
Editorial

It is not the strongest species that will survive, nor the most intelligent, but that which is most capable of change

The Origin of Species, Charles Darwin

Launching a new journal to a target audience already drowning in data might seem, at first glance, a strange thing to do. Marketing professionals in the medical device, pharmaceutical and diagnostic industries are not short of reading matter. The same can be said for the consultants, analysts, academics and others that work with them. Nor does there seem to be a yawning gap in the advertising media aimed at such people. The development and launch of the *International Journal of Medical Marketing* has taken up a very large amount of time of many people, all of whom could display a terrifyingly long to-do list without adding this to their task list. So why the *International Journal of Medical Marketing*?

The answer to that question, emblazoned on the front cover of this and all subsequent issues, is to facilitate excellence in medical marketing. By this we mean marketing in both the tactical (promotional and selling) and strategic (analysis and planning) sense as it relates to those industries that class clinicians and other medical professionals as their customers. Our argument is that marketing professionals working in medical markets need to consider their professionalism and, in many cases, seek to improve it. Our justification for this position is based on three points:

- The degree of marketing professionalism in our industry lags behind that of other functions and, arguably, other industries. If this seems a harsh judgement, compare the qualifications, process formality and accountability (three good measures of

professionalism) of your marketing department with your colleagues in Finance or Research and Development.

- Even where marketing excellence already exists in our industry, the pace of change is such that we must run to stand still. This transformation within every sector of our industry is not simply driven by technology and globalisation (forces that act on all industries) but also by the demographics and politics that uniquely impact on medical markets. If marketing is based on adaptation to environmental conditions, excellence has never been more needed or more difficult.
- No other publication attempts to meet this need in quite the way that the *International Journal of Medical Marketing* is intended to. There are, of course, a plethora of industry magazines and newsletters that carry topical and industry specific news. Similarly, there are peer-reviewed journals that attempt to generalise knowledge across the whole range of industry types. Until now, however, there has been no journal that has attempted to combine industry specificity with the rigour of double-blind peer review.

Our intention, therefore, is that each edition of the *International Journal of Medical Marketing* should provide valuable rigour and relevance to our subscribers, whatever their industry specialism or geographical interest. The papers submitted for this and future editions of the *IJMM* provide the substance behind these ambitions. For start-ups, the challenge of commercialising a new technology is addressed in Hugh MacNaught's first-hand experiences. For mature organisations, a practical route to sustainable differentiation through strategic segmentation described by Janice

McLennan and David MacKenzie. Ginette Camps-Walsh and Joachim Schmitt cover issues of reimbursement, from different and complementary angles. Prescribing behaviour is illuminated by Phil Stern and Leo van der Geer and Peter Kangis. The related, but rarely coordinated, issues of corporate image and sales team activity are considered in Eirini Dimopoulou and Chris Fill's paper on corporate identity cues. Russia's enormous potential and matching difficulties are described in Viktoria Anashkina's well-informed account

of her market. Taken together, the research papers and practitioner reports in this first issue cover an enormous range of markets, countries and specialities. Forthcoming issues extend that range still further.

Darwin's words in *The Origin of Species* were not written for pharmaceutical, device or diagnostic businesses, but they could well have been. It is for those who wish to survive that this journal is written.

BRIAN SMITH
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