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Information is everything!



Few are aware of the extent to which international pharma companies are sharing knowledge and data to accelerate research and drug development. Graphite's portfolio company, Hanson Wade, the pharma sector's prime conference organiser and data provider, is at the heart of this communal effort. Against this background, this bulletin looks at the role of conferences and the power of data sharing in the pharma and biotech industry.

Drug development pipeline



Source: Strategy & Analytics, Drugs In development by phase, February 2022

The pandemic has brought the pharmaceutical industry into the public consciousness as never before. The casual observer could be forgiven for assuming that the largest pharmaceutical companies and biotech firms compete tooth and nail and, once products are on the market, that is true. Companies need to recoup the vast sums they spend on research and development (R&D), with more than 96% of pharmaceutical drugs failing to gain regulatory approval and even successful drugs sometimes taking more than ten years and costing over \$1 billion to get to market.

Behind the scenes however, and away from the competitive B2C and B2B2C markets, the picture is reassuringly different. In stark contrast to the trade secrets so jealously protected by firms in other industries - a mere handful of people guard the recipe for Coca-Cola or the process to avoid a chocolate tail on a Malteser - the sense of working for a greater purpose runs deep within life sciences R&D.



Knowledge-sharing forums for pharma

Hanson Wade puts on 180 conferences a year. These provide opportunities for leading researchers and scientists in highly specialised fields to share their latest insights and discoveries. They also facilitate discussion, intelligence sharing and networking. They have become a critical part of R&D within the pharmaceutical and biotech industries.

When Covid-19 stopped physical events overnight, Hanson Wade rapidly launched a digital conference product and ran 104 digital events between June and December 2020. More than 13,000 delegates attended from all continents. The vast majority of the company's events continued in a virtual format throughout 2021.

Hanson Wade's research has shown that delegates and sponsors are now keen to return to physical events. For the rest of 2022, most conferences will be held in person.

Digital conferences will continue to play an important role in, for example, areas where demand is lower or where audiences are more geographically dispersed. On the other hand, it seems unlikely that hybrid events will endure.

Beacon - critical information for R&D in life sciences



[Watch video](#)

Power to the data

Hanson Wade's Beacon and Searchlight products complement the conferences. They draw upon the group's client relationships and facilitate knowledge-sharing and R&D. Both products are used by the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world, helping them to improve R&D decision-making. Beacon provides a rich database of drug development data and Searchlight builds membership communities of senior industry participants around specific industry-wide topics.

The pharmaceutical industry's response to the challenge of Covid-19 has amazed us all. As the owner of Hanson Wade, we at Graphite Capital are proud of the part the company has played and will continue to play in supporting the collaborative process that enabled the pharmaceutical industry to respond so impressively to the challenge of Covid-19.

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