

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

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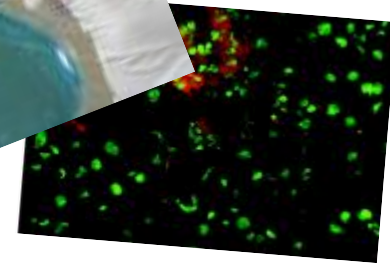
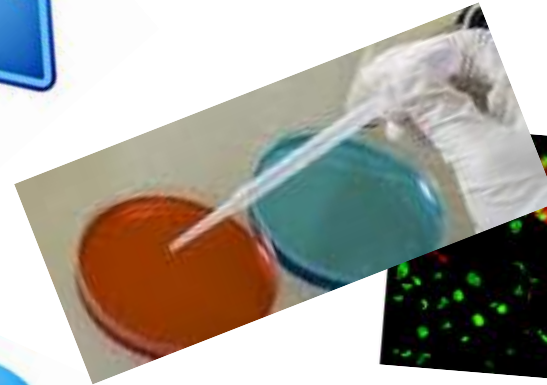


Overview

- What is medical communications?
- What do med comms agencies do?
- 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?



My background



GlaxoSmithKline



Bayer



What is medical communications?



What is medical communications?

Medical communications agencies provide **consultancy services** to the pharmaceutical, biopharma and medical devices industry to help raise awareness of medicines, devices and technologies via **education and promotion**



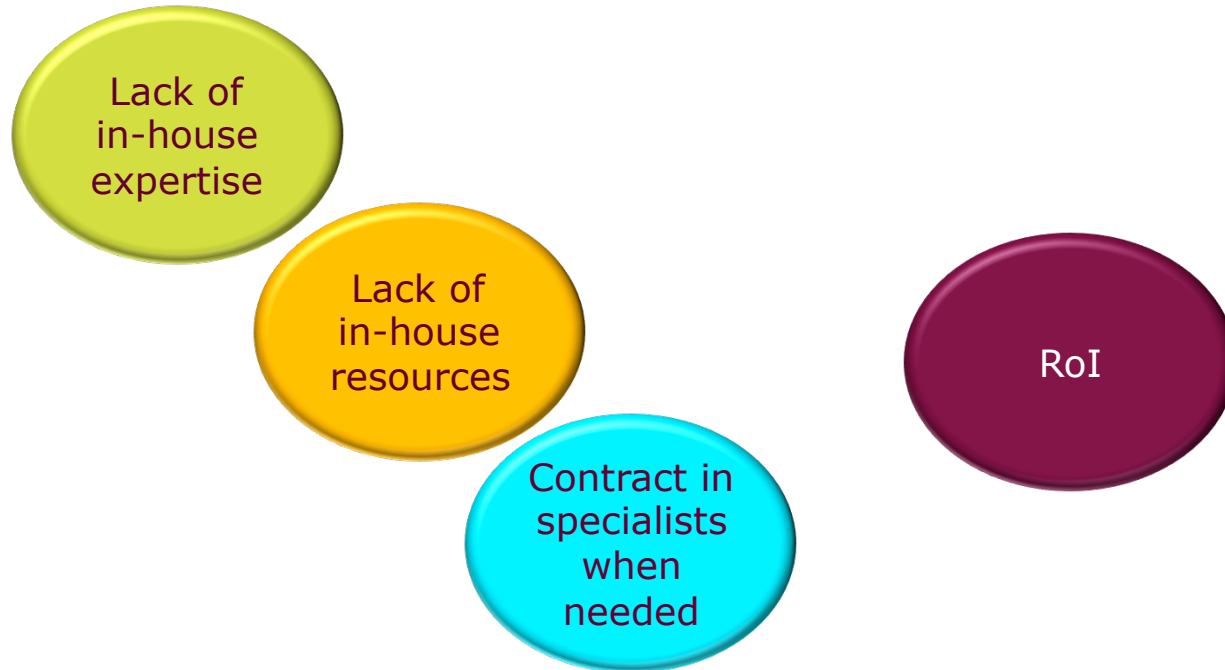
What does a Med Comms agency do?

- We provide strategic counsel to pharma companies during the development of new therapies to facilitate scientific and commercial communications :
 - maximise dissemination of scientific data to all relevant target audiences
 - educate and inform prescribers about the benefits and risks of therapies
 - increase anticipation around the therapy and differentiate it from competitors

... all supported by data

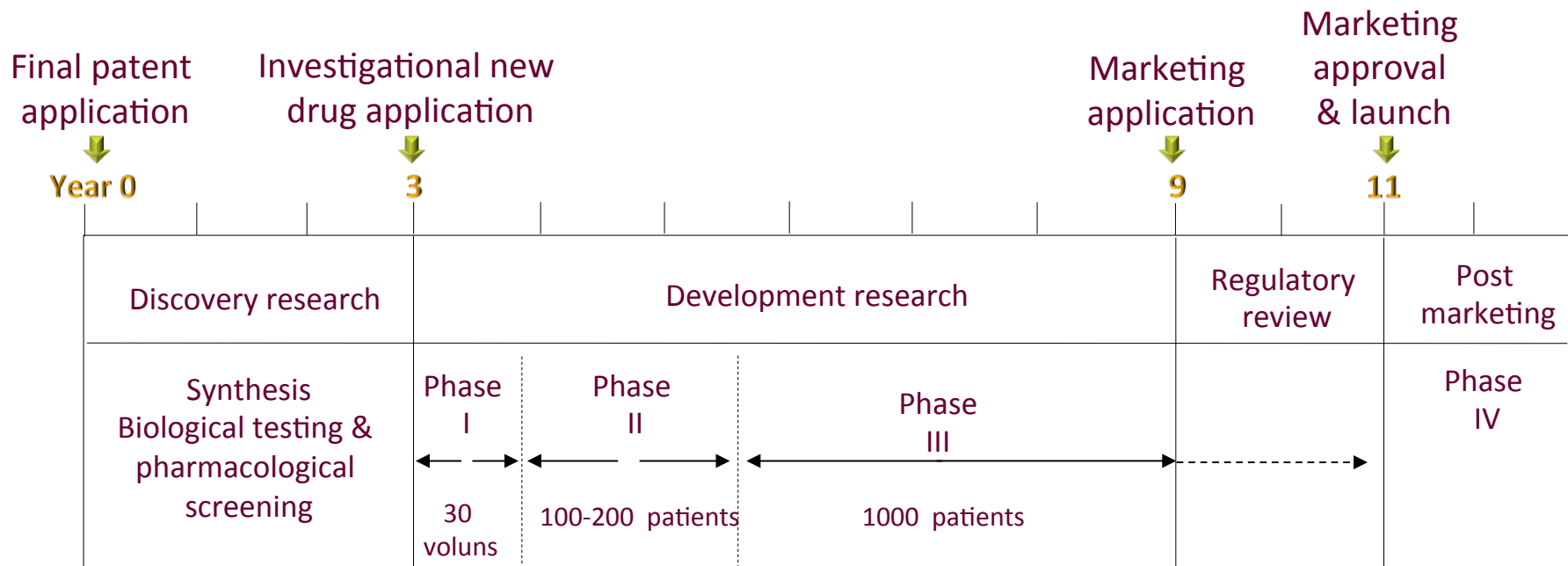


Why do pharma companies need this service?



Drug discovery is expensive

Average R&D cost of a new medicine up to launch:
\$48m¹? \$1.3bn²? \$4 billion³?



1. Light DW & Warburton R 2011 *Biosocieties* 6:34-50; 2. DiMasi JA et al 2003 *J Health Econ* 22:151-185, extrapolated by PhRMA; 3. The Truly Staggering Cost Of Inventing New Drugs 2012 www.Forbes.com ; 4. PhRMA citing Grabowski H & Vernon J 1994 *J Health Econ*, 13

What do med comms agencies do?

Many agency services, many agency models

- Large corporate holding groups with advertising, PR and digital companies as well med comms
- Specialists in one or more of the above, or something related (e.g. market access, strategic positioning)
- Small consultancies with few full time staff – might specialise in a particular service or therapy area

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

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



Many agency structures

Client Services Director
Leads team responsible for coordination of delivery timelines and financial management

Scientific Services Director
Leads medical writing team and responsible for scientific quality and accuracy

Strategic Counsel
Ensures programme achieves strategic aims

Account/Project Manager
Responsible for managing budgets and timely delivery; coordinating all agency activity

Medical Writer
Responsible for developing scientific content and liaising with external experts, journals

Editorial Services
Technical edit, QC, proofing; liaise with studio, congresses, journals

Creative Services
Manage all creative elements including design, print, digital

Digital Services
Technical and creative team of developers, info architects, UX designers

Meetings Support
Provide logistical support to core team as appropriate



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:
 - Educational events for doctors
 - (Strategic) advisory board meetings
 - Scientific round tables / working groups
- Also:
 - Commercially focused materials for rep use
 - Competitor intelligence
 - Digital items for internal or external use



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(s), 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



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 meeting with leading global physicians on the latest data for a new drug
- Brainstorm ideas and prepare a presentation for the client for a sales force training programme
- Work with digital colleagues on an iPad quiz for use at a scientific congress or, e-detailing materials for use by reps



What do we look for in a new medical writer?

- **MEDICAL:** A science background (but not necessary medical science) – PhD is highly 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



Editorial route into agency

- Many agencies have editors in addition to writers
- Different skill set from writing but editors need the same scientific training as writers
- Editors might come to agency via medical books or journals publishing editorial function
- Technical editing experience is usually essential
- However, opportunities might exist via editorial assistant role, or editorial internships



The role of the account manager

My background



Client services fundamentals

- Remember we work in the service industry
- Recognise client needs and organise resources to deliver
- Drive projects to ensure efficient planning and execution
- Know the product you are working on and its basic properties, features and benefits
 - Indication(s)
 - MOA
 - Marketing objectives
 - Key messages
 - Competitor information: unique attributes/differentiators
 - Treatment landscape



Client service: basic principles

- Create a positive, and memorable experience for every client
- Meet (and strive to exceed) expectations
- Manage expectations
 - Keep the client informed at each step of the project
 - Provide proactive support and consultation
- Show that you are a pleasure to work with and look for ways to provide excellent service
- Learn your clients' 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



What do we look for in a new account manager?

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



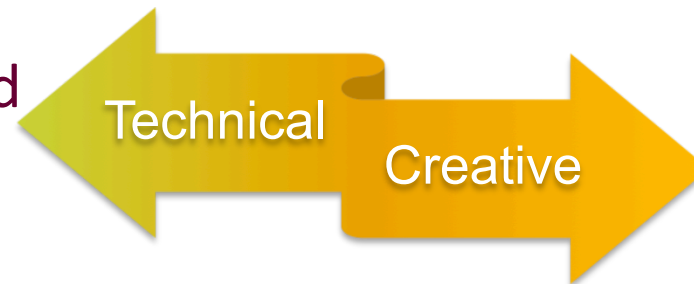
Deliver what the client wants, on time, on budget



Why join a Med Comms agency?

Why join a Med Comms agency?

- Broad experience to be gained



- Opportunity to work with global experts in their field
- Potential to work in a range of therapy areas
- 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



Think about whether you like travel



Think about whether you like travel!



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!



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