



Insights and Sound Bites

September/October 2008

"It's a healthy thing now and then to hang a question mark on the things you have long taken for granted. - Bertrand Russell

How Early is Too Early to Start Doing Market Research on a Brand?

"Of course we'll do market research....when it's time to market the product."

If that sounds familiar you may be missing one of the biggest opportunities to influence the success of your product.

It might seem odd to think of marketing research in terms of clinical trial design – after all doesn't the clinical department do this? But the primary objective for the clinical group is to design a trial with safety and efficacy endpoints that will get the product approved.

However, the clinical trials are often the basis for any marketing "claims" that can be made when the product launches. How many times have you heard "we can't say that because we didn't test that"?

If you know what is going to give your product an edge when it gets to market, you can determine how best to design the clinical trials.

Can you claim the product is faster? (Was that tested in the trials and does it matter to the user?) Can you claim that patients like it better? (Was that tested in the trials and was it measured in a meaningful way?)

And remember that in healthcare, the customer isn't just the physician who is going to use or prescribe the product. There are many stakeholders influencing the success of your product and their perspectives should also be considered in the early product development.

- Physicians - Using or prescribing your product.
- Providers - Nurses, pharmacists, others who have contact with patients and products and may influence usage.
- Payers/Purchasers - Insurance carriers and also those making purchasing decisions in the hospitals.
- Patients - The ultimate beneficiary of your product ...may include family members/ caregivers.

Don't miss one of your biggest opportunities to influence the success of your product. Market research early in the product development can help you tailor your product development for the greatest market impact.

Case Study

Company X was developing a new prescription product for GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease, otherwise known as "acid reflux") which would have a different mechanism of action than the existing PPIs (e.g. Nexium®, Prilosec™). They had many options for the design of the clinical trial, all of which would impact the indication it received and hence the claims they could make. Options included indication for GERD, showing efficacy versus placebo, indication for GERD showing efficacy versus other PPIs, indication for non-responders (i.e. second-line therapy), and an indication for another, less familiar condition, understanding that it might also be used for GERD. All options had pros and cons from a clinical design and investment perspective.

Research was done with physicians to determine how each of these indications would impact the way they would view the product and prescribe it within their treatment algorithm for GERD, and also with Managed Care Organizations to determine how the product would be placed on the formulary under each scenario, which would significantly impact use. Results were critical for designing the most effective trial for the product.

Ladd Research Group in the News!

Nicole Eckert has been named as a YWCA Rising Star, an award given to young professional women (ages 25-40) who pursue excellence in their careers. YWCA Rising Stars are a dynamic group of professional women nominated by members of the YWCA Academy of Career Women of Achievement to participate in a program designed to provide unique networking, mentoring, and educational opportunities.

Amy Winstel has been elected to serve a two-year term as the co-chair for the Ohio/Indiana/Kentucky chapter of the QRCA (Qualitative Research Consultants Association).

Ladd Research Group was a sponsor of the annual benefit for **Faces without Places**, a local non-profit organization committed to keeping homeless children in school. The group provides transportation, supplies, shoes and other critical necessities to ensure continuity in education. For more information visit www.faceswithoutplaces.org

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