

Winning combinations win awards

Feta and olives, Lennon and McCartney, Ronaldo and Bale, Fonteyn and Nureyev – most of us would agree each are good on their own, and when combined with their counterpart - sublime. When it comes to business, can the same be said of sales and marketing? How often is there true synergy between our product messaging and sales process?

Here we look at a stellar example of how by changing to a unified approach, Astellas Pharmaceutical achieved market leading results across the board and won a national award in recognition of their success.

Drivers for change

Patient care is the core focus for Astellas as they single-mindedly research and develop products in their specialist areas. Their exemplar research has resulted in exceptional products worthy of imitation; so how does one pharma company differentiate itself from another? George Kardasis, BU Director Astellas Pharmaceutical expands *“Medical detailing becomes increasingly complex and difficult, as the competition between the pharmaceutical companies for the time and attention of the doctor intensifies continually. At the same time the emergence of generic drugs, the reduction of blockbuster drugs and the dramatic changes in the environment lead to the need for change in the role of the Medical Representative”*.

Astellas wanted to strengthen their position in the Greek market. They had new drugs and therapies in the field of Uro-Oncology and most of all they wanted to help their people meet the challenges of the current environment. George explains: *“At Astellas we are all about the people. It’s tough out there and training helps to give back something positive.”*

Project goals were ambitious – requiring measurable change in behaviour and results. Astellas decided to enlist outside help to achieve them and ICAP was selected to deliver the SPIN[®] Suite which includes programmes in sales, sales coaching and marketing from Huthwaite International.

Success criteria

Overall, Astellas wanted skills that would help differentiate them from the competition and build value for the product. If individuals could be assessed before, during and after training then learning could be focussed - progress would be measurable and coaching more effective. All this would give the project the best chance of success and feed into Astellas’s vision of CHANGING TOMORROW™. And they didn’t want just pockets of excellence. *“The symphony will not sound good if only half the orchestra has the sheet music. We want sales and marketing to be equally equipped to play the same tune and delight the listener.”* Says George.

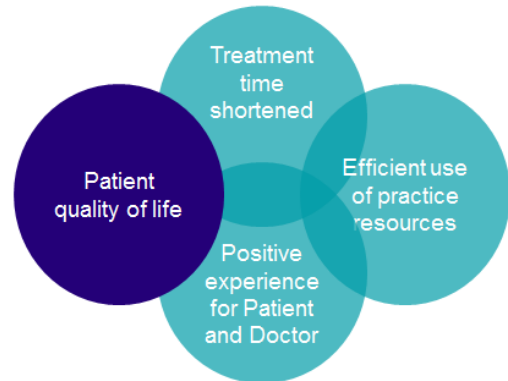
Dedicated to SPIN[®]?

Initially, there was some resistance to change. At the start of the project, one medical rep commented: *“I know my work very well. I do not see the point in changing my behaviour”*. A month later he stated: *“Now I know exactly which behaviours I should change and why.”*

The training material was customised to take into account more than one perspective. The needs of the patient were highlighted separately from those of the healthcare professional. This helped the medical reps and marketing people communicate on a different level - keeping messages both relevant and clear. *“We learned how to get the message from the rep, through the medical representative, and the technical expert to the health professional and the patient. Now each recipient experiences how the product helps them – keeping the value relevant and personal.”*

George goes on to say: *“It is important for our reps to be relaxed in the sales call and have an underlying confidence to manage a conversation with the health professional that focusses on delivering the best treatment for the patient and the practice. And so to complement the excellent product knowledge our reps have, we wanted to change the way they approached their sales calls. Following SPIN[®], our reps look at the sale from every view point and can make a convincing case that demonstrates value to the doctor, the practice and ultimately the patient – and how it affects their quality of life. We are unique in this approach in Greece.”*

In other industries we may refer to this holistic approach as the Total Cost of Sale. In this instance, a typical outcome could result in benefits such as:



Skills for life

SPIN[®] analysts observed the reps on their sales calls and a pattern of change in behaviour began to emerge call on call. One such change was the improvement in structure which meant that reps were able to articulate value to the doctors more efficiently and succinctly. During this time of embedding and coaching SPIN[®] skills truly strengthened the success of the reps: *“SPIN[®] really got under the skin of our reps. They can use it intuitively whatever message they are delivering.”* continues George. *“We observed each rep using the SPIN[®] model to diagnose areas of strength and areas to work on. Over the course of two years we were able to work on changing behaviour rep by rep and skill by skill.”*

*“Astellas have shown great commitment to the skills development of their people, comments George Margaritis, Senior Manager, Head of ICAP Training. “The work they have undertaken has been outstanding. This is confirmed by the **Gold Sales Excellence Award 2016** where ICAP and Astellas have won the category **‘Training & Development of the Sales Force.’**”*

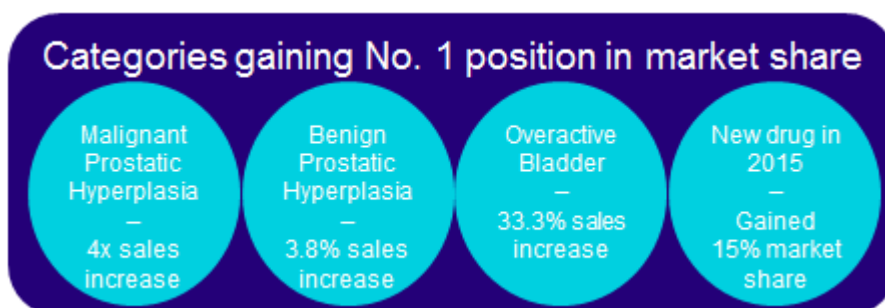
Sales outcomes

Astellas’s vision: CHANGING TOMORROW™. Huthwaite International’s vision: Change behaviour. Change results™ – another winning combination?

Please judge for yourselves...

...an independent study by IMS carried out in December 2013 and again in November 2015 provides irrefutable proof that Astellas increased market share across four treatment areas.

The SPIN[®] project rolled out between the first and second study. At the start, Astellas had leading position in



the market for one product. By November 2015 not only had the market leader strengthened its share but three other products had also become market leaders.