

Service Review Reprint # 57-02

Relationship Marketing via eNutrition

The ForMyDiet Platform

By John Mack

According to the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), having a healthy diet is one of the most important things you can do for your overall health. Poor diet and physical inactivity are among the most important factors contributing to several life-threatening problems, including diabetes and obesity, both of which are treatment areas currently receiving significant attention from the pharmaceutical industry.

But for some people, maintaining a special diet is crucial to their health and well-being. According to recent studies, people who suffer from Type 2 Diabetes can benefit greatly by maintaining a special diet high in fiber and low in fat. Phenylketonuria (PKU), a rare hereditary condition in which the amino acid phenylalanine is not properly metabolized, requires strict compliance to a diet that is extremely low in phenylalanine to prevent or minimize mental retardation. A host of other medical conditions also require special diets (see Box). Millions of people suffer from one or more of these conditions, requiring treatment with prescription medicines or injectables.

"Pharmaceutical companies that market treatments for conditions requiring diet management can provide educational and value added tools as a featured aspect of their marketing campaigns," said Ami Assayag, CEO, Specialty Diets, Inc., developer of the web-based medical diet management platform ForMyDiet™.

eNutrition Platform

Specialty Diets offers eNutrition technology that benefits product companies, health professionals, patients, and caregivers. By providing a value added applications to both the treating physicians and their targeted patient communities, Specialty Diets enables pharmaceutical companies to build a lasting and trusted relationship with their customers.

The ForMyDiet Platform is an integrated web-based platform that includes online diet disorder content, patient community tools, and e-commerce for sponsoring company products, as well as ad-

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Medical Conditions Requiring Special Diets

There are over 100 million diabetics in the world today, and the number is predicted to double by 2010, to 221 million, according to the British Medical Journal. In the U.S. there are over 20 million people with chronic kidney disease, 69 million obese people, and 24 million people with heart disease. All of these people could benefit from special diets as an adjunct to medication and treatment.

The following is a list of other diseases or medical conditions for which special diets are indicated.

- Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis
- Celiac Disease
- Chronic Constipation
- Crohn's Disease/Ulcerative Colitis
- Cystic Fibrosis
- Diabetes
- Diverticulum/Diverticulitis
- Dysphagia/Swallowing or Mastication Difficulties
- Food Allergies (e.g., Eggs, Milk/Dairy or Lactose Intolerance, Soya, Wheat)
- Gout
- Heart Disease
- Hepatic Disorders
- HIV/AIDS (wasting)
- Hyperlipidemia
- Hypertension
- Hypercholesterolemia
- Kidney Disease
- Liver Failure
- Macrocytic Anemia
- Malabsorption
- Malignancy
- Marasmus (or Kwashiorkor or Anorexia)
- Microcytic Anemia
- Obesity
- Osteoporosis/Osteomalacia/Osteopenia
- Phenylketonuria (PKU)
- Pancreatic Insufficiency
- Renal Failure
- Short Bowel Syndrome

vanced diet management and healthcare professional applications that can set apart any pharmaceutical or clinical nutrition company from its competition.

The ForMyDiet Platform:

- Enables companies to build long-term, positive relationships with providers and consumers.
- Improves the quality of life of individuals with chronic disorders.
- Improves the ability of healthcare professionals to care for their patients.



FIGURE 1: ForMyDiet Platform Bridges Pharmaceutical Companies to Consumers and Healthcare Providers.

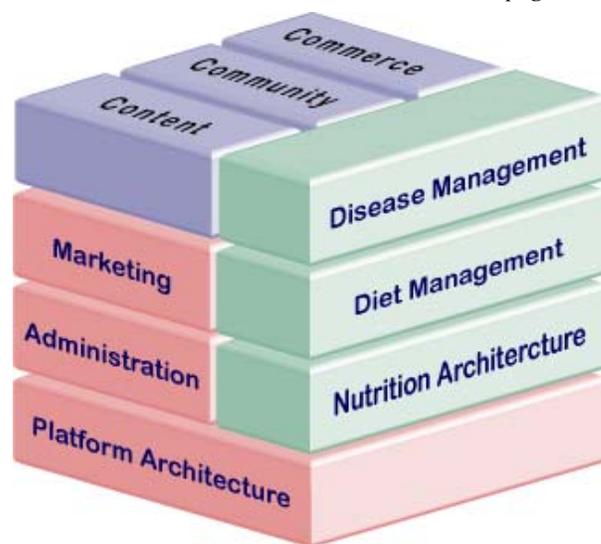
“Our platform allows pharmaceutical companies to build a long-term relationship with health professionals and patients,” says Assayag, “This privately branded relationship marketing platform allows effective targeting of individuals suffering from chronic disorders who need to actively manage their diet to ensure quality of life and prevent medical complications.”

“My patients keep records of their diet as they have in the past, but now they are securely entering their intake online,” says Bibina J. Varughese, a Registered Dietitian and member of the American Dietetic Association. “The platform contains thousands of foods and allows patients to add other foods as needed. The ForMyDiet platform also allows patients to receive automatic emails notifying them if they are consuming too much or too little of a particular nutrient. The healthcare professional portion of the application gives me the ability to view patients’ laboratory results and prescribed diet requirements in one place. This allows me to make faster and more accurate decisions about a patients’ diet”

MySpecialDiet.com

In October, 2005, Specialty Diets licensed MySpecialDiet.com, a privately branded version of the ForMyDiet Platform, which included a database of several thousand registered users, to Royal Numico, a \$3 billion specialized nutritional products maker headquartered in Holland. SHS International, the metabolics division of Royal Numico, uses this eNutrition portal to target individuals managing their diet for medical purposes and their medical caregivers. While the MySpecialDiet.com site is a U.S. web site, Specialty Diets has also launched similarly branded sites for SHS in the U.K., Germany, France and Spain.

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SPECIALTY DIETS - PLATFORM MODULES OVERVIEW

- ◆ Architecture components include the platform administration and marketing:
 - Turnkey.
 - Privately Branded.
 - Secure.
 - HIPAA Compliant.
 - Integrated.
 - Web based.
 - Dynamic.
 - Multi-lingual.
- ◆ Nutrition components include both patient and healthcare professional applications.
- ◆ Portal components include the web’s 3 C’s – Content, Community, and Commerce.

According to Francis Rutjes, Direct Marketing Manager of Metabolics for SHS International, “The integrated platform that links healthcare providers to our customers is a key aspect of the program. We recognize that people rely on their healthcare providers to guide them to appropriate products. As consumers and their caregivers visit our site to use [diet management] tools, we now have the vehicle to communicate with them almost daily.”

In April, 2006, MySpecialDiet.com, won the Web Marketing Association Award for Outstanding Interactive application. In May, the site also won the 23rd Annual Healthcare Advertising Bronze Award in the Pharmaceutical/Medical Device category for Best Web Site. “It is always nice to be recognized for your efforts” notes Assayag. “This award is particularly satisfying because we competed against some of the largest advertising agencies in the world.” Assayag was also recently named to the PharmaVOICE 100 list of most inspiring people in the life sciences industry.

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“Our customers need to medically manage their diet in order to maintain health. We seized this as an opportunity by making it a core element of our interactive marketing strategy.

With [MySpecialDiet.com] we are now capable of communicating fresh, relevant messages on a continuous basis.”

– Francis Rutjes, Direct Marketing Manager of Metabolics for SHS International.



FIGURE 2: Privately-Branded web applications for relationship marketing and patient compliance (left).

FIGURE 3: Targeted marketing: Improved messaging via robust relationship marketing platform (right).

The advertisement for XPho Maximum drink includes the following text and elements:

- Product Name:** XPho Maximum drink
- Key Features:**
 - Finally, the convenience of a ready-to-drink, phenylalanine-free product.
 - A great addition to your daily PKU diet!
 - Single serve, on-the-go convenience is ideal for easier diet management and helps support diet normalization.
- Benefits:**
 - No measuring, no mixing, no mess
 - Lunch box and workplace friendly
 - Suitable for ages 5 through adult!
 - Provides 15 grams of protein equivalent
- Call to Action:** ACT NOW for Free Samples and Chance to Win 6-Month Supply!
- Table: Easy Addition to Your PKU Diet**

Product	One Maximum Drink Tetra Pak Replaces 15g Protein Equivalents
SHS	
XPho Maximum®	60g
LeuAde®	17.5g
LeuAde®	15g (includes 251.4g)
Phenyle®	1.8g
Phenyle®	1.8g
Phenyle®	18g
Phenyle®	18g
Phenyle®	18g
Milaga	
PKU 3	22g
PKU 3	22g
Applied Nutrition	
Phenyle® Drink Mix	60g
Phenyle® Drink Mix	17.5g
Phenyle® Amino Acid Blend	18g
Phenyle® Amino Acid Blend	18g
Phenyle® Amino Acid Blend	18g
Mead Johnson	
Phenyle®	60g
Phenyle®	17.5g
Ben	
Phenyle®	49.5g
Phenyle®	17.5g
Vitalife	
PKU express	25g

According to Rudy Mareel, President of the Clinical Nutrition Division for SHS, MySpecialDiet.com has attracted over 19,000 visits from members of the metabolic community since its launch last October. Mareel also reports that the site has grown active membership by over 225% in the first five months. "That's pretty impressive when you consider that there are only about 25,000 people in the whole world with a [disease state] relevant to this website," added Assayag.

Conclusion

As pharmaceutical companies increasingly seek to improve their interactive strategies, the Specialty Diets platform offers a well rounded suite of functionality that will appeal to both consumer and healthcare provider alike. The ForMyDiet platform provides valuable resources for customer acquisition, compliance, adherence, persistence and healthcare provider care.

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Experts Cited In Article

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