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# QUALITATIVE SEGMENTATION LEADS TO MORE PRODUCTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

LISA RONER, EDITOR

Classic targeting and segmentation approaches have served the industry well, but Katrine Bach of Agnitio says qualitative segmentation, or profiling, should replace more quantitative approaches, giving pharma a closer and more productive relationship with its most important customers.

“The whole idea of profiling is that we’re able to think in a completely differentiated, personalized manner, meaning that segmentation ultimately can be taken all the way down to a one-to-one,” says Bach. “Profiling allows us to narrow down our customers in order to provide improved message delivery.”

State of the art in pharma today is what Bach calls “tactical segmentation,” which is a mix of potential and adoption. And now many companies, she says, are trying to add qualitative aspects, such as motivation and view of who the physician is and what is personally important to them.

“It’s all about messages and how you speak to individuals,” she says. “With profiling, you try to understand triggers, where they come from and the areas of interest of a particular person. And that can lead us to a much more adaptive and personalized presentation that allows us to speak more directly to a given individual’s triggers.”

Customers can fall into three basic “quality” categories: virtues, rules and consequences, Bach says. In other words people are driven by (1) what’s right (e.g. you hurt someone else because it’s not the right thing to do), (2) what is deemed by society to be right (e.g. you don’t hurt someone else because the law says you mustn’t) and (3) what is calculated to be right (e.g. you don’t hurt someone else unless they’re threatening to harm you or yours).

“So the whole idea of profiling is to take that information about what drives people, fold it into our segmentation and use it to narrow our approach even further and make it much more a part of our conversations,” she says. “Doing so improves call quality, methods of delivery, message recall – everything really that leads the physician along the path of knowledge that helps him decide on a product.”

Agnitio’s platform, Bach says, allows marketers to build sales support presentations that take all of the unique features of the product (benefits, issues, and the consequences of those issues), sorts them into a matrix (including an argumentation flow per key message or profile) and helps reps associate the

right presentation and messages to the right customer, using the profiling classes the tool provides.

Today’s media can be completely interactive and very rich and mature, allowing for the capture of more detailed information, particularly with regard to physician profiles, Bach says. Agnitio uses various profiling interactions, often in the form of a “spider-web” asking what is important to the physician, enabling reps to deliver the right messages and sequence for strength in their presentations.

“A physician needs to feel each time he has a discussion with a rep that they’re talking about things that are of interest to him and that he’s getting quality back – that the rep is more of a service provider than a sales person – a true partner” she says.

The approach also brings greater value to marketing, Bach says.

“Everything happening in front of the physician was a black box before,” she says. “Now, we’re capturing information about the interactions, including length of call, time spent on each key message and an instant impression of message compliance, quality and use of materials. You can identify materials that are being skipped or that are particularly helpful. Having that kind of qualitative data to add to the quantitative metrics gives us a richness we just haven’t achieved before.”

Last but certainly not least, Bach says qualitative segmentation brings value to reps.

“This kind of platform gives reps a central role in the organization as a partner to the physician and to marketing,” she says. “When you’re providing that kind of value, you see value yourself in your job. In addition, there are direct benefits of the communication facilitated by the media, including automation of many of a rep’s call reporting duties.”

To contact Bach, email her at [kb@agnitio.com](mailto:kb@agnitio.com)

To learn more about the benefits of qualitative segmentation, be sure to attend the Agnitio lunch time workshop on March 3rd at eyeforpharma’s upcoming Sales Force Effectiveness Europe 2009 in Barcelona.