

Achieving Commercial Success with an IQVIA Field Sales Team

European biopharma company engages IQVIA to support re-entry to U.S. market

Situation

A European biopharma company was preparing to relaunch a product in the United States. The company had no local infrastructure and plans called for hiring only a handful of full-time employees. To meet its commercial goals, the company needed a partner that could help quickly create a strong presence throughout the U.S with an outsourced field sales team.

Challenge

The European company needed to deploy a highly effective, high-performing sales team at speed. The organization's needs spanned every aspect of field sales commercial operations: training, technology, and fleet management, as well as supporting processes, such as incentive compensation planning and expense management.

In addition to the infrastructure challenges, the company was relaunching into a declining market for branded therapies. The sales team would be selling against a regular generic.

No one could have predicted what the team would face two years later: unexpected disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic and high turnover from the cross-industry "Great Resignation" that followed.

Solution

Tapping into operational excellence expertise and robust data resources, IQVIA helped the company dissect its challenges and design the right field sales team.



The company also counted on IQVIA's full suite of operational capabilities – including staffing, project leadership, sales training, healthcare provider target segmentation, incentive compensation, market access, and sales force automation technology.

IQVIA completed initial deployment of the 52-person field sales team in just 12 weeks. From there, IQVIA used data and analytics to continually improve the composition of the team. During the four-year partnership, the IQVIA-powered commercial team grew to include six managers supporting 62 outside sales representatives and four inside sales representatives.

For the IQVIA team, the initial focus was promoting the branded treatment. Thanks to their high level of flexibility, the team was later asked to support the launch of three additional products: an authorized generic and two treatments, also facing significant non-branded competition, in a different therapeutic area.

RAPID PIVOT TO REMOTE ENGAGEMENT

Two years into the commercial deployment, the COVID-19 pandemic presented unexpected challenges. The European company initially considered dramatic reductions in the U.S. sales force. But IQVIA provided an alternate strategy – remote engagement – to maintain promotional presence and strong growth without compromising employee or public safety.

The pivot to full remote detailing included a new training curriculum for remote engagement, as well as an intensive communication plan to support collaboration. The team also adapted key performance indicators to reflect the new selling model and used IQVIA's data and analytics to finetune the redeployment.

Results

Leveraging IQVIA infrastructure, data, and analytics proved to be the right strategic decision for this biopharma organization. The collaboration enabled the company to be highly agile in the face of ongoing challenges – from COVID-19 restrictions and heavy turnover to increased threats from generic products.

No matter the challenge, the IQVIA team applied a wealth of resources and experience to identify and execute workable solutions.

These efforts paid off. The company exceeded sales goals in all four years of the partnership – including the period of significant disruption due to COVID-19 restrictions. In fact, the initial launch product has achieved quarter-over-quarter growth with both specialists and primary care physicians. And while the market for the first therapeutic area was achieving growth of just 0.1%, the IQVIA team supported overall growth for the brand of 20% year over year.

This success demonstrates the power of using data to inform a commercial strategy and having the right people, with the right infrastructure, to execute it.