

Service Review Reprint # 54-03

Managing Reprints for Better Clinical Support of Marketing

By John Mack

A 2004 ACNielsen survey revealed that 3 out of 4 (76.2 percent) of physicians identified medical journals as an important source of medical information, whereas only 46.5 percent identified pharmaceutical representatives as important. Articles published in peer-reviewed journals have a particularly high level of credibility among physicians. Pharmaceutical companies have long taken advantage of these facts to make sure that reprints from medical journals are an integral part of the sales and marketing process.

Reprints have become even more important as guidelines from the American Medical Association and PhRMA, the industry's trade association, require pharmaceutical companies to provide only medically relevant "gifts" to physicians. Reprints of medical journal articles fit the bill nicely.

Obviously, reprints of articles that summarize randomized clinical trials supporting the efficacy of a company's drug are very valuable tools in support of the marketing and sales of the product. Pharmaceutical companies are permitted to distribute, unsolicited, reprints to physicians as long as the information is within label, ie, for approved uses of the drug. For off-label articles, the physician must make a specific request, which is often fulfilled by medical affairs personnel rather than by reps.

Managing Reprints

Negotiating with publishers and managing the digital rights of reprints, however, is better left up to experts at service providers like Reprints Desk, a new company formed by content professionals with over 50 years of experience serving customers and publishers in healthcare.

"We see a trend within the pharmaceutical industry to rely more on information and evidenced-based marketing to influence their physician clients," says Peter Derycz, Founder of Reprints Desk. "Pharma's sales and marketing budgets are shifting a bit towards more content-oriented approaches. Reprints Desk was created to serve that need in the market."

"We are agnostic about how and when pharmaceutical companies should be using reprints," says

Derycz. "That's an opportunity or risk that pharmaceutical companies manage as they see necessary. Our expertise comes into play when it comes time to use a reprint, managing the copyright issues, delivery and other logistics. We want to make it easy for pharmaceutical companies to use journal reprints in their marketing, sales, and physician education efforts."

One-Stop Shop

"One of the challenges pharmaceutical companies face when they want to use reprints is the management of all the diverse requirements of multiple medical publishers they may want to work with," says Scott Ahlberg, Head of Sales & Marketing for Reprints Desk. "It's a potential morass." There is no standardization for processing reprint requests by publishers.

It is much simpler to work with one company that can handle all the company's reprint needs instead of working with a dozen or more publishers, paying multiple invoices, managing turnaround times, maintaining multiple points of contact, etc.

Reprints Desk is a one-stop shop for pharmaceutical companies to obtain reprints and copyright clearance to reproduce and distribute those reprints. Value-added services offered include:

- **Paper and Format:** Most reprints can be printed in the format and paper of choice—from stock paper replicating the original publication, to unique formats that will get the attention of the desired readers.
- **Customization:** Reprints can be customized with the pharmaceutical company or brand logo, to tie the 3rd party content back to the company and/or brand.
- **Article Delivery Solutions:** Getting the right number of reprints to the right place at the right time can be a challenge. Reprints Desk delivers reprints directly to the end users specified, or to a targeted list it creates.

Reprints Desk is also using its content management expertise and publisher relationships to develop services for archiving & tracking reprints, and alerting customers to new articles that may have value for marketing or medical affairs uses.

"We are the turnkey solution for the pharmaceutical company or for the agency tasked with providing reprints to physicians," says Ahlberg.

New Trend: ePrints

Today, publishers are faced with increased demand for electronic reprints from pharmaceutical companies. Some of this demand for ePrints—electronic reprints of published articles delivered via the Web or email alerts—is the result of increased use of eDetailing by pharmaceutical companies who wish to offer them as part of the eDetailing program, perhaps as an incentive. ePrints look like reprints, but they offer lower production costs and faster, cost-free distribution.

"Whatever the reason, we see a new trend in the distribution of reprints electronically by pharmaceutical companies," says Derycz. "This may be done through product Web sites, eDetail programs, or via intra and extranets."

Reprints Desk allows pharmaceutical clients to order a specific number of ePrints to be downloaded in PDF format. The pharmaceutical client doesn't have to worry about running out of ePrints because Reprints Desk monitors the number of downloads and alerts their clients when it is time to re-order.

Digital Rights Management – No Problem!

Publishers are concerned that massive redistribution and copying of electronic reprints will hurt their subscription revenues. Also, they are afraid that the content may be altered, which is a legitimate concern for publishers who are considered the official record of the world's scientific community. Consequently, publishers want more control over how reprints are used in the "e" universe.

"We created a service that prevents someone who has downloaded an ePrint from emailing copies of that file to ten other people," says Derycz. "Reprints Desk uses RapidRights from Cadmus ArticleWorks™ to deliver protected PDF files to customers."

RapidRights is a digital rights management (DRM) system designed specifically for publishers as a user-friendly solution for securing PDF files. Article Works can restrict an article to "view only," if a customer so chooses, ensuring that the article is used only for education purposes and not distributed either on paper or electronically.

The DRM protection offered through ArticleWorks works with the freely available Adobe Reader and does not require any other downloads or plug-in

applications. "Downloading and working with any plug-in software is a serious drag on user satisfaction for any online experience," contends Derycz. "While the actual use rights might vary from one article to the next, the key point here is that the user experience in accessing the article, and the customer experience in providing the access, is the same regardless of where the article was published."

Copyright Permissions Can Be a Hassle

There are also challenges with managing copyright and use rights of reprints, especially when it comes to ePrints. "Aside from offering a one-stop solution, we differentiate ourselves regarding use rights and copyright management," says Derycz.

Copyright permissions can be obtained for unique uses of articles, like course packs, promotional mailings, conference handouts, or almost any article re-use. Reprints Desk has relationships with numerous publishers, and the experience to locate and negotiate with any rightsholder to ensure that copyright is cleared.

"We also offer a custom permission service for clients who want to use copyrighted content for custom use such as on a hybrid intranet/extranet for Medical Science Liaisons and Key Opinion Leaders," says Derycz. "Our custom permission service leverages our knowledge of copyright and functions as a bridge between publishers and our clients to obtain rights for custom uses."

Knowledge, Experience, Resources

Managing reprints—whether in print or electronically—is a task best left to experts like the people at Reprints Desk who know how to locate rightsholders and can determine what the options are for re-use of published content. The Reprints Desk team has years of experience licensing high value content from publishers around the world and draws upon relationships with top publishers to get a response to pharmaceutical clients' licensing needs quickly.

Pharma Marketing News



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