

**'Cello's ensemble approach allows us to provide knowledge for the client that moves from observation to implementation'**



## Insight: Sounding the right note with Cello

Over the past decade, techniques drawn from the consumer sector helped analyse the pharmaceutical market in unsurpassed detail and with unprecedented accuracy. But the ways in which consumer companies use market research remain several steps ahead of their pharmaceutical counterparts. Richard Gilmore, Chairman of Insight Research Group and Managing Partner of Cello Group (pictured left), believes that many approaches used by consumer companies could boost pharmaceutical sales. "Insight has built its success on project teams that bring together diverse skills and expertise," he told *PharmaTimes* Magazine. "This is now extended beyond to encompass the knowledge in other Cello businesses."

### An ensemble approach

Insight was one of the three founder companies of the Cello Group, formed in 2004, which now includes such well-known businesses as: Insight and The MSI Consultancy, both specialists in healthcare; Leapfrog which focuses on fast-moving consumer goods; RS Consensus and mruk, working mainly in the business-to-business and public sector; and brand specialists The Value Engineers. Cello's 11 member companies serve clients as diverse as the National Health Service and Pfizer, Visa and Grolsch, the BBC and Orange. "Traditionally, market research painted a picture of the landscape," says Gilmore. "Increasingly, market research companies integrate those observations into strategies that engage the customer and modify behaviour. Cello's ensemble approach allows us to provide knowledge for the client that moves from observation to implementation."

"The Cello approach still maintains client choice. Few market

research or brand managers believe in the one-stop-shop," adds Viv Farr, an Insight Director. "One agency, either a Cello member or another organisation, may characterise the emotional issues associated with the brand. Another, such as Target, also a Cello member, may deliver to specific customer groups using direct mailing. Meanwhile, TMI inspires change by engaging the salesforce and other employees with the aims of their organisation. After all, people deliver the sales."

Gilmore stresses, however, that they are not trying to 'cross sell' or pressurise clients to work with other Cello businesses. "Insight will still own the problem and provide what it was asked to do, but its deliverables are now more relevant and useful because of the added value gained from exposure to the Cello Group," he says.

Cello's commitment to client choice means that member companies sometimes compete directly for the same account. For example, The Value Engineers recently went head-to-head with Leapfrog. The Value Engineers develops a brand internally and hones it with market research. Leapfrog takes the more traditional approach of performing the research first and then developing the brand. Both approaches work, but the outcome, style and culture differ. The client decides.

### A collaborative approach

As this suggests, Cello's collaborative approach allows each of the 11 companies to maintain an individual brand and culture. "People work for, and clients engage, consultancies for a number of reasons," Farr adds. "But it often comes down to people. People still sell to, and work for, people. So we don't want to lose those individual identities." Furthermore, each member of Cello has a »



strong reputation within its sector. "We'd lose a lot of the value it's taken years to build up if we just merged into one organisation," Sue Rees, Insight Director says. After all, it wouldn't say much for a marketing consultancy that did not maximise the strengths of its own brands.

Cello's collaborative approach also allows individual members to 'punch above their weight'. Leapfrog drew on the expertise and support of other members of Cello to gain a massive market research contract with Tesco, as well as an internal project for the NHS. Leapfrog lacked the physical size to manage either project alone, but working with other Cello members gave it the critical mass in terms of size and expertise to deliver. Insight delivered a more useful project on patient communications by getting advice from charities specialist, Target Direct.

#### Learning from the consumer sector

Market research has changed markedly over the past 10 years. "Market research in the pharmaceutical sector has become much more sophisticated," says Philip Dunn, Insight's Consumer Director. "There's not as much difference between the market research approaches used by the consumer and pharmaceutical sector as there used to be."

Nevertheless, pharmaceutical companies can still benefit from applications pioneered by consumer companies. For example, Insight has considerable experience and expertise in measuring and improving pharmaceutical salesforce effectiveness. One detail follow-up study suggested that doctors felt the representatives didn't believe in the product and consultations with the salesforce confirmed that they didn't buy the company line. So Insight asked TMI for ideas on how to ensure brand engagement. "This is a new approach for pharmaceutical companies, but it is widely used in other sectors," says Anne Cunningham, Director, Insight Associates. Nevertheless, the flow from consumer to the pharmaceutical sector works both ways. Insight pioneered 'Tri-Sight', which produces a 'three-dimensional' view of interactions. This is now used in other Cello businesses.

Furthermore, pharmaceutical companies increasingly need to identify and market to specific segments, such as primary care trusts or small groups of GPs and consultants. Gilmore believes that the pharmaceutical sector could use new media to 'micro-market' more effectively and learn from the successful e-marketing

campaigns employed by consumer organisations to encourage brand engagement. Indeed, Gilmore predicts that, increasingly, representatives will have less of a directly promotional role and act more as a conduit to encourage doctors to go to the website or other 'information centre'.

#### Pioneering word of mouth campaigns

Another approach pioneered by the Cello consumer sector (such as drinks companies who are banned from many traditional advertising vehicles) depends on innovative, even experimental, campaigns to engender interest and a feeling, among the target population, of 'insider knowledge'. Through word of mouth, the campaign reaches a 'tipping point' and demand sweeps through the target population. "Among healthcare professionals, approval from local peers and key opinion leaders is more influential in determining brand engagement than either representatives or advertising," Natasha Barretto, an Insight Director, notes. "A more sophisticated approach to dissemination by 'word of mouth' is ripe for use in the pharmaceutical sector."

Gilmore also believes that pharmaceutical market research needs to examine the 'unknown unknowns' in more detail than is often the case. "The most interesting insights and valuable approaches often emerge at the margins. So you need to look at everything to cover things you haven't anticipated," he says. "If a company is going into an area for five or 10 years it needs to know as much as possible about the market and stay in touch with the customers."

Again, approaches pioneered in the consumer sector can help: confectionary companies, for example, often use customer panels to maintain an 'ongoing dialogue' with the changing views of a brand and the market issues. This means going beyond the simple key opinion leader advisory board approach, which isn't usually used for market research.

As you might expect from a leading marketing consultancy, Cello is a fitting name. The cello is a solo instrument in chamber music, and an integral element of a larger orchestra. It has been used by composers as diverse as JS Bach, to the grunge band Nirvana, and it is capable of covering the entire range of pitches of the human voice. Like its namesake, Cello is also equipped to provide the full range. **By PT Chief Writer Mark Greener**

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Insight has built its success on project teams that bring together diverse skills and expertise