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Reprint Highlights from CBI's 2nd Annual eDetailing Conference, held September 18-19, 2003 in Princeton, New Jersey.

THE FUTURE OF E-DETAILING

By John Mack

During its pilot phase, eDetailing was a pay-for-performance promotional channel that product managers could use to reach physicians online. Now, some brands are beginning to discover eDetailing's true potential as a relationship management channel and as an integral part of the brand's marketing strategy.



David Ormesher

"The future of eDetailing is physician relationship management," said David Ormesher, CEO of Closerlook, inc. He was speaking at the Center for Business Intelligence's 2nd Annual eDetailing Conference, held September 18-19 in Princeton, New Jersey. "The benefits of creating long-term relationships include brand loyalty, detailed customer intelligence and sales integration with the field force," he added.

Limited Office Access to Physicians

According to data from a Health Strategies Group, Inc. study, 90% of traditional details are Drop-ins (unscheduled calls) or Sample checks during which the average time discussing products is 2 minutes or less. Even during more effective types of calls—scheduled calls and lunch meetings—the time devoted to discussing products is decreasing (see chart).

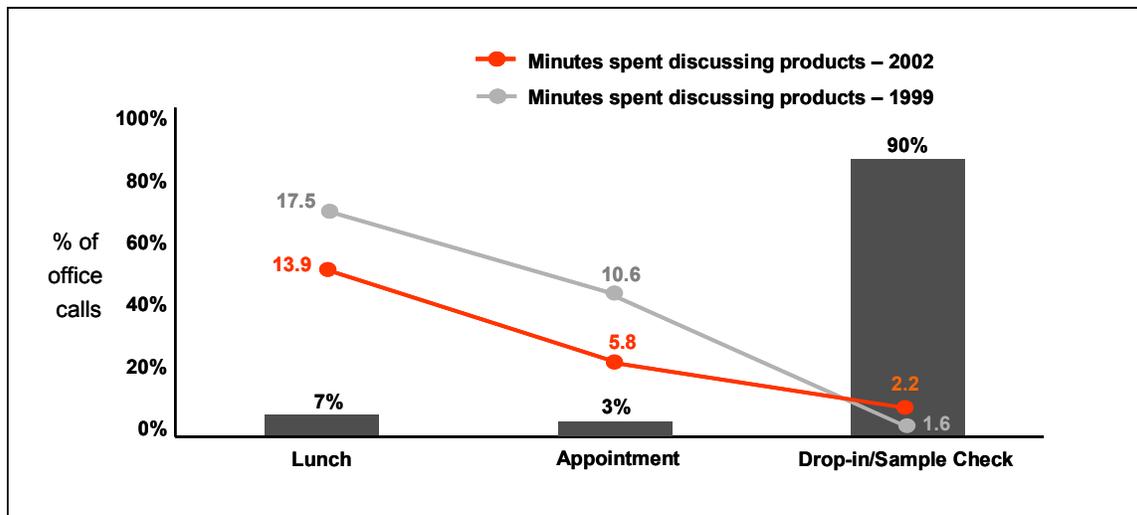


FIGURE: "Doorknob Details Study," 1999; *SFE Monitor* 2.2., May, 2002 (Health Strategies Group, Inc.).

Continues...

The busiest physicians may be the most difficult to schedule quality time with to discuss product details, yet these are the physicians most likely to use the Internet to seek medical information according to a Data Monitor Study published in February 2003 (see chart, below).

The TAP Experience

Sharad Bob Chib, Group Manager, Market Segments, TAP Pharmaceuticals, joined Ormesher in the presentation to discuss the Prevacid Interactive Information Program™, a two-year on-going physician relationship management program developed for TAP by Closerlook, inc.

The TAP program is an example of what Closerlook calls “Integrated eDetailing”, in which the goal is to promote products and optimize prescription sales while supporting long-term relationships with key customers. The program components include acquisition, authentication, profiling, promotional messaging, reporting and customer support.

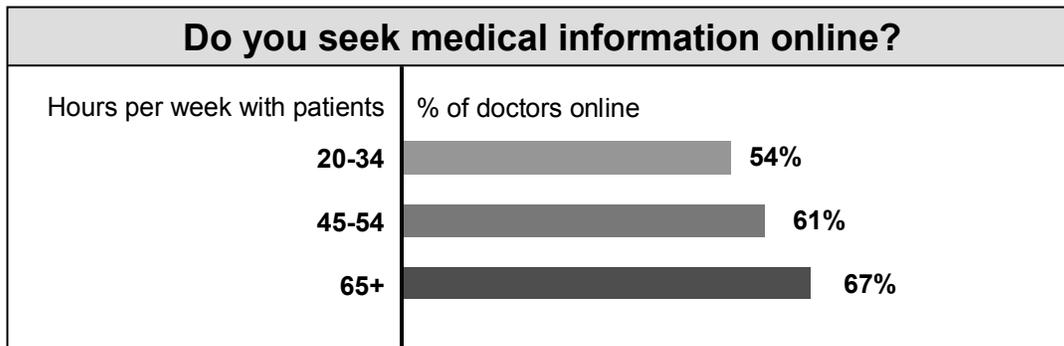
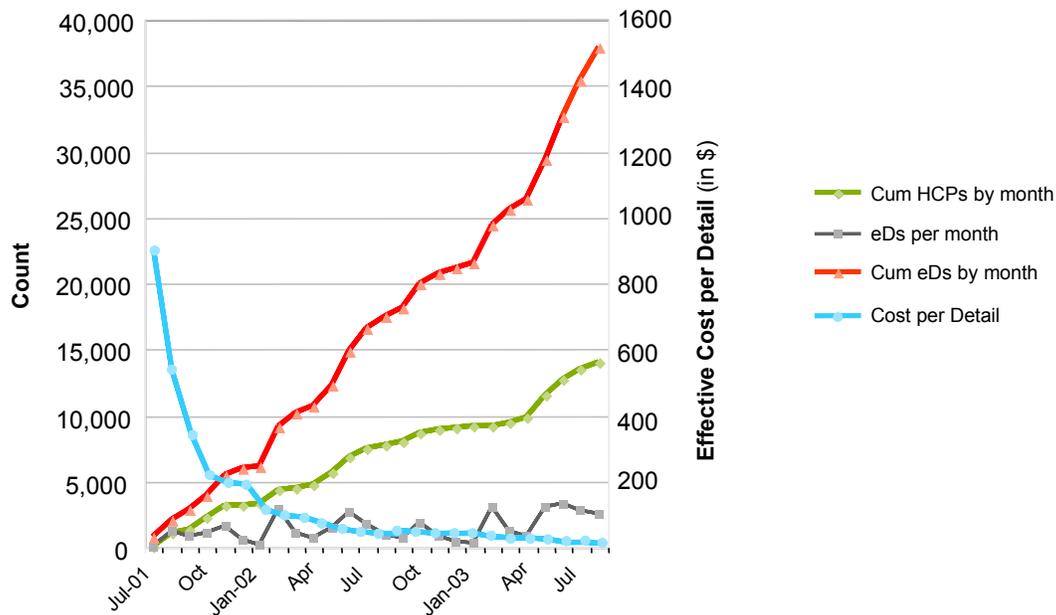


FIGURE: "Computing in the Physicians' Practice" (Datamonitot/Harris Interactive).

As the chart below demonstrates, the fixed price solution pays off with a very low effective cost per detail as a critical mass of physicians sign on and more edetails are presented. Acquisition and scaling, therefore, is important for a good ROI. Several acquisition channels—direct mail, permission email, managed care, sales reps, fax, banners—can be used to sign up physicians. The mix can be optimized depending upon enrollment rate per channel. Physician profiling and segmentation are also important to deliver the right message to the right physician.

The Honoraria Issue

Most eDetailing programs provide physicians with some kind of cash-equivalent honoraria for participating in an eDetailing program. This could be a \$25 certificate for a medical textbook, for example. Surveys have shown that honoraria are important to “eDetailed physicians” (see “Why Pharma Can’t Ignore eDetailers”, PMN29-02). Yet only 50%-60% of textbook coupons are redeemed!



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The Virtuous Circle

The TAP program currently reaches over 14,000 physicians, 33% of which are classified as "hard-to-see." Seventy-four percent (74%) have requested an appointment with a sales representative, which supports the point that an eDetail can serve as a "pre call" for the sales representative and can enhance the call experience.

Integration of the sales rep into the eDetailing program closes the so-called "virtuous circle" consisting of the doc, the eDetail, and the sales rep. Sales reps are integrated into the TAP program via an email service that notifies the rep when one of their physician clients requests a call.

"Integration is key," states Ormesher. "As long as eDetailing remains an orphan tactic, its benefits will be limited. But when it's integrated into the larger family of brand marketing tactics, it becomes a valuable strategy that can optimize the effectiveness of the entire promotional mix."

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