



Fall PMRG Conference Insight Brief

Tools for Maximizing Brand Potential



Overview



The biopharmaceutical sector—both as individual firms and as an industry—needs to improve its ability to measure, understand, and guide interactions among the major players in the healthcare system. This was the clear message heard by delegates at the Pharmaceutical Market Research Group (PMRG) annual Institute on new methodologies and industry developments (Philadelphia; October 25-27). This year's theme, *Tools for Maximizing Brand Potential*, was particularly timely for the biopharma sector. Both clients and suppliers expressed the same message in informal meetings and workshops: it's tough out there. With the costs of drug development and commercialization going up—as the array of innovative molecules goes down—building and sustaining a valuable brand franchise is ever-more challenging and essential.

Keynote speaker Jonathan Salem Baskin (*Branding Only Works on Cattle*) challenged the audience to think of franchises in behavioral rather than conceptual terms. To be sustainable and valuable, the “relationship” in Customer Relationship Marketing systems must be about actions and behaviors: what do we *do* for our customers? What do they *do* as a result of brand satisfaction and brand loyalty? Inevitably, people express their brand loyalty (or lack of it) with how much they use a product—in biopharma's case through prescriptions, physician requests, or preferred formulary positioning. Baskin's slides are available to download at: <http://www.pmr.org/Portals/0/09Institute/Keynote%20Jonathan%20Salem%20Baskin.pdf>



Key Insights

>> The overriding lesson was that no one technique will unlock all the insights needed to build compelling positioning or messages.

In the spirit of action, the first day's break-out sessions were formatted as workshops rather than lectures. The array of workshop topics reflected the industry's quest to get branding right, while doing more with less. Three sessions explored alternative techniques for uncovering useful customer insights around which brand teams can build their positioning. Psychology, ethnography, dialogue audits, anthropology, and "market immersion" were just some of the approaches discussed as tools for getting a better handle on the foundations of a successful brand. The overriding lesson was that *no one technique will unlock all the insights* needed to build compelling positioning or messages, and marketers must consider multiple methodologies to build a stereo view of the target audiences. On the second day, several of the sessions continued this quest for customer insight with an overall theme of understanding each of the players in the healthcare system as a customer, and as an individual.

The other major theme highlighted was the role of solid evidence, rigorously analyzed, in supporting brand decisions. Three workshops explored quantitative challenges, such as forecasting, prescription adherence, and managed markets pricing models, each with an eye toward getting the best guidance from the most efficiently gathered research data. This "do-more-with-less" theme was echoed in the second day's morning sessions that examined physician data quality, innovative uses of longitudinal data, and the use of predictive markets techniques.

This use of predictive market techniques was covered in a presentation titled *What the 'Smart' Crowd Can Tell You about Your Brand: Practical Techniques for Measuring Brand Value Using Collective Wisdom Methodologies* [insert link to presentation]. Presented by Quintiles Consulting's Jim Kirk and Ismael Carreras, this described techniques with a long history ranging from election polling to betting on sports, to investing on Wall Street. Prediction markets generate the collective intelligence or wisdom of the crowd that can be very useful for making key decisions. During the presentation, the two experts discussed three specific applications:

- Calibrating demand—preference share estimates
- Assessing the relative appeal of highly polarizing brand propositions
- Evaluating quick-turn, in-licensing opportunities

"Pharmaceutical marketing research is all about driving better business decisions," said Jim Kirk. "As the industry adapts to a new market landscape, we need to provide our customers with insights that will help guide those decisions."

Later in the day, speakers continued to explore alternative techniques for measuring brand message effectiveness and extending the usefulness of existing datasets.

The key takeaways from this conference includes:

Evidence is Key

The stakes are too high, and the number of opportunities too few to risk critical decisions on inadequate data or weak analyses. Framing the strategic questions clearly is critical to designing the right research to gather that evidence, and the evidence is critical to answering those questions.

Key Insights

(Continued...)

>> Long are the days of nearly certain growth for new drugs. Brands must work even harder to achieve critical mass.

Markets are Complex

The old model of “develop a drug, write a script, detail a doctor” is long gone. Biopharma drug success is shaped by many different players, each of whom has a unique set of drivers, barriers, and constraints that affect how they react to new brands.

Success is Fragile

Just as the old model of franchise building is long gone, so too are the days of nearly certain growth for new drugs. Between the pressure of market access and regulation, and the increasingly sophisticated marketing from competition, brands must work even harder to achieve critical mass.

Brands are Valuable

Real brands have a life, a personality, and a monetary value that goes beyond the attributes of a molecule or device. Building those brands takes time and effort, discipline and creativity, and the cooperation of many disciplines and partners.

Biopharma is Fun

Sure it's important to our healthcare system and our economy overall, and to the millions of people who take, use, and manage our products. But it's also tremendously stimulating and challenging, and we are fortunate to have lots of good, smart people with whom to work.

Biography

Jim Kirk has spent 35 years in marketing and market research. He joined Eidetics in 1988 from senior management positions in consumer and industrial product marketing, strategy, and business development at Gillette and Ocean Spray. In addition to his position as Eidetics Practice Leader, he serves as strategic consultant for many of the firm's major new product launch support programs for biopharma clients, both domestically and globally. Jim's particular areas of interest are brand and portfolio strategies, including positioning platform development, life cycle management, market segmentation, and linked model forecasting. Since Eidetics' acquisition by Quintiles in 2008, Jim has played a lead role in developing new service offerings that integrate the clinical and commercial resources of Quintiles with Eidetics' strategic research capabilities. Jim's degrees include a BA in biochemical sciences from Harvard, as well as an MA from Stanford. He has been a regular presenter at national PMRG meetings, and taught for seven years as part of PMRG's Promotion Response Workshop.