

The agency perspective: What we do and how we do it

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15 July 2011



Who are we?

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Scientific Team Leader, Darwin HC

- MA in Biochemistry; DPhil in Physiology
- 10 years of experience in scientific communications in the UK and Asia Pacific:
 - Medical communications, scientific publishing, biotechnology



Olga Dai

Account Director, Darwin HC

- BSc Economics, MSc DIC Healthcare Management
- 6 years of experience in healthcare communications
 - Medical communications, pharmaceutical marketing, external communication at the European Medicines Agency (EMA)



Overview

- What is medical communications?
- The role of the medical writer, and what we look for in one
- The role of the account manager, and what we look for in one
- Why join a Med Comms agency?



What is medical communications?

What is medical communications?

When your Dad asks you exactly what it is you do for a living...

- Journalism? **x**
- Academic publishing? **x**
- 'Evil' pharmaceutical industry henchman? **x**

Medical communications agencies provide consultancy services to the pharmaceutical industry to help raise awareness of medicines via education and promotion



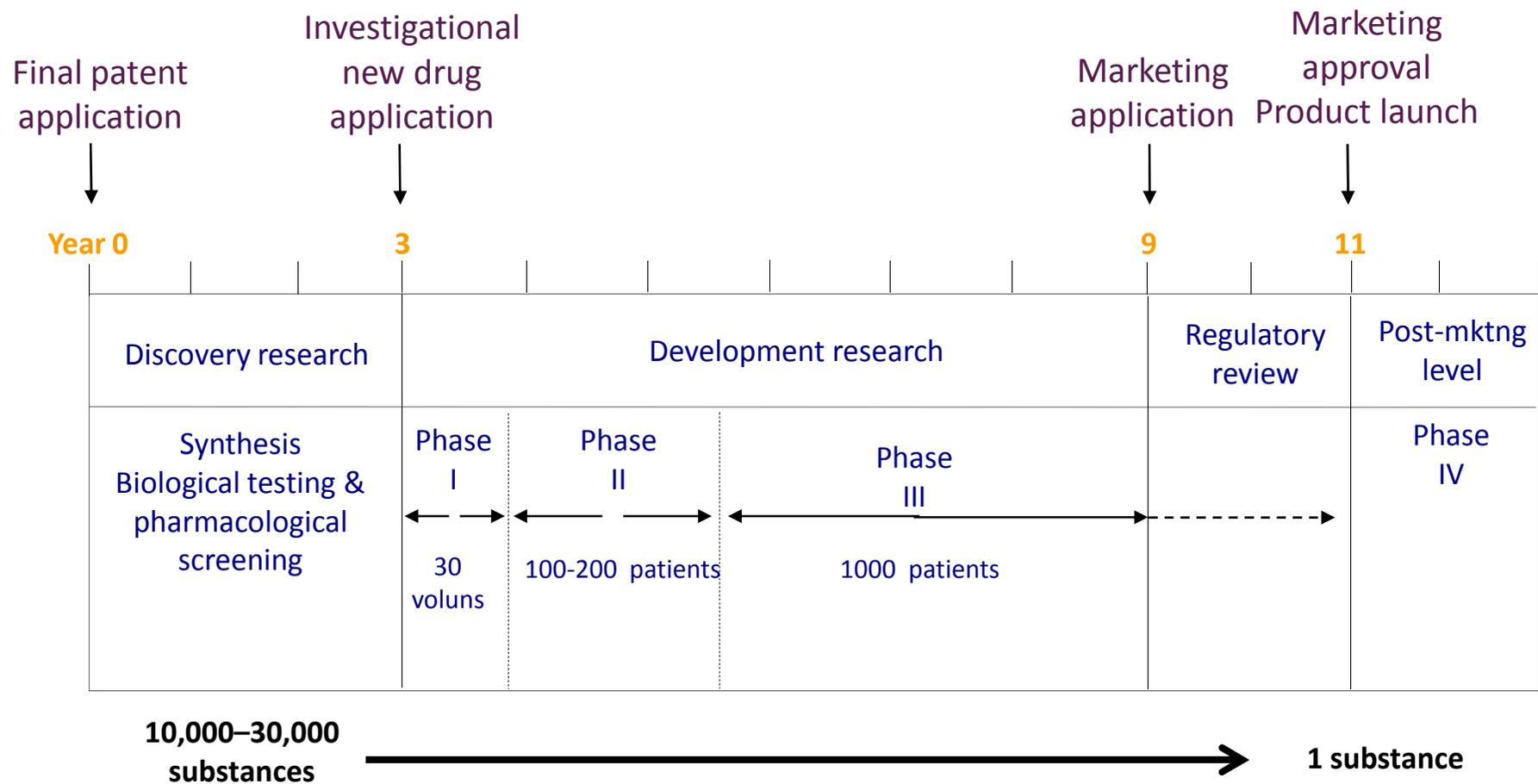
What does a Med Comms agency do?

- Most importantly... we help pharma companies to educate and inform their customers about the benefits and risks of [new] therapies, **supported by data**
- We also provide strategic counsel to pharma on optimising and maximising dissemination of data to all relevant target audiences
- Scientific and commercial communications to increase anticipation around the therapy and differentiate it from competitors, **supported by data**

Why would pharma companies need this?



Average R&D cost of a new medicine up to launch: **\$1 billion**



Many different agency services... and a lot of terminology

Regulatory documentation

Positioning

Professional relations

Branding

Publications

Advertising

Medical education

Health economics

Public relations

Market access

Market research

Consultancy



Many agency models

- Large corporate holding groups with advertising, PR, medical education divisions
- Specialists in one or more of the above, or something related (e.g. market access, strategic positioning)
- ‘Ma & pa’ shops – aka ‘man in his shed’

There are many agencies providing content-free services specifically for the pharma industry:

- Logistics and meeting management
- Skills training
- Venue finding, and so on



You'll hear the term 'full service agency' a lot!

- What does it mean?
 - It means they can do 'everything'...
- There are good reasons for this:
 - Success in one activity potentially opens up access to different budgets



- Therefore many agencies:
 - Have specialist divisions that deliver many or all of these services, or
 - Align themselves with complementary agencies



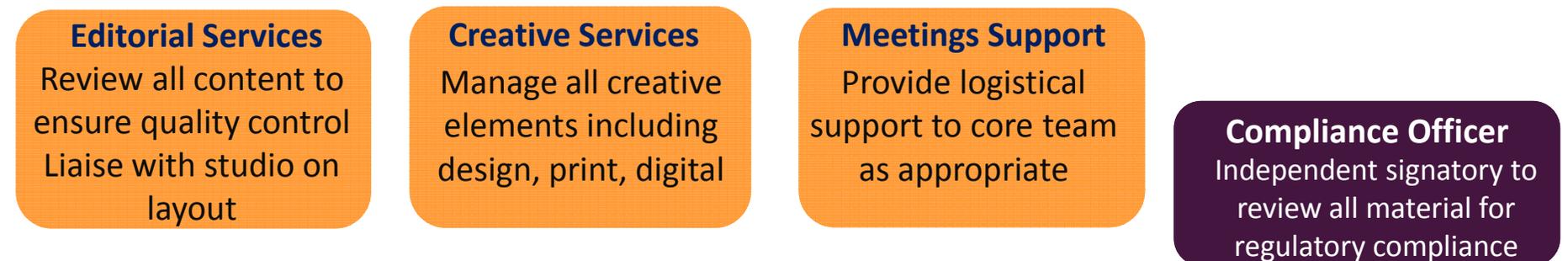
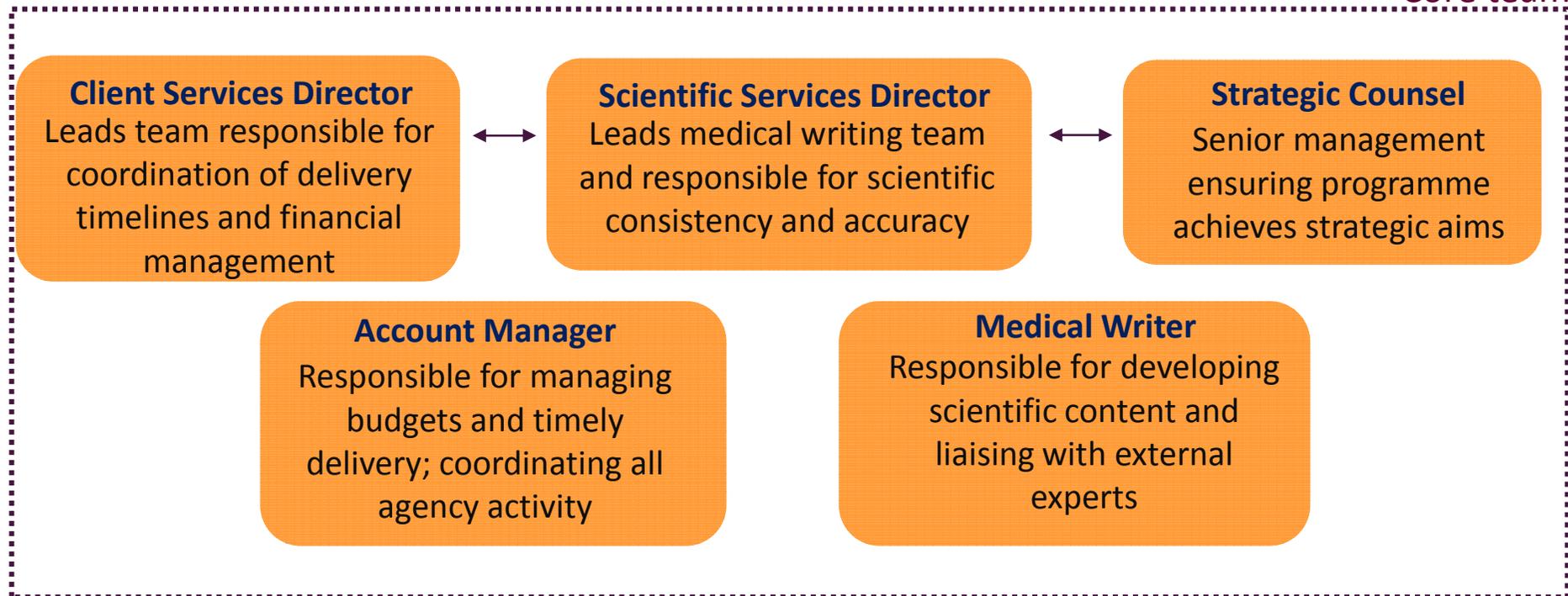
On a day-to-day level, what do Med Comms companies actually do?

- Develop materials, such as:
 - Journal manuscripts [with authors, for peer review]
 - Congress posters and presentations for new data
 - Learning resources [internal training & external education]
 - Scientific slide kits and animations
- Oversee scientific meetings (contents and logistics):
 - Educational events for doctors
 - (Strategic) advisory boards
 - Scientific round tables / working groups
- Also:
 - Commercially focused materials, e.g. brochures, leaflets for use by sales reps
 - Competitor intelligence
 - Media materials to support PR



The typical agency team

Core team



The role of the medical writer

Role of the medical writer

- Write high-quality, scientifically accurate copy
- Keep up to date with new developments in therapy area, and among competitors
 - Reading scientific literature
 - Attending scientific congresses
 - Online learning
- Build relationships with clients, colleagues, other agency teams and opinion leaders (external experts)
- Contribute to strategy for commercialisation of drug and identify opportunities to communicate relevant information to relevant audiences



Role of medical writers

- Ultimately...



Ensure our client's drug/device is on the prescriber's "mental formulary" and remains on his/her radar during its lifecycle



A typical day for a medical writer

- There isn't one!
- Teleconference with client and authors of a publication to take direction from authors on content – and then start writing!
- Finalise core slide deck for use by physicians in European educational meetings
- Develop the agenda for a strategic advisory board for leading global physicians on the launch of a new drug
- Brainstorm ideas and prepare a presentation for the client for a sales force training programme



What do we look for in a new medical writer?

- **MEDICAL:** A science background (but not necessary medical science) – PhD is advantageous
- **WRITER:** Enjoy writing and have a talent for it
- Attention to detail
- Think on your feet
- Problem solver
- Excellent 'desktop' research skills
- Able to absorb new concepts rapidly
- Comfortable with statistics
- People skills – 'bonding' with colleagues and clients
- Take feedback well!



Deliver what the client wants, on time, on budget



The role of the account manager

Client services

- We work in the service industry
- Client service is the number one priority
- Drive project to ensure efficient planning and execution
- Recognise client needs and organise resources to deliver
- Know the product you are working on and its basic properties
 - Indication(s)
 - MOA
 - Unique attributes/differentiators
 - Key messages
 - Marketing objectives

“From your client’s point of view, what you do, how you do it, knowing how well it must be done, and doing it again and again are the fundamentals.”



Client service: Basic principles

- Create a positive, and memorable experience for every client
 - Show that your agency is a pleasure to work with
- Meet (and strive to exceed) expectations while you help them achieve their commercial and personal objectives
- Manage expectations
 - Keep your client informed at each step of the project
- Learn your client's individual needs and style of working
 - Regular client contact builds positive relationships
 - Tailor your style of working to that of the client's
- Become partners with your client

"It means looking for opportunities to wow and delight your client in unique and unexpected ways."



What do we look for in a new account manager?

- **MEDICAL:** Interest in science
- **ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT**
- Enjoy working in the front line!
- Team player
- Commercial awareness
- Good communication skills
- Good organisational skills
- Be comfortable with numbers (budgeting and reconciliations)
- Be comfortable presenting (new business, client meetings, internal meetings)
- Understand product strategy and assist in delivering tactics



Deliver what the client wants, on time, on budget



Why join a Med Comms agency?

Why join a Med Comms agency?

- Broad experience to be gained
- Fast paced and deadline driven
- Career progression: scope to progress rapidly
- Opportunities for change in direction within agency
 - Editorial & creative
 - Client services
 - Event management
 - Interactive/digital specialism
- Opportunity to work with global experts in their field
- Opportunity to work in a range of therapy areas



Think about whether you like travel

In the past 18 months Darwin has...

Organised...

- 8 large (250+ pax) standalones
- 15 satellite symposia
- 50+ advisory boards
- 12 steering committees
- 4 MDT meetings

... by working with...

- 10+ logistics companies
- More than 15 AV suppliers
- 8 creative agencies
- 12 client teams
- 8 purchasing departments

... In doing so we have...

- Worked with over 200 speaking faculty
- Created more than 90 presentations, edited more than 80 others
- Produced half a dozen supplements, 60 reports / minutes
- 35 electronic minutes, reports and 10 newsletters



Good agency staff are well rounded...



... and adopt the highest ethical standards

- **Those directed at pharmaceutical companies (and their agents)**
 - e.g. Good Publication Practice
- **Those directed at journal editors**
 - e.g. ICMJE Uniform requirements
- **Those directed at authors**
 - e.g. The Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials (CONSORT)
- **Those directed at professional medical writers**
 - e.g. AMWA (US) and EMWA (Europe) guidelines



It's not all 'stiff' medical projects...

Just a few of our more unusual jobs:

- Video live physician interviews (and go for nice lunch in the Tuscan hills)
- Develop and deliver “Jeopardy” game for sales rep training
- Run debate for lung cancer nurses, moderated by Michael Buerk
- Organise live webinar for breast augmentation surgery



- Assist Miles Hilton-Barber (blind adventurer) with his keynote speech at a standalone meeting for ophthalmologists



...And it isn't all work, work, work either



Questions?