

Up next: rare-disease precision marketing



Wendy White
SVP rare disease,
Dohmen Life Sciences Services

PRECISION medicine has revolutionized the way we treat rare diseases, allowing us to create drugs customized for small groups of people who have unique medical profiles. But there is another revolution that is waiting to happen: one in how we get orphan drugs to patients who need them and help them stay on track with treatment.

Let's call it precision marketing. Companies that succeed with orphan drugs will be those that can make the paradigm shift from traditional pharmaceutical

marketing aimed at large disease populations to precision marketing focused on overall patient experience with a robust support program as the centerpiece.

Even though patients stricken with rare diseases desperately need customized treatment, they have an equally urgent need for customized education, access and support. Meeting those needs while immersing patients in a positive brand experience across all touch points is the most direct route to acquisition, adherence and lifelong loyalty.

But this immersive approach doesn't begin with product launch. It starts with the emotional bonds and trusted relationships companies build with these interconnected communities as early as clinical trials. Similarly, the approach doesn't end

when the prescription is written. There is continuous value in fine-tuning the experience with data collected at each step of the patient's journey, combined with the patient's own feedback.

So what does precision marketing look like? Although no all-purpose plan for this next phase of marketing is guaranteed to succeed for every orphan drug, there are basic guidelines. **It's unique to each community's needs:** One-size-fits-all approaches to lifecycle management won't work. Rare communities are not just different; they are each different in their own way. If you're open to it, patients will be happy to tell you what they need and they'll be invested in the success of programs and resources they've co-created, so your resources will be shared.

It's centralized: Rare disease patients and caregivers lead complicated lives and face huge medical, financial and social challenges, along with insurance hurdles and complex routes of administration. By funneling all interactions through one point of contact, you can simplify patients' and physicians' lives.

It's data-driven: Integrating marketing, traditional hub and specialty pharmacy services to meet the unique challenges and opportunities of rare disease patients gives you a feedback loop to improve program offerings and alert you to adherence issues before they result in dropped patients. Eliminating redundancy will get you clearer data and better patient outcomes. And isn't that precisely what you want?

This time, it's all non-personal



Robert Boyce
general manager of healthcare,
Modern Marketing Concepts

MANY MEDICAL-device and biopharmaceutical companies struggle to manage holistic sales and marketing efforts. Complex corporate structures within care facilities make it difficult to provide appropriate messaging to multiple touch points within their continuum-of-care settings.

Big pharma has used multichannel marketing for years and medical-device makers have long utilized inside sales, but neither has systematically cracked the code on developing effective and fully integrated sales and marketing programs.

But efficient alternatives to hard-pressed representatives are not just a dream. Some companies are succeeding. How?

The head of commercial at a large device firm who believed that a non-personal approach would not work for a new product his firm was bringing to market recently allowed us to give it a try in one segment. After eight months—through a well-executed multichannel campaign that included finance, directors of nursing, chief marketing officers and clinicians—we outpaced the field with sales and units in use.

In another case, a leading biopharma firm in the hospital market launched a product in the orphan-drug space while knowing it needed to expand the reach of its existing field force. So we devised a multichannel account-management strategy

to work in tandem with the field force. Insights related to each facility's purchasing process and key stakeholders gathered via multichannel efforts and then deployed to make visits by field sales reps more effective.

The firm increased the overall frequency of messaging and its value proposition to hospital stakeholders through the use of effectively timed and analytically driven direct mail and e-mail campaigns. Simultaneously it broadened its reach through the use of inside tele-sales professionals, which let the firm navigate the structure of the IDNs and use this information to pull through sales of the new product once added to formulary at the corporate level. In the end, we created a master channel data set with a high data density of valuable elements that could be fur-

ther integrated with the client's existing CRM platform to ensure best execution across all future sales and marketing efforts.

In this case, a comparative study demonstrated that an outbound non-personal interaction where a marketing message was delivered prior to the visit by field personnel preceded 90% of the closed sales.

While there are significant forces in the industry that are making sales and marketing more challenging than they have been in prior eras, new tools and approaches are having success generating returns. Leverage all your resources to develop a picture of the facility. Integrate that data picture to devise a plan that integrates all of the channels at your disposal. The best-case result? A better, and more cost-effective, customer experience.