



Who Plans to Fail?

Graham Davies, Davies Strategic Solutions Inc.

More than one in four campaigns diminish the value of the sales force's effort. According to ACNielsen HCI's studies of these campaigns, 29% had funding problems, money being either too much or too little (*Canadian Pharmaceutical Marketing*, November 2004). Did these brand teams fail to plan?

Soon, sales and marketing executives will turn their attention to 2006. Much of their effort will be focused on strategy, as it should. However, will their tactical planning have the same level of rigour and sophistication? In developing an appropriate and balanced promotional plan and budget, can they quantitatively answer the following questions?

1. Are the quantity, type and mix of exposures optimum for each brand at this time?
2. Should the budget be increased? Why? How much? What is the best use of this money?
3. If budgets must be reduced, how can it be done with minimum pain?
4. Are the company's promotional investments balanced across the portfolio?

The sales and marketing executive depends heavily on the sales representative because few initiatives can surpass the power of personal selling. But the sales force's reach and frequency is limited by access to physicians and cost.

Physicians are exposed to many more opportunities to receive our message (Figure 1). These vehicles are often not as powerful as a primary detail. Most are less expensive and can reach more MDs more often. Used to leverage the sales force, they can substantially increase sales and marketing efficiency. How can these vehicles be objectively compared to a primary detail position without considerable experience evaluating pharmaceutical campaigns?

In the U.S., ACNielsen HCI has evaluated over 6,800 pharma campaigns. Knowing what works in the end, they created a planning tool to help companies prepare a marketing plan that is well-balanced across the various tactics. To accomplish this, they evaluated the relative values of various tactics in their ability to deliver a message. Through testing, they have ascribed relative values to most promotional vehicles in our arsenal.

In the course of their work, they found planning should take into consideration:

1. Prescribing opportunity (to set exposure objectives)
2. Product life cycle (to help modify exposure objectives)
3. Message complexity (to help select tactics)
4. Relative values (to balance tactics)
5. Application of the leveraging principle (to optimize detailing efficiency)
6. Competitive promotion (to fine-tune the budget)
7. Past performance (to fine-tune the budget)

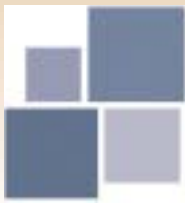
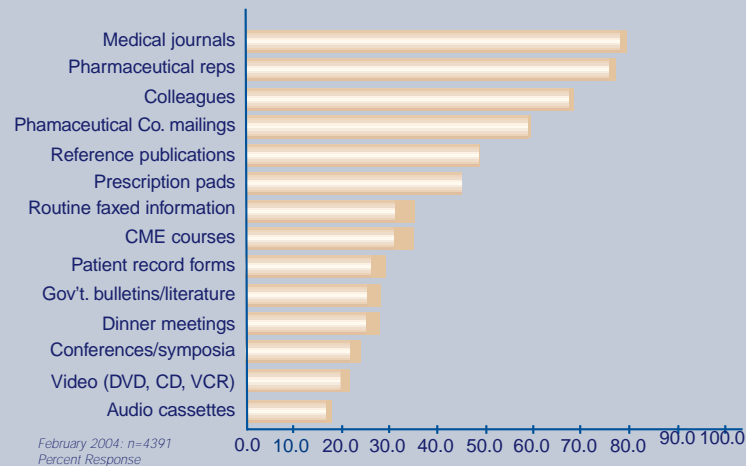


Figure 1

Past week exposure to information on advertising on products (Office-based high prescribers [GP/FP/DO/IM])



It appears that there is now a systematic way to develop an appropriately balanced promotional plan to help companies optimally leverage their detailing effort and avoid the problems of overfunding and underfunding noted earlier.

For more information on validated tools to measure campaign performance and a systematic approach to tactical planning, contact Graham Davies of Davies Strategic Solutions Inc. at (416) 467-7005 or by e-mailing g@davies-strategic.com. More information can be found at www.davies-strategic.com. **CPM**

This column focuses on optimizing sales and marketing effectiveness. It draws not only on my experience, but that from other sources. Also, the column will often be supported by findings from research conducted by Marshall Paul of ACNielsen HCI, a leader in pharmaceutical promotion research since 1986.

A Move at GSK

GSK Vice-President Reaching for the Top Down Under



Paul Lirette

The move from Montreal to Melbourne might seem daunting for most of us, but for Paul Lirette, it is a career move he's had in his sights for some time. The former Vice-President, Sales & Marketing, GlaxoSmithKline in Canada, is now President and CEO, Australia, and Area Director, Australasia, and will be a member of GSK's International Management Team.

"By continuously raising our threshold of performance, through training and teamwork, new opportunities emerge both professionally and personally that reward an individual's investment of time and effort," Lirette claims. "This is particularly true when you are part of a global family such as GSK, with so many opportunities for career advancement. I am truly delighted with this move and look forward to my new assignment."

Over his 17-year career at GSK, Lirette's team worked in a very strategic fashion with a number of partners. The team fostered innovative and highly successful disease management programs in asthma and diabetes in Quebec. These have also been launched in Ontario and are being considered as templates in other provinces.

GSK Australia currently employs some 1,500 associates.

"My entire family is excited about the move and the new experience and, of course, I am really looking forward to the new business challenges that lie ahead," Lirette says.

He also adds, "We have developed a large pool of talented and motivated professionals ready to carry on our company's tradition of excellence. With their track record, I am confident that GSK Canada will continue to set new performance standards, as well as provide the company's global network with new recruits to maintain its leadership position in the industry."

