BASE life science whitepaper

A Pragmatic Approach towards Business Intelligence in Pharma

April 2020

Setting the Scene

Business intelligence can take multiple forms. In this whitepaper, we will focus on a way to improve collaboration and enable orchestration amongst the various functions within Customer Relationship Management (CRM) in pharma.

A central shared CRM objective amongst pharmaceutical companies today is 'Orchestration' . In a growing digital environment, it is key to have a clear overview and to ensure transparency of the way functions work and interact in the different work streams. Enabling a smooth process for reaching out to the customer requires a synergetic balance between all departments to formulate a '360 degree' overview of the customer.

One of the fundamentals is therefore to be able to provide the necessary cross-functional insights to the various users. The type of users can be manifold depending on the objective: Medical Scientific Liaisons (MSLs), Key Account Managers (KAMs) or Sales Force Effective Manager (SFEs). What is important is to formulate a mutual standpoint in order to be able to foresee interactions and other activities between the company and Health Care Professionals.

This paper focuses on the pragmatic steps and the Business Intelligence tools that can support the enablement of this view - facilitating customer centricity and orchestration of visits to the customer. It will navigate through some of the initial insights that will matter for each function across various types of reporting.

Mutual Intelligibility

An essential burden of collaboration is the lack of understanding between the various business functions. There is a need for the business to come up with a nomenclature including a mapping of the various functions.

A granular example is when a KAM speaks to an HCP, he/she would detail a specific product. The MSL should not care about the product name but should be able to understand the molecule as well as addressing the insights discussed between the two. Vice versa, if the MSL has discussed the side effects of a specific course of treatment, the KAM should be able to gather that a specific product or brand is the topic of discussion. This mapping of information should then cascade down to the discussion of topics or key messages to enable cross-functional insights.

Understanding this is fundamental and a preliminary first step towards formulating the set of reporting metrics necessary for the company. The risk, if not assessed properly, is that the barriers existing between the different functions will not disappear and the company will remain in a silo-state.

The End-user as Turning Point

A commercial IT implementation that will not provide value to the end-user is set for failure . Following this principle when creating the initial sets of reports, the user perspective is central. Their needs should be the starting point for developing the solution.

Zooming in first on Commercial, the key is to ensure that set goals can be achieved. Of course, a regional solution should not fulfill all the needs of the whole country but some of the essentials should be aligned from Global to Region and from Region to Country. Therefore, goal achievement dashboards are of uttermost importance. If not formulated and provided by the Central Team, there is a very high chance that KAMs will spend time on setting these up locally. This is a very inefficient usage of their time. They should be talking to customers rather than building local reports in Excel.

In most of the companies, Reach, Frequency and Coverage will provide the necessary basics for the user to be satisfied. The most advanced questions may not be answered by the regional reporting solution, but the cross-functional data reporting dimensions can ensure that the work force is incentivized to avoid any potential time loss. Once this is in place, it becomes possible to focus on developing a shared view of the customer and to foster collaboration. Shared insights can then be created in report-form based on essential aspects and information for the KAMs to utilize. The detailed level of information granularity is important and may differ depending on geographical scope (global/regional/local).

For the Medical Team, reactivity remains the reality. In some countries, this is purely a result of regulation. In France for instance, the MSL can only visit HCPs on a 'per need basis' - otherwise it would be considered as the enforcement of a promotional role which is forbidden[1]. This sheds light on the most important aspect to be assessed by the Medical end-user: Providing a report that enables the Medical Team to assess its own reactivity.

The next step for MSLs is to make sure to provide an overview of the type of questions asked to the physician. As free-text fields are currently not applicable for reporting, there is a need to capture the topic of discussion at a level detailed enough to provide value for the MSL. Key messages should be linked to attributes of the product so it can be detailed by the commercial function. Ideally in a well-organized marketing journey, when the MSL reports a call on a specific topic, it should automatically prompt the Reps to perform an action with the HCP related to the product. Providing an insight on the KAM activity around KOLs and general customer engagement will provide valuable insights.

Transferring towards the Market Access (MA) Team, data information usually becomes useful on a very different level. Market Access teams tend to cover much wider territories and are more interested in the national perspective. They seek to map the market landscape and it is extremely important for Market Access to continuously access data on the entire country level in order to compare relevant MA metrics such as formularies or contracts coverage. In addition, a deep dive into details on e.g. the number of formularies by status or interactions completed by other teams towards accounts can generate great value.

In a launch setting, adding sales data could become a driver for the adoption of reporting. Understanding the result on actions from the team and coverage on the general prescription volume could lead to a high usage of the reporting tool. Analyzing the ratio of promotional activities versus non promotional calls would enable the team to optimize on the interactions from the company for a specific account.

Convincing Managers by BI Tool Stickiness

Moving to the next level of end-users, managers possess a fundamental power in the adoption of a new reporting system. Pragmatically, convincing the managers will force the entire field force to use the tool as they will need to

1 LEEM, Dispositions déontologiques professionnelles, Applicables aux entreprises du médicament adhérentes du Leem, December 2019

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please their manager. Therefore, building in valuable manager insights and reports to the reporting interface may ensure a stickiness of the system.

The commercial teams are competitive by nature. Providing the current status of the different team members is one of the crucial insights that a KAM manager would be looking at. They are essentially interested in knowing the achievements of the different members of the team alongside with their objectives. The call frequency of the users, the call plan achievements as well as the coaching reports follow-ups are typical report insights that provide value to the manager as this information type would support them when coaching their team.

Depending on context and scope, additional sales insights may be also become valuable. Once the activity is tracked, the business impact of the activity can be analyzed. Data on market share within a specific brick and its performance, the evolution of such a market share as well as the progression of HCP within the adoption ladder may be highly interesting insights as well.

Transitioning towards Medical, MSL managers would usually like to understand whether the medical strategy is followed by the various team members. It should therefore be possible to report on the various components as comprised in the strategy.

Two basic components of such a strategy would be the pillars of discussion with HCPs as well as the KOL managers. Those two aspects must be reflected in the reporting to be available for the medical team managers. It should be possible to understand the percentage of time spent on a specific topic by an MSL. Alongside the time spent in the field, it becomes interesting as well to ensure there is a visibility on the percentage of time spent discussing with KOLs versus internal teams. In most companies, an integral part of Medical is to educate the team, and the progress of this activity should be reflected within the reporting instance.

When looking at the Market Access function, managers are mainly interested in the team coverage on the various authorities and hospitals. They have a key interest in knowing whether their team members are focusing on the right hospitals and most appropriate stakeholders in general. Some additional time reporting would enable the MA function to know whether they spend enough time preparing for calls and planning appropriately.

Finally, they are interested in the analysis of account coverage along with different applied segmentation dimensions. An example from a company having products on tenders was to ensure all the pharmacists characterized as ‘buyers’ were covered on a regular basis, while all the pharmacists segmented as part of a tender committee should be viewed two to three times during the three months, before the tender was issued.

Ad Hoc Reporting as a BI Strategizing Factor

Once the end-users have become accustomed to the reporting interface, they will start looking at new ways to analyze the data in place. That’s where the ad hoc reporting tools become key. Most of the BI tools today have a native way of extracting the data. A first step should therefore be to analyze if there is a reporting data gap. The solution should encapsulate the necessary reporting needs so customization, and add-ons are limited once the system has gone live. Lots of end-users seem to ask for ad hoc analysis capabilities within the BI tool and it is a governance question whether to enable this option or not.

Providing this freedom to the end-user will satisfy specific needs for him/her and these people may end up with spending a lot of time searching for data points to calculate their bonuses while not doing calls. Providing just the standard reporting would ensure that end-users will focus on the right metrics and spend the time needed in the field. The insights that can be applied to multiple markets should be built into the BI tool itself. On the other hand, the end-users may apply the data in novel ways that could reveal new insights from a customer perspective, unleashing the real value of business intelligence.

Medical users are far less interested in the number of calls performed. They are looking for much more qualitative insights rather than quantitative, checking e.g. that medical inquiries have been fulfilled. Enabling ad hoc reporting may simply not provide that much value for Medical. On the other hand, the risk is as well limited. It will therefore be a specific assessment from the company balancing value and risks.

If the workforce is well trained, MSLs can crunch data in insightful ways to ensure that the right content is provided to HCPs at the right time. Besides traditional measures of KOL coverage, this would yield new reports focus on the content leading to positive reactions from HCPs.

Market Access functions may be a function where it is more difficult to define the right standard reporting needs and capabilities. For some product stage, it would be interesting to track the formulary status while for other products, tender management coverage would be interesting. That inherent nature of requirements makes it hard to define the proper needs. Letting the end-users decide the reports to use may be the most fulfilling option.

Improving Management Decision Making

For senior leaders, the important reporting aspects are related to sales and whether the team has an impact on the level of sales. Management should essentially be capable of comparing the various team impacts, the positioning of the company towards its competition and the uptake of products. This would probably be a top down approach where the leadership team has a common aligned way of looking at the reporting insights.

Cross-functional Transparency as Catalyst for Future Success

The culmination of achieving all or some of the above-mentioned points should be a vast improvement in the 360-degree journey and return on investment. Tailoring the right insights and disciplines across the Customer Experience workspace (Sales, Medical and Market Access) and bind these together in a transparent manner will pave the way towards enhanced decision-making in a growing digital environment.

Turning away from silo-structured specific reporting BI tools and entities towards a wider cross-functional deployment can help companies to ensure that tactical and strategic business activities are tightly aligned with the business objectives.

In combination with mutual, controlled orchestration, providing the necessary insights and reporting that can create an indication and ensure transparency on the way functions work and interact is key for creating the 360-degree view that has become essential in today's and the future's CRM.

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