

AstraZeneca

Positioning new drugs to maximise global appeal

In April 2007, Standard and Poor's gave AstraZeneca a strong credit rating, explaining that their "top products are expected to continue delivering impressive performance." They added that their rating reflected the group's "excellent business profile" and was "underpinned by a well-balanced drug portfolio and superior cash flow generation." They were also awarded 'Business in the Community Big Tick Award' in 2005 and 2006, awarded for excellence in the way they organise and integrate responsible business practices, and show a positive impact on business and society.

The Problem

Pharmaceutical companies operate in an increasingly competitive environment with the cost of R&D skyrocketing, legal regulations tightening, and the growing presence of the generic drug industry. Clinical phases consist of several stages and the average drug takes 12 years to develop with only one in 10,000 molecules screened being approved by the regulator. Also, since patent life includes the time it takes to get approved by a regulating body, by the time the drug is actually ready for market there might only be a few years of exclusive rights left to sell that drug. The total cost of bringing a new drug to market can be over \$800m. When AstraZeneca successfully developed a new drug that performed well in trials and was given approval, it was crucial that their marketing strategy was right.

Our Strategy

- Gain superior insights into physicians' decision making processes when prescribing anticoagulants, more specifically, physicians' needs or concerns on both a rational and emotional level.
- Create an enduring differentiation between the recently withdrawn Exanta and AZD0837.
- Deep dive with patients and physicians: exploring their combined mental models, wishes, hopes and fears for the future. This is to develop a set of possible futures where the market is going and future positioning gaps.
- Exploring trends and scenarios: presenting the futures back to the experts, and obtaining their reactions and feedback.

Our Solution

We have shown AstraZeneca significant evidence of which aspects of particular drugs will hold most appeal for those prescribing and using them, how to position and communicate different drugs to convey their strengths, and maximise compliance on both a rational and emotional level. We also showed physical examples to our client to demonstrate how our ideas would work in practice.

"Your work gave us access to new thinking, more powerful insights than we had hoped for when we started." – AstraZeneca

