Transforming the market access landscape: the role of digital applications

Pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies are turning to technology more frequently to solve business issues, and are increasingly using digital technology to optimize market access for their products.

Given that it can take up to 12 years and cost £400 mn to £1.15 bn[1] to bring a new drug to market, it is understandable that organizations are capitalizing on the benefits of new technologies to try to reduce uncertainty, costs, and time to market. For many leading companies, digital applications are informing direction and becoming an essential enabler in realizing their vision.

So why are digital applications transforming the value and access functions? We believe that there are three key benefits for market access.

Facilitating proactive planning and agility

While companies may already have a market access planning process, digital applications can facilitate a proactive approach by providing a structured checklist of activities and identifying vital gaps mapped against the latest HTA requirements. In addition, tasks can be assigned, alerts raised when items have not been addressed, and progress or completed tasks tracked. This provides confidence that a market access plan can be formulated early, is always current, and can adapted whenever there is a business need to change direction.

Improving real-time decision-making and accelerating cross-functional productivity

Digital applications and cloud technology can provide a consistent framework for real-time decision-making across the multifunctional groups that feed into market access planning and implementation. From as early as Phase 1 development, market access issues can be captured, the risks and benefits of considerations such as parallel consultation defined, and the requirements for HTA submissions considered. Capturing data in a centralized system provides an institutional memory of decision-making and allows more rapid and efficient cross-functional working.

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Linking global thinking with local needs and implementation

The most effective way to anticipate evidence gaps and country-specific payer requirements is to ensure that the affiliates are an integral part of the process and work closely with the global teams. Digital applications are an ideal mechanism, not only for planning a tailored market access strategy, but also for ensuring HTA templates are populated as soon as possible and local implementation tools are ready for launch. Evidence generation plans can be developed and tracked, meeting both global and local needs and avoiding duplication of effort.

Now is the perfect time to re-evaluate your technology and your suppliers

As technology advances, integrating digital applications into your market access processes will be a vital part of your strategy. Digital applications could be used as extensions to existing processes, such as systemized working between affiliates and global teams that immediately accelerates productivity; or they could be used to transform processes, for example, by improving planning and providing an institutional memory whereby historical data can be used to inform future decision-making.

PRMA Consulting has made a significant investment in its suite of digital applications. The focus has been on ensuring the appropriate functionality is available to clients and delivered within a highly usable world class User Experience (UX). The applications are built on contemporary technology, hosted in a cloud environment, and created with a security by design philosophy to protect the integrity of client information. You can use the PRMA consulting suite of applications with confidence.

Clients using the PRMA Navigator® have reported reduced cognitive workload in performing everyday tasks and have achieved time savings of up to 80% when using the auto-population function to maximize the use of the latest supporting materials for HTA submissions. This efficiency frees resources for strategic thinking, understanding complex value stories, and scenario planning, which results in higher-quality submissions.

Clients using the PRMA Healthcheck® late module have reported that it encourages integrated decision-making between global, regional, and local affiliates. The application provides a robust situation analysis and rates current evidence generation activities against individual requirements from payer submission templates relevant to the asset. This facilitates increased collaboration by linking global thinking with affiliate needs, and encouraging effective multifunctional dialogue for product assessment, evidence generation planning, and HTA preparation. By having rapid aggregation and dissemination of data within a centralized system, the application not only enhances efficiency but also allows companies to proactively address their market access needs. They can anticipate payer requirements, prioritize resources, plan evidence generation, and get a headstart on HTA and reimbursement submissions. For example, one top-5 pharmaceutical company that has worked closely with PRMA Consulting has reported savings of up to 50% across its internal and external resourcing when using our digital applications to develop its HTA submissions.

The process of selecting the right supplier also plays an important role in reducing the cost and time to implementation of any new digital applications. A supplier needs to have proven experience, a comprehensive understanding of the issues involved, and current insight into market access decisions and HEOR trends. It should be able to combine this with the resources and systems to deliver the right services on time and on budget, and provide a level of aftercare suited to your business needs. After implementation, the supplier should also be able to provide you with analytics from the organization's use of the digital application to enable you to achieve more from the existing technology and identify areas where enhancements can be made.

An experienced, customer-focused supplier will provide goal-led design thinking to meet your organization's developing needs. The ability to customize functions ensures that ensures that the work is continually validated against your needs and results in an efficiently delivered, successful digital application.

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Another client of PRMA Consulting digital applications evaluated the methods they use to interpret the needs and motivations of market access stakeholders in different countries. They found there was a need to assess the internal terminology and working relationships between global and country teams. This conversation, and subsequent adoption of the digital application, led to a much improved "structured collaboration and harmonized approach for unearthing market access potential". This company was open to revisiting and rethinking its processes and was therefore able to improve performance and meet the challenges of an accelerated market access landscape head on.

Now is the perfect time to re-examine your market access process and evaluate how digital applications could help you realize your market access vision and improve your commercial competitiveness.

About the author

PRMA Consulting is a global consultancy solving some of the most challenging market access issues facing pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies today.

Our tailored services include strategic market access, landscape assessments, payer and KOL engagement, value propositions, GVDs, evidence generation, real-world evidence, and pricing and reimbursement strategy.

The suite of PRMA digital applications is used by top-20 pharmaceutical organizations and biotechnology companies to transform market access processes and build capacity. These dynamic applications enable clients to unlock and optimize product value from early development through to successful country submissions.

Safeguarding your data and ensuring business continuity

Business-critical systems and data are protected by the expert management of new digital technology. Business continuity is maintained with data storage and back-ups that ensure the digital application remains operational, stable, and secure.

ISO27001 and CSA STAR Level 2 standards should be implemented by the digital application provider as part of their information security management system (ISMS). PRMA Consulting is experienced in delivery of the ISMS framework of policies and procedures to ensure compliance with legal, physical, and technical protection of business data and information assets, and risk management.

Reference

1. Torjesen, I. (2015) "Drug development: the journey of a medicine from lab to shelf", *The Pharmaceutical Journal.* Available at: https://www.pharmaceutical-journal.com/publications (Accessed 22 August 2018)

For a conversation about your market access challenges, contact us: prmaconsulting.com/digitalapplications

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