



# GAPSULE

## Panel Discussion no. 4

### TRANSCRIPT



<https://gapsule.docmode.org/>

## **WHAT IS GAPSULE:**

Gapsule has been conceptualized to fill the knowledge gap and help to improve the interaction between the pharma companies and medical practitioners.

## **BACKGROUND:**

COVID has disrupted many activities with frequent lockdowns and social distancing. These things haven't even spared the pharma industry, as they experienced closed clinics, restricted face-to-face meetings with medical practitioners, or severe restrictions in travel for a product briefing exercise.

Now in this situation, it is imperative to be part of this entire transformation. This transformation, which is led by technology, ensures a better connection with doctors. And the doctors to connect better with the patients using these emerging technologies. It has become more imperative to understand the areas the pharma industry is missing out on.

One of the areas that really impacted during this pandemic was knowledge sharing. Knowledge sharing includes the production and dissemination of clinical data, scientific breakthroughs to keep the medical practitioner in the loop of new developments which would help them to excel in their practice. But with restrictions between physician and pharma company meetings due to COVID, the knowledge marketing went for a pause period.

This led to the launching of Gapsule by DOCMODE, an effort to just bring in the top experts from different pharma companies for a panel discussion on focus areas where it could be either around the emerging technologies could be around the emerging trends or could just be discussing what we together need to do in order to build a better future.

## **MODE:**

### **Panel Discussion Series**

- **Session 4: 18<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

## PANELISTS:



**Mr. Pranab Bastya**

Region Head- CIS, Sr General Manager,  
Ajanta Pharma Ltd.  
(International Business)



**Mr. Altaf Qazi**

SBU Head - Sales & Marketing,  
Akumentis Healthcare Ltd.



**Mr. Narendra Kirpekar**

Sr. General Manager -  
Marketing Domestic Business,  
Macleods Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

## MODERATOR:



**Mr. Hans Lewis**

Founder and CEO of DocMode

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Earlier doctors were doing hands-on surgeries. But with advancements in technology, robotic surgery and live streaming of the procedure have become a reality. A group of doctors sitting in an auditorium hundreds of kilometers away can watch the live streaming and can interact with the surgeon performing the procedure by asking questions. Such procedures, these days, are also being live streamed on social media channels. Thanks to the adoption of digital technology.
- Knowledge marketing is all about pharma companies communicating with healthcare providers, discussing with them, and informing them about their line of products, the efficacy of the drug, and how it would be of benefit to the patients. Marketing personnel including area sales managers, state business unit heads, zonal sales managers, frontline managers, and medical representatives need information on products to communicate with the doctors. As marketing personnel belonging to different pharma companies interact with the same healthcare providers, they get to know about multiple options or solutions that are available to them. This relationship drives the entire sales cycle benefitting the pharma companies, healthcare providers and the patients.
- Doctors are always looking for new methods and solutions in patient and disease management. Therefore, the pharma companies need to train their marketing personnel thoroughly. In other words, only a well-trained, well-informed, knowledgeable, and confident medical representative can make meaningful engagement with a doctor. Failure of the medical representative will result in the failure of the brand even though it may be of great benefit to the patient.
- The pandemic changed the way in which doctors, healthcare providers, and pharma companies interact with each other. The conventional physical briefings by medical representatives are still on. Pandemic, however, is nudging the pharma companies to go in for digital engagement for reasons well-known. In the changed circumstances, one big lesson learned by the pharma companies is that the right content at the right time in the right format and platform will decide their sales graph.
- Most often pharma companies currently focus on medical representatives and doctors. However, some of them fail to see the need to partner in the patient management value chain which doctors expect them to do.
- In the past, medical representatives were the only source of information. However, doctors now have access to a treasure-trove of information. Today's medical representatives need to know not only about the products they market but also about the competitors' products. They should be exposed to information relating to the latest medical research, evolving procedures, and the supporting drug ecosystem in treating diseases. In essence, doctors should take intellectual delight in interacting with the medical representatives. Any medical representative just won't do!

- Most pharma companies have wonderfully coped with the marketing issues arising out of the pandemic situation. Some have digitally arrived and some are in an evolutionary stage while a few others still have to decide which way to go. The writing on the wall being very clear, it is time for the undecided to give a digital push to compete and thrive.
- A lot has changed with the pandemic. Pharma companies are increasingly focusing on their sales force providing 7 to 20 days of product training, detailing and online engagement sessions with healthcare providers. The primary focus is on how medical representatives using minimum time can effectively engage with healthcare providers. This is because healthcare providers with increasing workloads do not have the luxury of time. The industry needs to pass on messages in small capsules. So, pharma companies will benefit from sessions like Gapsule.
- Pharma companies need to initiate discussions between IT and Training Departments to formulate better ideas to ensure enhanced engagement. Knowledge-sharing also includes making available international medical experts who participate in various forums across India enlightening the medical fraternity in India. With pandemic-induced restrictions on travel, we need to explore how such sessions can be digitized.
- It is generally said Covid brought in digitization. Whereas the fact is that many pharma companies have embraced digitization even before the arrival of Covid-19. But it can be safely said that the acceleration of digitization happened due to Covid-19.
- Digital platforms are becoming increasingly inevitable for pharma companies. However, there have also been instances of some companies abusing the digital platforms which are prompting many healthcare providers to stick to the physical-interaction model. So, pharma companies looking at long-term growth need to judiciously use the digital platforms and ensure that they are used only for information that is relevant to the doctors and healthcare providers.
- Interaction with doctors alone is not sufficient for pharma companies to establish their brands. Some pharma companies have started interacting with the patients directly through patient education communication thus impacting the value chain. More pharma companies should explore this option even while strengthening the relationship with doctors. Also, pharma companies should look at how they can collaborate and partner with healthcare providers in patient education through well-packaged communication tools.
- Digital marketing is not just creating a website or creating social media pages. It is about how these new-age tools could be used for personalising services. Analytical tools can help in understanding the extent of involvement, what the patients or doctors are looking for. These statistics in turn will help pharma companies to devise appropriate strategies that target individuals through a community-approach.

- It is also important for pharma companies to have clear-cut long-term and short-term strategies for digital marketing initiatives. This will beat redundancy and render pharma companies more focus-oriented as they move from project to project. It is also important to involve all the team members at every stage of the project so that everyone would know what works and what does not. This will sharpen the marketing focus of pharma companies.
- Pharma company brand managers should have a clear idea about the target audience and what he or she will consume by analyzing digital data before embarking on marketing programmes. Wherever needed, they can also focus segmentation since not all healthcare providers are active on digital platforms. This exercise will help them fine-tune their strategies in an appropriate fashion. This is especially so since the future is going to be about integrated communication. It means, some form of physical selling will continue to exist even if digital selling would get increasingly dominant. So, the challenge before the pharma companies is to travel the two parallel paths with a fine balance.



# GAPSULE

## **A First of an Industry Dialogue Series**

**Aimed at Bridging the Knowledge Gap between the Pharmaceutical Industry and Medical Practitioners for Better Treatment Outcomes.**

<https://gapsule.docmode.org/>

*An initiative by*



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