



FEATURED ARTICLE

Leverage the Sixth Sense of Clinical Apps Specialists to Win in Diagnostic Imaging

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A solid window of communication with clinical apps specialists at the helm is a crucial cog in optimizing the sales and service cycle for medical imaging,” says Krishanu Bhattacharjee, the Founding Director of EMeRG and a Medical Devices market veteran.



What's with the Subjectivity in Medical Diagnosis?

Could the same exact brand of MRI scanners at two different hospitals yield images of quality that could be described as two extreme ends of the spectrum? Could the same brand and configuration of CT scanners or Digital X-rays produce all the way from “beautiful” (a passionate expression by most clinicians) to “barely okay” diagnostic images? Imagine the most cutting-edge technologies in medical imaging made with utmost passion, sincerity and dedication for years not yielding an image that makes the radiologist jump out of his chair.



Image quality, Training and Customer Satisfaction – A Unique Correlation

All the years of efforts and R&D budgets spent towards perfecting a technology finally boils down to how aware the end-user is of the true prowess under the hood of the machine they are using. Unless trained adequately and frequently, the customer would never completely know how capable the technology is and what clinical, and operational benefits they could effectively leverage from it. After a point when the hospital management doesn't adequately get to see

the true value ($=\sum \text{Benefits} - \text{Costs}$) of the technology procured, it develops a certain dissatisfaction that goes well beyond the Buyers' Remorse syndrome.

This is where the role of a Clinical Applications Specialist becomes pivotal. Unless tapped adequately, it almost tends to selling a hospital a million-dollar technology, only a minuscule of whose true potential is being utilized by the users.



Understanding a Clinical Apps Specialist

Having interacted with and travelled miles across all possible terrains with them, and by virtue of having a similar academic background and peer groups, I could attempt to paint a picture of a typical clinical apps specialist (pardon the act of generalization here, but this is purely to drive a point). One might describe a clinical application specialist as someone with a quintessential academic bent, a somewhat geeky approach, a pace that wouldn't necessarily compete with an average corporate go-getter; and an absolute sense of purpose in all the acts performed. Characterized by long days in unknown workspaces next to a console, sharing the only desk and the only workstation with several other technicians in a cramped room, the Apps specialist spends weeks away from home each month. Spending all the productive and

Leverage the App Manager Intelligence to Win in Diagnostic Imaging



beyond-routine hours with the customers, sharing make-shift-working- lunches next to the workstation, these apps specialists get to do what most marketeers, product managers and execs might not – knowing the real pulse of the customer.



How do we leverage this sixth sense?

Fostering innovations, better / optimal investments towards NPIs:

While med-tech firms spend significant proportion of their sales on understanding voice-of-customers prior to developing a new technology, a large wealth of knowledge could still be harnessed by taking on-board the tribal knowledge of clinical apps personnel. Why was the last gen technology inadequate; which parts did the customers find difficult operating; what did the users appreciate the most about the technology – answers to many such questions may be attained without spending an external dollar.

Bolstering customer retention strategies by improving customer satisfaction:

It is evident that the value segment of medical imaging customers would continue to hire first timers and inexperienced radiology technicians to save on costs. For them to be able to operate the equipment effectively, constant training and hand-holding is critical. On the other hand, the high-end customer segments may have the most experienced radiographers whose constant urge to unravel new techniques / protocols that help generate the best outcomes for their patients would need to be satiated

thoroughly. In either case, it is the clinical application specialist and the clinical marketing teams who would hold the key towards customer satisfaction.

Developing centres of excellence for specific clinical applications and procedure types; embracing and promoting customer success stories

The next frontier of competitive war-games would be fought on the basis of clinical and operational evidences and outcomes. Co-promoting medical best practices and generating specific outcomes that would eventually help the most effective technologies to prosper would be the natural next steps. Clinical apps specialists could serve as the critical connecting link in such scenarios, ensuring their goodwill is translated to mutually beneficial partnerships.

Enhancing the possibility to sell upgrades, contracts and improve on areas of collaboration:

While this is being done in fits and starts, medical device companies have enough scope to improve customer liaison and generate recurring revenues. The ability to create sticky relationships with customers and KOLs especially in mature markets where new sales are hard to come by, could be one of the primary lookouts for a clinical apps specialist.

Going for the win - Part of winning strategy for med-tech would be to create a solid window of communication with the clinical apps specialists at the helm; where all discussions, promises, and forward looking statements made by various representatives from sales / marketing / services to the customer are streamlined, archived and periodically reviewed to improve customer relations and overall customer experience.

About the author:



Krishanu Bhattacharjee

Krishanu is the Founder & CEO at EMeRG. He has spent a decade-and-a-half in the medical technology industry spearheading research and consulting studies. He is passionate about solving the paradox of “innovation in isolation” in emerging markets for medical device users by assisting innovative NPIs. Krishanu possesses keen understanding of medical device markets globally; having led in-depth field research, outcomes and market access research as well as strategy workshops across US, ASEAN, Africa, Middle East, South America and Europe.

To discuss ideas that enable product innovation and actionable marketing programs for medical devices, please reach out to him at krishanu.b@emerg-inc.com.

About EMeRG – The medical devices and diagnostics advisory firm:

EMeRG is a fast growing, business consulting firm, with tailored solutions for med-tech and health-tech companies. We are a team of management consultants and health transformation specialists that design solutions and services for on-point decision making and strategy for the CXO. Process re-engineering, customer voice mapping, and fluidic decision blueprinting are the core engines of our offerings-matrix.

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