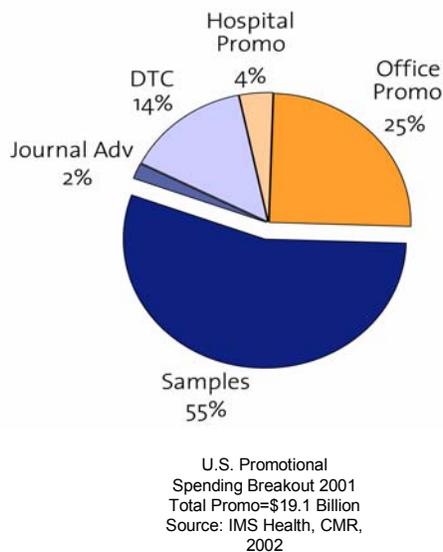


Reprint

Intelligent Online Sampling Strategies

By John Mack

For pharmaceutical marketers, sampling is the single largest promotional investment, accounting for 55 percent of the \$19.1 billion spent on promotion in 2001 (see FIGURE below). It's no wonder—efficiently expanding sample coverage has been shown to drive significant new prescription growth with impressive ROI.



New online strategies have made eSampling a tool for significantly expanding targeted physician and sample coverage. Applications include accelerating new product uptake, efficiently maintaining physician coverage for mature brands, covering hard to reach physicians and driving patient demand.

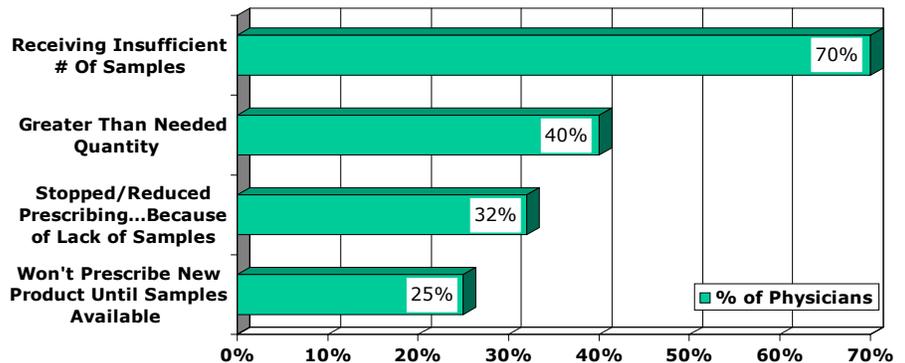
This article summarizes a workshop presentation made by Mark Gleason, Managing Partner, HyGro Group, Inc. at CBI's 3rd annual eMarketing for Pharmaceuticals conference held March 25-26, 2004 in Philadelphia, PA. Gleason shared data from new

studies on physician attitudes toward online sample ordering and provided insights on how to reach this untapped market potential through expanding sampling for both physicians and patients.

Samples Drive Rx's

After reps, samples are the most influential tool affecting prescriber behavior, according to a meta-analysis of 16 studies reported in JAMA (Wanzana; see FIGURE at bottom). In one published study, 55% of physicians acknowledged that drug samples influenced their prescribing (Shaughnessy *et al*).

According to a study by ZS Consulting (Physician Surveys, 2/02 Report; n = 215), drug samples are an essential practice tool:



- Samples are an integral part of enabling office based practices to have satisfied customers:
 - 88% of samples are distributed to patients
- Samples enable physicians to medicate patients who otherwise may not receive treatment
 - 29% of samples distributed go to indigent patients
 - 13% of samples distributed go to the elderly

Samples: The Reps' "Currency"?

Pharmaceutical marketers have traditionally viewed samples as "currency" to help reps gain access to physicians. After all, they have to sign for the samples don't they? Unfortunately the growing competition for physician attention appears to have eroded the effectiveness of samples as an access tool. IMS Health's sample tracking has found that only 36 percent of samples are actually delivered by a rep in-person. The majority of samples, 54 percent, are distributed via service visits without seeing a doctor.

online sampling systems that expand prescriber coverage."

The Internet Sample Expansion Strategy

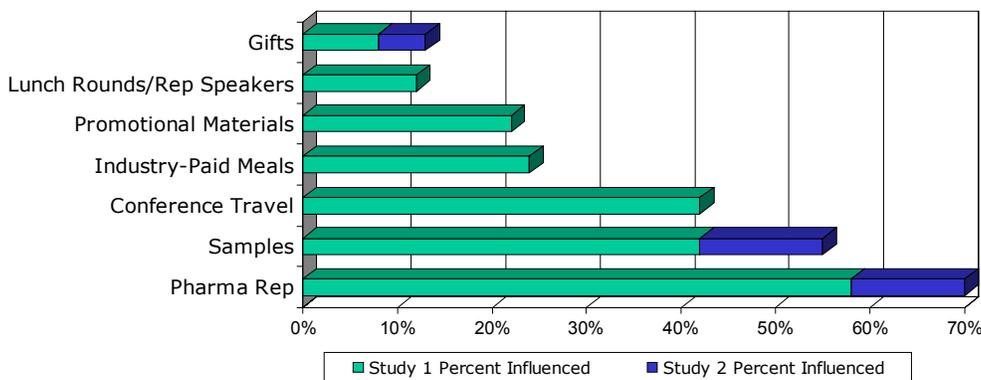
Physician use of the Internet is virtually ubiquitous – 90 or more percent of physicians use the Internet according to sources such as Verispan and Manhattan Research. Physicians view the Internet as a valuable information source. According to a Manhattan Research study, the Internet is rated as significantly more credible than detail reps and at about parity with medical symposia (see CHART).

Also, physicians using the Internet rate it very highly on timeliness, comprehensiveness and having the latest information on drugs and therapy.

The opportunity for reaching mid-tier and low-tier prescribers through the Internet, therefore, is there for the taking. All that is required is to leverage a scalable technology platform and channel partners to access MD's and deliver promotional services (e.g. sampling, educational materials).

Pharmaceutical Marketing Influence on Prescribing Behavior

% of Physicians Reporting Rx Influence



Percent of Physicians Dissatisfied with Sampling (Source: Sawaya)

"The industry is doing a very poor job servicing physicians with samples," according to Gleason. "Physicians are dissatisfied with sample delivery and it affects their prescribing." A survey of physicians has shown that 91 percent were dissatisfied with the current supply of drug samples (Journal of General Internal Medicine, July 2000). Erratic supplies have a significant impact on prescribing behavior (see CHART).

Samples are an important rep tool. Without sampling, according to an Accel Report ("Through Our Customers' Eyes," 2003), MDs indicated they would reduce access to <10% of representatives who call.

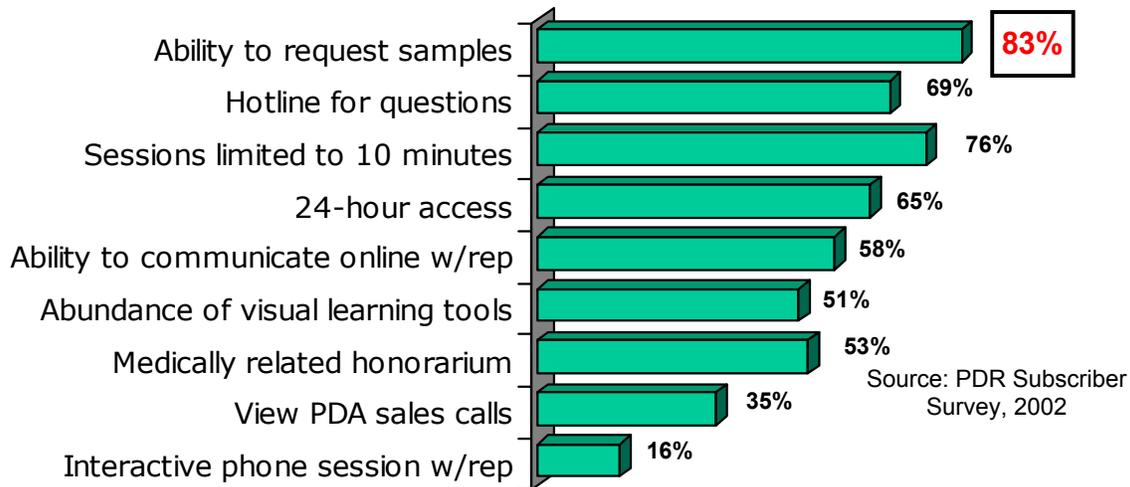
Nevertheless, with the average estimated cost of \$142 for an office-based physician call (Scott-Levin RAPP Study Report, 2002), the economics of sample delivery through service calls is very expensive. "As a consequence," says Gleason, "pharmacos can't afford to have the head count to reach middle and low tier prescribing physicians. 'No see' and uncovered physicians, white territories, efficiently reached online could be a very profitable eMarketing opportunity," claims Gleason. "Today, technology offers intelligent

	Timely	Latest info Rx & therapy	Credible	Comprehensive
Journals	75%	82%	97%	79%
Internet	89%	89%	70%	82%
Pharma Symposia	58%	82%	67%	52%
Detail Reps	55%	81%	44%	44%

Percent of Physicians Rating Services Good or Excellent (Source: Manhattan Research Physician Health Media Study, June 2002)

PDR.net and eSampling

One major physician channel that has embraced e-sampling is Thomson PDR, which has formed a marketing alliance with MedManage Systems to offer its PDR® Sample Service to physicians through the PDR web site (www.PDR.net). MedManage provides the e-sampling platform for the PDR service.

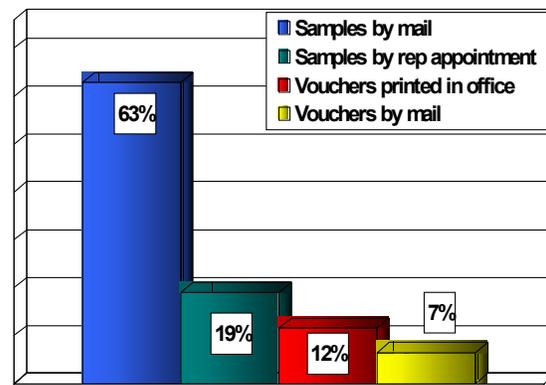


"For pharmaceutical companies, the coupling of PDR credibility, resources and broad reach with drug sample availability is a natural and powerful marketing strategy," said David Duplay, executive vice president, Thomson PDR. "PDR Sample Service is a significant addition to our value-added solutions that integrate with the physician workflow."

According to Duplay, PDR's annual survey of over 500,000 subscribers "found that 83 percent of physicians want PDR to offer online sample ordering on PDR.net." (see CHART). Overall, approximately 7,000 physicians are regular users of the service since it was launched in the fourth quarter of 2003.

PDR works with its pharma clients to target specific physicians for allocation of samples. PDR.net can do this because they have over 200,000 registered physicians and can authenticate physicians by using a number of qualifying criteria including the physician's DEA number. Through this authentication process, PDR can be sure that physicians only receive samples appropriate for their area of practice.

PDR.net offers both "live samples" and vouchers through its online sampling solution. Using the voucher option, a physician prints sample vouchers to hand to his or her patients who take them to the pharmacy for fulfillment. "Vouchers," says Duplay, "are useful to keep costs down and bypass PDMA sample tracking requirements." However, An MD Consult survey found that physicians strongly prefer receiving live samples by mail versus other sample options (see CHART).



Source: MD Consult Survey

eDetailing and eSampling: Good Partners

E-detailing, which offers structured product information interactively online, is rapidly being adopted by physicians (see "Why Pharma Can't Ignore eDetailers," [PMN Reprint 29-01](#)). Based on high physician demand, PDR.net plans to offer e-detailing linked to e-sampling on its website in the near future. "Offering an e-sample followed by an e-detail is something our physicians have been asking us for as we move to further integrate technology into the practice of medicine," says Duplay.

According to Forrester Research Analyst Elizabeth W. Boehm, "Physicians are embracing online technology, so pharmaceutical marketers can—and should—embrace online physicians." It appears that e-sampling is a good way to accomplish this.

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