



The Situation

Case Study

Advantex Learning Solutions worked with a specialty pharmaceutical company to enhance the business acumen and marketing skills of its Junior Marketers in order to improve the execution of marketing communication programs and tactics.

A leading pharmaceutical company selling a specialty product to treat a rare genetic disorder wanted to enhance the overall business acumen and marketing skills of their inexperienced Marketers. Many of the top leaders at the company indicated that the marketing team had a varied range of prior experience, some of whom were transitioning into marketing roles for the first time. More importantly, the skills that these marketers had were untested, because of a lack of marketplace competitors which can drive competitive enterprise skills.

As part of the solution design process, Advantex spoke with top leaders and determined that the best way to address these challenges was through a three-day training engagement. The session was built around an interactive digital business simulation where the participants had the opportunity to run a pharmaceutical company for four years. Participants focused entirely on the business impacts that resulted from executing current and sophisticated marketing tactics and decisions. The objectives of the solution was to:

- Enhance the overall Business IQ
- Create a stronger marketing culture and mindset
- Strengthen the ability to link brand leadership strategies with specific and quantifiable business outcomes
- Develop the ability to understand “what-if” analysis and the potential trade-offs of marketing decisions on business outcomes



The Learning Solution

Advantexe developed an end-to-end learning journey that consisted of pre-work and the three-day live session simulation experience. The pre-work included developing foundational business acumen skills through eLearning and familiarizing themselves on the simulation story. This introduced participants to the flow of the simulation and their overall learning objectives, which included:

- Gaining insights into strategic and tactical marketing in support of the strategic and financial sides of running a pharmaceutical company
- Understanding the tools of marketing and how they impact business results

Over the course of the three days, teams of four went through four rounds of the simulation, consultant-led debriefs after each round, and prepared presentations for a fictional Board of



Directors. During the live session, our lead consultant first went through an interactive introduction to the simulation, Virtuous Pharmaceuticals. They walked the participants through the platform and the product portfolio, including distributing a brand strategy document for each product. Initially, the company offered three Rareus Diseaseasicus treatments: Corezemin, Gesero, and Stantrix. As the rounds moved on, a fourth product was released, Wulurix, which is a

Next Generation treatment. All these products treated different patient segments within the same marketplace.

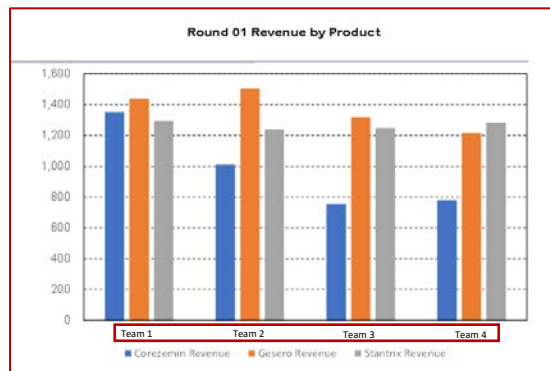
For each product line, teams were responsible for determining a marketing budget (allocated on a percentage basis from an overall budget), product strategy, marketing team size and skill level, and allocating the specific product budget across a marketing mix.

It was pivotal for the teams to understand where each product was strategically located within the pipeline, as some were more mature than others. They could allocate 10 points between Acquisition, Adherence, and Sunset for each product, and were encouraged to review and even change the strategy year over year. Choosing the correct strategy was the first step to succeeding in this sim.

The other important decision area was the marketing mix decisions. Teams ranked in order from most important (1) to least important (4), the messaging objectives, which included disease education, product education, access, and adherence, and channels, which were print, digital, social, and EMR/EHR. After ranking these, teams also had to rank the most important target audiences (HCP, patient, caregiver, and payer) for each objective and channel. The correct ranking combination of each of these factors produced the optimal marketing effectiveness score, one of the key results.



In addition to all these decisions, teams had the option to invest in up to two product-specific tactics per round. These tactics impacted both short-term and long-term results of the business and could have benefits as well as tradeoffs. Some of the tactics included patient portal development, online caregiver community strategies, and conference presentations.



Each round of the simulation presented a unique challenge. In Round 1, participants were introduced to their portfolio of products, including releasing a third product, and were responsible for reviewing the current financial data and marketplace of their company. Round 2 saw the launch of the fourth “NextGen” product, along with the challenge of using social media and digital tactics in tandem with its release. A competitor enters the mix in Round 3

that competes directly against your newest product. And in Round 4, participants had to complete the final round of the sim with all the previously listed factors. They also had to prepare and deliver a presentation focused on strategy, execution, results, and forecasts to the Board of Directors.



The Results

The feedback on the engagement was overwhelmingly positive from participants and the company's management team. From a post learning impact survey, it was identified that the engagement presented learners with a consistent framework for developing current and future skills that were based on best-in-class marketing methodologies, strategies, and tactics. Furthermore, the participants indicated with a score 4.8 out of 5 that all the topics discussed and explored in the simulation session were highly valuable and something that they could use back on the job. In fact, many of the open ended questions stated that participants wanted the opportunity to play through the simulation on an on-going basis to go even deeper in areas such as competition and positioning products within the portfolio. Other feedback included;

- “The simulation was great! It was wonderful to get hands-on experience and to challenge myself to think outside the box.”
- “I must have had 10 ‘a ha’ moments directly from the simulation”
- “This was the best training I have ever received. It was amazing to be able to see in real time the business effects to our marketing decisions. I now have clear insight into how we are helping to drive revenue!”

The session scored a perfect Net Promoter Score with all participants willing to recommend the training to others in the company. Due to this success, Advantexe will now be developing a version of the simulation to be delivered in Europe, and will continue to roll out additional sessions domestically.



About Advantexe

Advantexe Learning Solutions partners with clients around the world to build the business acumen, leadership and selling skills needed to execute their business strategies and achieve meaningful business results. Our comprehensive toolkit includes skills assessments, dynamic learning engagements powered by computer-based business simulations, and reinforcement tools that encourage immediate skill application. These elements combine to produce a measurable and lasting impact on our clients' businesses.

For more information, please visit us on the web at www.advantexe.com or email us at jim.brodo@advantexe.com.