

E-Sampling Is No Longer an “Alternative” Solution



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Drug sampling remains a critical and increasingly challenging aspect of pharmaceutical sales and marketing. Healthcare decision-makers count on office-based physicians distributing samples to enhance patient behavior. At the same time, pharmaceutical marketers frequently use samples to generate physician loyalty.

These days, pharmaceutical manufacturers seek ways to sustain sales force effectiveness despite the reduction of their sales forces. Even more challenging for manufacturers are the current sales conditions as physician group practices restrict the access of the remaining sales representatives. Gatekeepers abound.

Tracking Technologies

Additional technology-driven and delivered marketing methodologies have produced even broader solutions such as CRM database tracking systems that allow for multiple e-marketing and e-sampling efforts over finite periods. These solutions can provide a broad range of activities-based analytics allowing pharmaceutical brand teams to track and adjust (real-time) marketing efforts related to sample orders and associated scripts.

Sales-productivity tools that allow physicians and office managers to access information in the ways they prefer, whether online in real time, or through more traditional

Pharmaceutical **sales force effectiveness and the reduction of these sales forces** is the number one driver for pharmaceutical manufacturers in today's economic maelstrom.

E-Sampling Comes of Age

To meet these challenges, pharmaceutical manufacturers are now turning their focus to what was once considered an “alternative” or “supplementary” service. E-sampling is now proving to be a robust, cost-effective, and axial solution.

As virtual sample closet solutions become more sophisticated yet easy-to-use, the adoption of these tools has increased significantly.

Ordering Made Easy

FDA guidelines now allow for e-signatures that in turn make it possible for physicians to use a “virtual sample closet” to get information about pharmaceutical products on their preferred schedule. E-sampling creates a straight-forward method for physicians to integrate sample ordering into their standard work flow.

offline methods, can help maintain and elevate script coverage in territories under pressure or ones that can't receive the attention they deserve.

Web-based solutions such as these, which are broader, more powerful, and further reaching, are currently considered “core” marketing strategies for new pharmaceutical product launches and existing product market expansion efforts.

What was unthinkable only a short time ago is now a reality — a newly branded pharmaceutical product launch with “NO” feet on the street whatsoever.

Indeed, e-sampling is no longer an “alternative” solution. It's a quickly growing part of the revolution in pharmaceutical marketing and physician practice.

Joining the ranks of the sales and specialty representatives in importance and effectiveness, e-sampling has come of age and will continue to grow as physicians increasingly turn toward technology and online solutions to remain competitive. ■

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