answers quickly will bring real value to the partnership with healthcare providers.

Paul Shawah, VP of multimedia strategy at Veeva Systems, says at the same time that more information is being made available via other channels, sales representatives are also being equipped with better and more powerful ways to communicate with healthcare providers.

"The result is that sales representative can more frequently address or facilitate an answer to physicians' questions in real time," he says. "As an example, sales representatives now have iPads that can be equipped with their universe of clinical resources, organized in a way that the information is instantly accessible. The rich iPad communications infrastructure also enables real-time, sales representative-facilitated peer-to-peer communications to address questions the sales representative may not be able to answer. Instant, high-value engagement will always be valued by physicians."

The Technology Connection

As in all areas, technology is impacting the sales representative-physician relationship, some say for the better, while others warn that the new tools should not distract from the core message.

Technology is a tool that can positively impact every communication channel, including field teams.

"Adding technology to a field sales team can provide very real value," says Rick Keefer, president and CEO, Publicis Touchpoint Solutions. "Field teams that are iPad enabled, for example, combine the unique value of an in-person representative with the best-in-class approach of the latest technology. A sales representative that can rapidly access tools such as e-visual aids and a sales force automation (SFA) system is more efficient, effective, and valuable to that HCP."

"Reps' ability to effectively and efficiently make the most of their time in the doctors' office depends largely on the tools they use," says Nick Colucci, president and CEO of Publicis Healthcare Communications Group (PHCG). "A recent study showed 38% of physicians have seen a rep use an iPad or other tablet during a face-to-face meeting. These tools allow reps to structure conversations in a way that facilitates more two-way discussions and gives a repository of content that can be chosen based on relevance."

Mr. Rosenthal warns however that just providing information with an iPad instead of a paper sales aid doesn't make it more effective.

"In our personal lives, most of us have experienced an excellent sales person taking time to learn about our individual needs before coming forward with a product or service recommendation," he says. "We've also experienced other sales people who try to push their company's offering on us without investing time to understand our needs. Physicians are no different from the rest of us — they respond better when they can clearly see an effort to understand their needs. For sales representatives, that means understanding that the physician is trying to help a patient."

Edward Fotsch, M.D., CEO, PDR Network, agrees that sales representatives need to tune in to the physician's workflow and in-office systems rather than distracting them with the rep's workflow — for example, iPad apps, brochures, etc.

"The days of distracting physicians from

iPads Storm the Field

A recent TGaS Advisors mini-benchmark on the use of iPads in field promotion showed that iPads are entering the promotional space at an unprecedented rate, and it may be that commercial organizations can't afford not to use them. Of the 20 participating companies, 13 currently use iPads, two more will use them in 2012, and the remaining five are considering their use. Specialty and hospital field forces were the most popular users, most likely because these products are more complex and physician interactions are likely to last longer.

This is not surprising, because technology permits marketing teams to upload approved messaging instantly, enabling reps to bring the latest information to physicians much faster. That being said, technology won't make the difference between a poorly performing rep and a good one. Technology is a tool, not a panacea. The rep still drives the relationship. Good reps will use all tools, including technology, to build relationships and communicate benefits.

Source: John Carro, Senior VP, Management Advisor, TGaS Advisors. For more information, visit tgasadvisors.com.

their workflow with donuts and flashy sales pitches are over," he says. "Mobile apps are still relevant, but doctors are more frequently accessing electronic health records (EHRs) directly from their mobile devices, reducing the need and use for other standalone applications outside their EHRs."

Interacting with healthcare professionals, and ensuring they have access to first-hand information about medical advances that can help patients, is still a critical part of the patient care continuum.

"New technology cannot improve lives if it doesn't reach patients in need safely and quickly," Mr. Colucci says. "Sales reps still represent the link between drug developers, physicians, and patients — and improving their knowledge and savvy will help to improve outcomes."

SKILLS FOR SUCCESS ►

Experts agree sales representatives will need new skill sets in the future.

JOHN CARRO. Senior VP, Management Advisor, TGaS Advisors, which provides benchmark and advisory services for pharmaceutical companies. For more information, visit tgasadvisors.com.

“Reps will be information connectors, ‘hubs’ connecting to physicians, nurses, payment specialists, and other key healthcare players. In addition to commanding higher-level account management skills, reps of the future must be able to interact with and understand other members of a selling team that combines the expertise of clinical health educators, reimbursement managed care specialists, and customer service representatives.

This change in role is expected to shift incentive compensation to more qualitative measures, but TGaS Advisors benchmark data suggest this is not yet happening at most major companies.

The sales rep is no longer limited to message delivery but is becoming a resource for solutions to complex problems, business expert, and information connector. Training increasingly focuses on business acumen to help reps go beyond product features and benefits to better understand the economics of healthcare, particularly payer dynamics.”



DARLENE DOBRY. President of Ogilvy CommonHealth Medical Marketing Worldwide, part of Ogilvy CommonHealth Worldwide, part of the Ogilvy & Mather network and a WPP

company, which represents an assembly of creative talent within healthcare communications with 65 offices across 36 countries. For more information, visit ogilvychw.com.

“Reps will need to take a much more introspective approach, realizing that the bar has been elevated with regard to meeting the physician’s expectations. The depth of their overall knowledge will need to be enhanced, and more dimensional training will be required. Reps will also have to tap into a whole new level of creativity to bring customer-centric solutions to their audience. Companies hiring representatives will need to employ rich recruiting and training skills to identify and nurture their reps to meet the evolving demands of the physician audience and industry.”



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“Reps need to be steeped in the science and data of their products, and understand the information in relation to the approved target uses. They also need to be trained on good promotional practices to know when and how they can deliver the information that will benefit physicians and their patients. Training will need to increasingly include more science, greater insight into physicians’ needs and desires, and regulatory governance for what they can do to add value — rather than what they can’t.”



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“Obviously, the talents, skills, and experience needed for this new role are significantly different from those in the current hiring profile for new pharmaceutical sales reps. Ultimately, companies must create comprehensive strategic plans that will replace the traditional pushed message. Part of that strategy is to elevate the role of sales reps, to give them more autonomy in making decisions about using resources to influence brand loyalty. Following that, companies will be charged with finding and hiring people who are a good fit with the new role. Once the right candidate is found, training will need to evolve as well. This new rep will need to build skills in business management, analysis, decision making, and strategic thinking.”



MELONIE WARFEL. Director, Life Sciences Industry Solutions, Pegasystems, which provides business process management (BPM) and customer relationship management solutions. For more information, visit pega.com.

“As therapies become more complex, the sales rep of the future will require additional understanding from a clinical and scientific background requiring some type of medical training. The reps will also need to be well-versed in technology so they can educate the physicians on how to search and access relevant information quickly within their environments.”

This link has long been held by the traditional field sales team, which is not going away as some in the industry have predicted, Mr. Keefer says.

“Traditional teams are, however, being augmented by other types of promotional and clinical teams, such as field customer service teams, live video detailing representatives, tele-detailing, tele-sampling, credentialed inside sales teams, clinical health educators, etc.,” he says. “Additionally, HCPs are becoming more customer-focused, for example holding evening and weekend hours. We no longer live in a 9-to-5 world. A novel emerging representative type is the hybrid representative, who calls on HCPs both in field and virtually via webcam at the time and channel of the physician’s preference.”

Because the representative has access to the many resources that HCP offices need, it’s this just-in-time approach that provides value back to the physician.

“Whether they need clinical or business information, tools for patient education, or sources for medical education, representatives can provide real-time answers with the use of technology,” Mr. Samuel says. “Through the use of new technologies such as tablets or iPads, the representative can make the dialogue with the HCP much more interactive. If the HCP has a question or company request, the representative can frequently provide the answer on the spot, using the new technologies. It is important to note, however, that appropriate training be provided, so that the technology tool is a seamless part of the conversation and not the focus.”

Mr. Barrett says that technology is just a tool and it will never eliminate the need for human interaction.

“Companies that understand how to leverage technology to enhance the value of their engagement with healthcare providers will succeed,” he says. “Companies that try to replace all human interaction with technology will ultimately fail or at least fail to reach their full potential.”

Mr. Keefer agrees, saying field sales representatives will continue to play a critical role in the life-sciences market for the foreseeable future.

“Novel alternative communication channels will augment the traditional field sales team, but at the end of the day nothing can completely replace that personal relationship and in-person dialogue,” he says. PV

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