

Goizueta Marketing Strategy Consultancy (GMSC)

Client Case Study

Solvay



EMORY

GOIZUETA
BUSINESS
SCHOOL

GMSC

Goizueta Marketing Strategy Consultancy
Established 1991

Developed August 2009

Project Dates

January 2009-May 2009

Overview of Project Proposal

The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) is an industry organization that is comprised of the leading pharmaceutical and biotech companies in the US, including Solvay Pharmaceuticals. The mission of PhRMA is to help patients by developing and marketing new medicines. Ethical relationships with healthcare professionals are a key part of the mission, and accordingly PhRMA has developed guidelines for interactions with healthcare professionals.

In July, 2008 the PhRMA guidelines were updated and the changes took effect in January of 2009. Some of the changes that will impact Solvay directly include:

- **Prohibition of Non-educational and Practice-Related Items** – pens, pads, mugs, or any other similar “reminder” items will no longer be allowed to be distributed to healthcare professionals
- **Restriction on Meals Accompanying Informational Presentations** – specifically, meals offered in connection with informational presentations should be provided within the office or hospital setting. Dinners at restaurants outside these settings are prohibited.

With these new guidelines, Solvay needs to reevaluate how it will promote its products to healthcare professionals in the therapeutic areas in which Solvay specializes. Additionally, many of Solvay’s competitors will not be required to comply with the new guidelines, as these companies are not members of the PhRMA organization. Sales representatives for these companies will still be able to bring reminder items to healthcare professionals as well as hold informational presentations at restaurants. As a result, Solvay will not only have to determine how to access healthcare professionals using alternative means, but how to do so in a way that is as effective or more effective than traditional means.

While the new guidelines took effect in January of 2009, adjustment to the new marketing and sales environment will take some time. Solvay is asking the GMSC project team to develop a short-term and long-term strategy that will guide the marketing team and sales force at Solvay on how to navigate this newly defined marketplace. The GMSC project team should focus its recommendations on Solvay’s drug AndroGel, in the Men’s Health therapeutic area. Specific deliverables include:

Market Analysis

- Examine Solvay’s current marketing strategy for AndroGel – specifically how information is communicated to physicians and other key stakeholders
- Understand current approaches to segmentation among customer base
- Examine Solvay’s competitors and their marketing strategies
- Understand preferences and behaviors of targeted healthcare professionals for collecting information about pharmaceutical drugs and other treatment methods

Marketing Strategy Recommendation

- Identify effective communication tools for Solvay to implement in the newly defined market, including promotional materials and delivery tactics (mailing, sales rep, internet, etc.)
- Assess patient and healthcare professional education opportunities
- Determine ways to maximize the effectiveness of a Solvay sales representative
- Identify other creative ways to convey information to healthcare professionals regarding medical conditions and treatments
- Provide a financial analysis of the proposed marketing strategy

Outcomes, Results and Client Comments

Given the competitive environment and the impact of PhRMA regulations, to successfully market AndroGel, Solvay must focus on the effectiveness of its sales force. Specifically, the team recommends that the Sales representatives remain the most viable and realistic option for communicating with doctors about AndroGel.

There are opportunities for improvement in Solvay's existing sales strategy and approach, including the following:

- PhRMA-focused modifications
- Improvements to influencing tactics
- Focus on patient compliance

The GMSC team suggested a number of impactful changes that Solvay can implement to increase the effectiveness of its sales force including improved training, education, sales materials, and doctor segmentation strategies.

Solvay has evaluated the feasibility of the students' recommendations and plan to incorporate some of the tactics that involved improvements to training the sales force and increasing patient compliance.

Client Comments

The GMSC program was an exciting process that produced actionable results. The students on the team were highly motivated and committed to the project throughout the semester. They delivered data, analysis, and recommendations that went beyond the project objective and were always professional when interacting with Solvay employees.

The support that the students receive from faculty, consultants, and more senior students is evident and those of us involved in the project probably learned as much from them as they did from us. In addition, Solvay hired two interns from the GMSC team, who were quickly able to contribute and were among the top performing interns this year.

After three years of GMSC participation, we hope to be able to participate again this year. Each year we have not only received excellent recommendations, but the program has also been an excellent tool for identifying talent.