



The PMCQ at 50: Continuing Education, Expertise and Exchange



Fifty years, forty-seven presidents, hundreds of directors and guest speakers, dozens of Christmas balls and golf tournaments, thousands of members... the **Pharmaceutical Marketing Club of Quebec (PMCQ)** is the longest running and most successful not-for-profit organization in the Canadian pharmaceutical industry. Given the current state of the pharmaceutical universe, with its ruthless mergers and downsizing, it is remarkable that the PMCQ has not imploded. Will the Club continue to survive?

If the PMCQ's current Board of Directors have anything to say about it (and they have a lot to say), the PMCQ will do better than survive—it will thrive. Sixteen professionals of varying ages, backgrounds and experience, nearly evenly split on both the client and the supplier sides, agree that the PMCQ provides Quebec pharmaceutical with three vital organs:

- a circulation system for networkers,
- a brain for knowledge seekers and
- a soul for those who thirst for motivation.

In 2007 to 2008, the PMCQ celebrates its 50th anniversary, but instead of reflecting on the past, all eyes are focused on the future. At the close of the 2006 season, the Club surveyed members and non-members about

the organization. In the summer of 2007, the Board of Directors met to hear the results and plan the response. The number one objective became emphasizing the value the PMCQ offers professionals from all sectors of the pharmaceutical industry, not just marketers. A goal that current, two-term **President and Senior Oncology Marketing Manager at Bristol-Myers Squibb, Greg Buie** believes is critical: "The PMCQ is committed to delivering on our new 50th anniversary tag line: education, expertise, exchange. In a 90-minute monthly meeting, we deliver on the education promise by bringing cutting-edge experts and thinkers from many areas to plant at least one seed that can be converted into innovation and excellence in our business and professional development. The expertise not only represents our world-class speakers, but also our many



Canada's former Ambassador to the United Nations, Stephen Lewis addresses a PMCQ monthly meeting on the role of the pharmaceutical industry in combating AIDS in Africa. PMCQ monthly meetings feature expert speakers addressing a wide range of issues affecting the pharmaceutical industry.

local colleagues who impart their knowledge, and meeting participants who share their perspectives and ask relevant questions from which we all benefit. Lastly, exchange speaks to the spirit of the Club and the environment we try to foster. We are an intimate group with much in common and I see the PMCQ's role as providing a forum for sharing our commonality."

What attracts people to the PMCQ?

One of the newest directors, **Monika Schmid, partner with C-Breeze Marketing**, says, "It is like no other club in Quebec. Top-ranked speakers, great education, first-class events... a great organization that I wanted to be part of."

Snell Medical Communications' Jazia Ronald, intrepid Chair of the annual golf tournament, explains, "It is the only association of its kind that provides a venue where individuals from all levels of the industry can learn and work together. I became a Director because I wanted to contribute towards making the Club a more dominant voice within the Quebec pharma industry."

Adam Olmstead, Marketing Manager at Merck Frosst/Schering, chose the PMCQ for more than the interaction: "Yes, it is a great way to interact with like-minded pharma people, but the educational events send you back to work with many learnings for you and your colleagues."

Terry O'Shea spent sixteen years on the client side with Merck Frosst and Novartis before moving over to **Sudler & Hennessey** two years ago: "Over the years, I attended many of the educational events and always found the quality and calibre of the speakers to be excellent. But on top of that, the PMCQ provided an excellent opportunity to touch base with many colleagues, catch up on changes, new events... the Quebec pharma industry is really small and it is important to touch base with each other a few times a year."

Merck's Marketing Communications Director, Ascher Essebag, couldn't agree more. A new member of the Board of Directors, Ascher joined the PMCQ because, "... it's a good opportunity for keeping up-to-date with industry trends as well as networking with colleagues inside and outside the industry."

For **Sadri Osmane, Business Technology Project Manager at Pfizer**, the PMCQ helps him to better understand the pharmaceutical side of the industry: "It's fun to meet other pharma people and suppliers while getting to know so much more about both pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical related topics."



The PMCQ Golf Tournament, held every June, offers a welcomed opportunity to unwind and reconnect with industry colleagues. Having fun is always the priority of this annual Club event.



Dancing the night away at the annual PMCQ Christmas Party. The pre-holiday event hosts over 500 club members and friends from industry to a night of entertainment and holiday cheer.



Giving back to the community has always been a priority for the PMCQ. Over the years the Club has raised funds for organizations such as Dans La Rue, The Montreal Children's Hospital and L'hôpital St-Justine to name but a few.



Providing industry specific education is a core mission of the Club. PMCQ University is just one way the Club works to strengthen the skill set of its membership.

Dan Léger reveals, "As a Product Manager I gained great insight and information at PMCQ meetings which helped me become a better marketer. Now in my new role as a **Director of Marketing at Lundbeck**, I consider it my responsibility to encourage all members of the Lundbeck marketing team to join the PMCQ."

Alex Grenier, Schering Product Manager and Chair of the elegant and entertaining 2007 Christmas Ball, believes that the PMCQ is even more essential during these volatile times in the pharmaceutical industry: "The industry is changing and, more than ever, now is the time for networking and doing a little extra to differentiate yourself from the rest of the crowd. The PMCQ is perfect for that... it is a great source of information and networking."

Data Ad's Bob Ness, long-time Director and PMCQ President from 2002-2003, remains enthusiastic, "... to truly benefit from all that the Club has to offer, it's important to participate on a regular basis. A strong membership and attendance helps motivate the board to do more."

Clearly, the Board of Directors is passionate about the Club's forward momentum. They volunteer their time and energy to make the PMCQ a value that is relevant to the entire industry. **Enza Cignarella, Senior Product Manager at Novartis** and a veteran PMCQ Director, describes the Club's ultimate value for pharmaceutical professionals: "The PMCQ contributes to fostering an industry that is vibrant, dedicated and knowledgeable. As the industry runs its business cycles and undergoes changes, the PMCQ has also evolved. I would challenge anyone who has preconceived notions about the Club to come out to an event and experience it for themselves. With that, I hope to see many new faces at PMCQ events this year so that we can continue to evolve and respond to the needs of all our members and non-members." **CPM**