

## Messaging on Men's Sexual Health

### A qualitative and quantitative exploration to build DTC communications strategy

A major pharmaceutical company marketing a prescription product for the treatment of Erectile Dysfunction (ED) was interested in refining its communications with current users and prospects. Four prospect groups were identified as priority targets via quantitative segmentation driven by pre-existing psychological dimensions to seeking therapy and their interest/need for ED treatment.

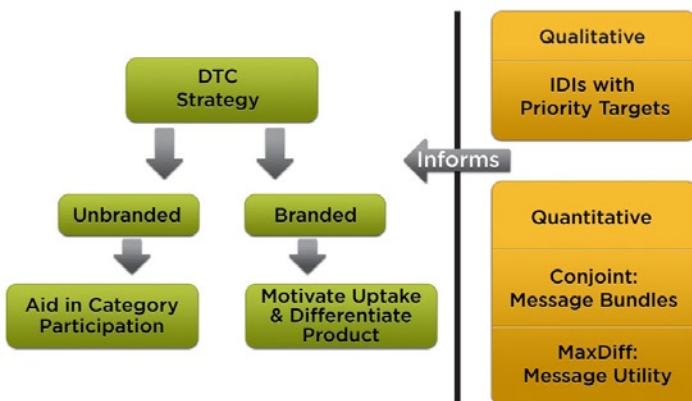
The company retained Observant LLC to assist with identifying an optimal core message for the direct to consumer (DTC) communication strategy. The campaign consisted of both an unbranded message component - a 'fact and information' component designed to facilitate patient entry into the category; and a branded message component - aimed at reinforcing product differentiation. Observant LLC took a multi-stage mixed-methods approach to message optimization.

large number of complicated messaging options without unnecessarily burdening respondents; how to distill the universe of messages into the most effective individual messages; and how to identify those messages that negatively impacted product affinity. The team developed a multi-stage sorting task to rapidly identify top and bottom messages - then did a 'deep drill' on these messages to understand likely effects and to identify opportunities to adjust language for maximum impact. The qualitative research produced a manageable set of the best unbranded and branded messages which were then subjected to quantitative research and analysis.

The second quantitative phase was designed to help the client understand how messages could be best combined to create segment-specific message bundles, that accomplished specific strategic objectives. Observant LLC designed two quantitative on-line surveys (branded & unbranded), incorporating two separate approaches for message analysis: a 'conjoint' task - where sufferers were shown sets of messages and asked to provide ratings on desired outcome variables (motivation, differentiation, etc.) - in comparison to a baseline measure, and a 'maxdiff' where respondents disclosed their preferences for each individual message.

Certain target segments while well differentiated on key characteristics, demonstrated homogeneity in message bundle preference. To resolve this challenge, the Observant LLC modeling team utilized a novel approach to integrating the maxdiff task's preference data for each message at the individual respondent level, with the conjoint modeling of segment specific demand. By taking this approach, Observant LLC was able to recommend optimal messaging strategies to reach high-priority sufferers, encourage them to seek treatment for ED, establish product preference, and ultimately motivate Rx requests. These strategies were then utilized as the strategic basis for the DTC campaign.

#### APPROACH TO CONSUMER COMMUNICATIONS



The first qualitative phase culled from the universe of messages (consisting of all verifiable product 'claims'), those that had the potential to motivate patient action. Observant LLC moderators, experienced in qualitative moderating in the sexual health area and other difficult to interview populations, conducted IDIs with ED sufferers in several US cities. A number of methodological and analytic challenges emerged; including: how to present a