

EXECUTIVE QUESTION AND ANSWER

Presented by Innoveer Solutions
and Boehringer Ingelheim

Q&A

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MJ: What was Boehringer Ingelheim's (BI) goal in deploying a CRM program throughout its organization, and what was your involvement in the planning and implementation of BI's CRM initiatives?

AK: We have three divisions, the prescription medicines division, the consumer healthcare division, and the animal health division. Prescription medicines, our largest commercial division, was using an ETMS system, an internal term for our customer relationship management (CRM) system, to help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our sales and marketing teams. However, the system was not meeting our goals very successfully.

Because of this, I was tasked with improving our CRM program to help us achieve our sales and marketing goals and ensure that all three divisions could easily standardize on the same system. I reviewed our existing solution and evaluated the different CRM platforms in the market to determine what would work best for our organization, our team, and our objectives. We then worked with Innoveer Solutions to develop our overall CRM strategy and implement our new program.

Once the system was functional, we gave the divisional heads ownership of the system for their specific groups. Our managers are now responsible for our CRM strategy within each of their field forces, and they are able to customize the program to meet their needs, including adding functionality as required.

MJ: Have you been able to measure the impact of your CRM program within your organization, in terms of improved tracking of communication with physicians and increased sales visits?

AK: Yes. Once we built and deployed our new CRM program, our field force witnessed the benefits of our solution – how it enables them do their jobs more effectively. As a result, we gained a strong commitment from the team, which is very important for our company and for any company that would like to achieve its CRM goals.

They now believe in the system and synchronize with it daily. Their usage of the system has increased, and the system has now become our central location for all relevant information, enabling us to more effectively exchange information and collaborate between our marketing, sales, and product management groups. Our team has never felt better and more confident in the field or when up against the competition.

We didn't just buy ourselves a very good and reliable CRM system – we also bought the total commitment of our field force, which has resulted in improved reporting and a better grip on our local market and customers.

Our new CRM strategy gives the business a better grip on our customers' needs. We are now able to better target physicians, and we have increased insight into our sales operations. This has helped improve the overall efficiency and success of our field force in terms of sales volume and in achieving our business goals. And this is something we have never been able to do before.

Our marketing and medical departments are now also working with our CRM system to improve the success of their decisions involved with trials.

MJ: How important was it for you to develop an overall corporate CRM strategy around your specific goals, and how did your strategy impact your program success?

AK: It was very important. We discovered that we needed to come to a decision as a group about our overall CRM strategy, so that we didn't implement a solution without a core set of goals and metrics. By meeting with Innoveer to prioritize our objectives, we were able to gain consensus among the management team about our overall strategy. We were then able to all move in the same direction toward the same goals with a common understanding of the initiatives, how the program should be deployed, and how and why the system should be used.

MJ: When you rolled out the system to your user-base, how much emphasis did you place on user acceptance, and what specifically did you do to ensure user buy-in and a high level of user adoption?

AK: The field force was resistant to the system at first because our initial CRM initiatives had not met our organization's needs and were not successful. By offering key users access to our new system – with the ability to offer input and participate in training in advance – the field force saw how the new system worked, the stability of the system, and how it enabled them to do their jobs more effectively.

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During our planning stages, we formed a steering committee, a project committee, and a key user group committee, all of which included a large group of users with a strong influence on our field force. Because of our committees, training, and ongoing communication, we were able to decrease resistance from end users who had the impression that management was using the system to monitor their work. By showing them how adopting the system could benefit them personally, in terms of enhanced productivity and improved knowledge, they quickly overcame these sentiments and began using it to their advantage.

MJ: What advice would you give your peers facing similar business pains in planning or implementing their CRM programs?

AK: It is critical to have your users involved in the process from start to finish, as well as to have a strong commitment from management about the importance of one standard CRM program. To do this successfully, we relied on Innoveer's experience and knowledge to demonstrate the advantages of CRM to our team. If you just hand someone a tool without securing their buy-in and developing an understanding of its purposes, you will find that it is impossible to develop a core set of expectations and objectives for your system, in terms of success factors and desired results.

Also, without building consensus around the program's objectives, you cannot develop an appropriate strategy or determine necessary functionality, which can lead to program resistance, and ultimately, failure.

ABOUT INNOVEER SOLUTIONS

INNOVEER SOLUTIONS, an award-winning customer strategy and solutions consultancy, provides advanced customer management services to healthcare and high-technology companies, among others, in the areas of planning and strategy, technol-

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ogy implementation, and optimization. The company's deep industry knowledge, broad technical skills, and Multishore methodology enable organizations to address their critical customer-facing issues and achieve an integrated view of all customer information. With an exclusive focus on customer management since 1998, Innoveer has worked with more than 300 organizations to increase their overall business growth, improve internal efficiency, and enhance the customer experience.

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ABOUT BOEHRINGER INGELHEIM

THE BOEHRINGER INGELHEIM CORPORATION is one of the world's 20 leading pharmaceutical companies. Headquartered in Ingelheim, Germany, it operates globally with 152 affiliates in 45 countries and more than 34,000 employees. Since it was founded in 1885, the family-owned company has been committed to researching, developing, manufacturing and marketing novel products of high therapeutic value for human and veterinary medicine.

In 2003, Boehringer Ingelheim posted net sales of 7.4 billion euro, while spending more than one fifth of net sales in its largest business segment, Prescription Medicines, on research and development.

For more information, please visit www.boehringer-ingelheim.com