CHAPTER SEVEN: RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter important considerations, recommendations and action steps for the successful development and implementation of e-Profiling and e-Detailing at MSD, are discussed.

7.1 IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

7.1.1 Environmental Factors

Based on an industry and company analysis, the following influencing factors must be considered:

- The pharmaceutical industry has become very crowded and competitive. With fewer calls available to MSD sales reps and with less time afforded per call, many reps are unable to profile their physicians, develop relationships with them, deliver complete promotional messages and differentiate their products from the competition.
- In a declining market, characterised by intense rivalry among many companies competing for a portion of a smaller pie, optimising customer relationship management strategies, as well as developing more cost effective sales and marketing strategies, is imperative.
- MSD in particular, has to find innovative ways to increase sales of their existing blockbuster products in order to fill the revenue void left behind by the withdrawal of VIOXX. More promotional emphasis must be placed on these products in order to achieve this.
- Essentially there exists an opportunity to use cost effective internet enabled technologies to electronically profile and detail physicians, and accordingly intensify the promotional effort.
7.1.2 COZAAR SWOT Analysis

Based on a COZAAR SWOT analysis, the following influencing factors were also identified:

- COZAAR's situation is unique. Although COZAAR is just over 12 months away from patent expiration and under normal circumstances would be in the maturity/decline phase, the new trials – LIFE and RENAAL have essentially "breathed new life" into the product, offering it new opportunities for use in compelling indications; and thereby extended its growth/maturity phase.
- COZAAR can be differentiated from competitors using these new trials and its molecular specific attributes. But with current restrictions on calls and time afforded per call, COZAAR reps are finding it difficult to do so.

7.1.3 Literature Review Findings

Based on an e-Profiling / e-Detailing literature review, the following important information needs consideration:

- E-profiling, which lends itself so well to cost-effective data capture, is key to building a deeper understanding of our customer segments, a more responsive relationship with physicians; a more accurate and structured targeting strategy. In this way E-Profiling may improve the effectiveness and efficiency of sales and marketing activities.
- E-Detailing has been proven to:
  - increase the reach and frequency of the promotional message
  - change physicians' attitudes and beliefs on pharmacotherapy and brand choice
  - provide sustained efficiencies in conventional product detailing
- E-Detailing can be optimised if leveraged with the right products, at the right time of their life-cycle, and with the right customer segments.
- E-Detailing can also optimise ROI if marketers:
integrate e-Detailing with the sales force – with consideration for field force activities and online and offline promotional message synergies

develop promotional messages and educational content that is both relevant and compelling

Integrate value-added e-tools, useful resources and links into the e-Detailing workshop that have the potential to attract and lock-in physicians

Centralise platforms in order to achieve economies of scale and therefore greater cost control.

7.1.4 Results from the COZAAR e-Pilot

Based on the results of the COZAAR e-Pilot, the following influencing factors were determined:

• There is a significant percentage of the SA physician population that are ready for e-Profiling and e-Detailing. They have the aptitude and the resources to participate in such initiatives.

• When e-Profiling is executed effectively, it will improve our ability to profile SA physicians in terms of their patient base, their perceptions and their most current scripting behaviour (amongst other behaviours).

• e-Detailing is had the power to sensitize SA physicians, shape their perceptions and drive desired behavior

• e-Detailing was able to significantly increase the reach and frequency of the COZAAR promotional message

• Using e-Detailing we were able to expose more physicians to higher quality and more interactive promotional messages

• Using e-Detailing we were able to achieve higher customer acceptance and openness towards the content communicated

• Using e-Profiling and e-Detailing we were able to gather useful market research (from physician-level data feedback)
7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MSD

1) Based on the success of the COZAAR e-Pilot, and on the significance of the results achieved, as well as other analyses; I would strongly recommend that MSD incorporates e-Profiling and e-Detailing into each business unit’s marketing strategy, with immediate effect. Both initiatives will improve MSD’s CRM efforts, increase the quality, reach, frequency and impact of their promotional messages; compliment the sales force effort and optimise the sales and marketing ROI.

2) However, I would strongly recommend that MSD use a hybrid “push-pull” model that integrates e-Profiling and e-Detailing with the current sales force. The results of the COZAAR e-Pilot confirmed that the combination of online and offline detailing has the most profound influence over the physician’s perceptions and behaviour.

3) The degrees of e-Profiling and e-Detailing application should depend on the products being marketed, where these products are in relation to their life-cycle and the customer segments being targeted. I would suggest also that Bernewitz’s models be applied to determine the appropriate level of e-Profiling and e-Detailing application.

4) According to the literature, e-Detailing is considered to be most suitable when a product is in the growth phase of its life-cycle, when physicians base their decision making primarily on data and the exposure they have to the data. Currently MSD has a number of products that are in these phases of their life cycle and could therefore benefit from the introduction of e-Detailing initiatives. In the Cardiovascular business unit there are essentially two products that would benefit from e-Detailing, namely:
   o **EZETROL** (ezetimide) – a cholesterol absorption inhibitor, which is in its early growth phase
   o **COZAAR** (losartan) – an Angiotensin II Receptor Blocker for hypertension, which is in its late growth / maturity phase
In the Orthopaedic / Respiratory business unit there is only one product that would benefit from e-Detailing, namely:

- **SINGULAIR** (montelukast) - a Leukotrine Receptor Antagonist for asthma – which is in its growth phase

In the Hospital and Speciality business unit, there are basically two products that would benefit from e-Detailing, namely:

- **AGGRASTET** (tirofiban) – a non-peptide platelet inhibitor for acute coronary thrombosis – in its growth phase
- **INVANZ** (ertapenem) – a broad spectrum antibiotic is in its early growth phase

5) NB. Considering the MSD range of products, the product that “stands out” as having the most growth potential and potentially the most advantage to gain from e-Detailing, is SINGULAIR. The respiratory business unit would, therefore, do well to leverage these initiatives to fully exploit the potential of internet-based marketing and especially e-Detailing.

6) It is advisable that one product manager, per business unit, be identified to take ownership of this arm of marketing and to develop, implement and measure the unit’s e-Detailing strategy. It is very important that content is geared toward the product strategy – emphasising key messages and branding. This product manager must also be given the responsibility of ensuring the aligned commitment of the sales force, to the e-Strategy.

7) The product manager responsible for e-Detailing would do well to then follow the 15 steps to e-Detailing success, as outlined in chapter 5. In this way they will effectively attract and lock-in physicians by keeping the content short and to the point, unbiased and most importantly – useful. In this way also, they will ensure that MSD can overcome scepticism and resistance amongst sales employees, and focus on ways to create value for both the company and the physician.
8) Finally, e-Detailing activities and costs are expected to run alongside traditional marketing activities and costs; and as a result, will more likely burden the marketing budget in the short term rather than reduce it. It is therefore also strongly recommended that MSD increase their marketing budget to accommodate e-Profiling and e-Detailing within the different units and in relation to the planned level of e-application. MSD must centralise the Softmed platform in order to achieve economies of scale and therefore greater cost control.

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COZAAR

1) The COZAAR e-Pilot will be available on the Softmed web-site for another 12 months. It therefore makes sense to make full use of the investment already paid for out of the 2005 marketing budget.

2) Based on the physician feedback it would seem that the e-Detailing modules were too long. It is therefore strongly recommended that the length of these modules be reduced, so as to increase its attractiveness to potential users.

3) Adapt current modules to reflect any changes to the COZAAR strategy (keep it current), and then make it available to the entire SA physician community via URL invitation, the UNIVADIS marketing portal, via links on the company’s corporate / product web-sites, as well as by rep invitation.

7.3 SUMMARY OF THE COZAAR e-PILOT

In summary, the COZAAR e-Pilot showed that SA physicians are ready for e-Profiling and e-Detailing and that these initiatives have the potential to improve our understanding of customers, as well as influence their perceptions and behaviour. The e-Pilot also determined that these tools are most effective when integrated with field force activities and that leveraged in this way, they could provide MSD with ‘first mover’ competitive advantage over competitors.