



CASE STUDY

Credibility's Competitive Advantage

How a Niche Healthcare Company Bolstered its Payer communications to Overcome Barriers to Access

For healthcare companies, launching a truly unique product can be both a blessing and curse. While filling an unmet patient need is the ultimate goal, overcoming a lack of recognition among payers can be a seemingly insurmountable obstacle.

Just ask one rare-disease-focused healthcare company, which experienced this hurdle firsthand when launching a first-of-its-kind healthcare product. The key to overcoming this hurdle was, quite simply, credibility.

Scenario

When going to market in March 2020, the new healthcare company's leadership team knew that its product—no matter how much patients needed it—would face barriers to access due to a lack of recognition. Since there was nothing else like it on the market, payers didn't know how to classify and reimburse it. To get ahead of this problem and educate payers, the company sent out press releases and conducted email outreach, but their efforts were in vain.

"We realized that we didn't have share of voice with the payers," said the company's VP of market access. "We tried more mainstream communications but, quite frankly, they weren't coming from 'credible' sources. Our message was falling on deaf ears."

Adding to the obstacles, the company launched its product at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, so the sales team was forced to quickly—and unexpectedly—shift to virtual meetings and digital engagement. Plus, patients with this condition weren't going in to see their HCPs, which meant that the entire sales process was being drawn out. Instead of the typical 10- to 14-day sales cycle, it sometimes took up to 60 days for a physician to write a script and a payer to reimburse the product.

"We recognized that people didn't know about our product as much as they should—and the pandemic didn't help when it came to getting the word out—so it was taking longer at every step of the process."

Solution

Fortunately, one of the company's consulting partners had worked with RJ Health before and recommended its payer communication offering. From there, the RJ Health team partnered with the company to decide on and develop the right communication.

"For us, it felt like a turnkey project—it was a tremendously light lift on our side," said the VP. "We were given a project manager and sat on a one-hour call to discuss the product and what we were trying to get done. RJ Health held our hand throughout it all and did most of the work."

After creating the content, RJ Health also worked with the company to personalize the list of recipients. In addition to sending the communication out to RJ Health's well-regarded list of payer recipients, it was important to the company to target additional contacts from regional Blues plans, along with a handful of key contacts at specialty pharmacies.

Also, according to the VP, another key benefit of the program was the performance data. The RJ Health team regularly sent data on who opened the email, who engaged with it, how it fared compared to other communications, and more.

"To me, the word that I go back to is credibility," said the VP. "Having a very professional communication sent out by a recognized and respected company like RJ Health helped build credibility among our customers. The RJ Health communication was a means of opening doors."

Success

Once the communication was deployed, the healthcare company's sales team had much more success booking meetings with payers and educating them on their unique product. The leadership team also received encouraging feedback from recipients.

"The communication was so professional that we got comments from people thinking it came from the government because it was so clean and easy to read."

With this initial launch in the rearview mirror, the healthcare company plans to work with RJ Health again for its next product launch.

"It was all about making sure we had the right communication going to the right people so they could access the right information," said the VP. "We looked at other companies to do the same thing, but we found that RJ Health was rare and special in the fact that it is credible and professional, and they came highly recommended by people we respect in the industry."

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