

How Biopharma BD&L Teams are Enhancing Capabilities to Elevate Decision Support

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In an effort to bolster pipelines, biopharma manufacturers are reassessing old practices and transforming market research methods.

Biopharma BD&L executives enjoy prestigious roles with coveted views of future pipeline plans, but they work in a high stakes/high visibility environment where tight deadlines and C-suite inquiries always loom. In their world, even a seemingly minor misperception, when compounded, results in decisions that often impact the stock prices of both buyer and seller; it is the rare executive who can confidently state they are routinely part of such material decisions. Despite the inherent pressures, these executives appreciate the professional development the experience avails to them, and they rarely regret accepting the role. One BD&L executive shared that it's "like walking a tightrope woven of endless facts and opinions and doing so without a safety net. Thankfully, I love a good adrenaline rush!"

The importance and pace of this work have spawned a new way to harvest proprietary insights and guard against costly misperceptions: former payers leading agile market research with current payers.

Four Ways Biopharma BD&L Teams are Transforming Traditional Evaluation Processes

1. **Sourcing consultants who are former payers.** Their extensive experience evaluating biopharma proposals brings incredible value to BD teams. They ramp up quickly into any drug category, intuitively know which research questions must be asked, easily contextualize payer responses, quickly fill remaining information gaps, and serve as exceptional thought partners for nascent strategies. BD teams leveraging former payers outperform others.
2. **Adopting hybrid research modalities.** Studies employing both in-depth interviews and modern, digital research techniques generate a richness of actionable insights within the compressed timelines this work demands. They are also highly adaptable to the common challenges of changing circumstances and unforeseen business questions.
3. **Excluding retirees from research panels.** The market access fate of unapproved treatments will not be determined by yesterday's payers. The confluence of innovative therapies, evolving payer practices and new government policies favor today's practitioners. Including retired decision-makers in market research panels risks overlooking the most relevant trends. Any proposal to include them should raise flags of concern.
4. **Securing contracts that support multiple, short-notice studies.** Unlike typical buyers of payer panel research, BD&L teams are often given little warning as to which therapy they will evaluate next. As a result, there's simply not enough time available to execute a contract before each evaluation. A single, flexible subscription contract with a reserve of studies addresses this need nicely.

For biopharma BD&L teams looking to elevate their evaluation processes, these four practices provide a roadmap for success. By sourcing consultants who are former payers, adopting hybrid research modalities, excluding retirees from research panels, and securing contracts that support short-notice studies, forecasting abilities are elevated and decisions are better informed. Embracing these practices mitigates risk and, more importantly, unlocks competitive advantages necessary to create an industry-leading BD&L team.

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