



Transforming Biopharma Launch Strategy for 100x Patient Impact

Introduction

In early 2024, a pioneering biopharmaceutical company specializing in rare diseases stood at the threshold of transformation. It had already achieved success with a key groundbreaking rare disease drug. But an even greater opportunity was on the horizon: FDA approval for a new indication that would fundamentally change their market position — launching them into specialty medicine and expanding their potential patient base from 3,000 to 300,000. The stakes were enormous. However, success would require more than just regulatory approval. To fully capitalize on this opportunity and bring a potentially life-changing therapy to patients would require a fundamental transformation in how their field teams engage with healthcare providers.

Challenge

The biopharma company realized that its existing team of sales representatives were accustomed to working closely with healthcare providers (HCPs) to identify the few (if any) patients who might benefit from the rare disease treatment. With the company evolving into specialty medicine, they needed a different approach.

The primary target HCP for the new indication:

1. Had significant expertise in the disease state.
2. Likely had dozens of qualifying patients.
3. Had a preferred therapy that their patients were already using.



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The sales representatives needed to understand what each HCP's needs, values, and treatment preferences were to properly position and sell the new indication.

To support the upcoming launch, the company dramatically expanded its field presence—growing its field force and sales leadership team by 40%. This rapid growth created both an opportunity and a challenge: how to maintain the high-touch relationships that had driven their past success while scaling new capabilities effectively across a much larger team.

The company also brought in a seasoned commercial executive who had prior experience partnering with PDG. This executive quickly identified that while the existing sales team had cultivated strong HCP relationships, the entire field team needed a more systematic and scalable approach to move HCPs along the customer engagement continuum. Drawing from previous experiences where PDG had transformed sales team effectiveness, the executive engaged PDG as a strategic partner.

The mandate was clear: develop and implement a scalable customer engagement model that would align the expanded commercial team and other cross-functional roles on a single engagement process and position them for a successful launch.

Solution

PDG orchestrated the transformation through three distinct strategic phases.

1. THE ADVISE PHASE

This phase began with extensive stakeholder interviews and analysis of current strategies and processes—taking inventory of what was currently being used. Through collaborative sessions with senior leadership, PDG worked with the Sales, Sales Operations, and L&D teams to build strong executive sponsorship (champions) and aligned on strategic priorities. What emerged was more than a sales initiative—it was a comprehensive vision for customer engagement to be built and executed by leaders and would foster a *growth mindset* across the organization. The proposed approach centered on enabling fundamental behavior change at all organizational levels, supported by a carefully structured accountability model to drive successful implementation.

Aligning Cross-Functional Teams—A Key Success Factor

One of the key outcomes of this phase was aligning sales, marketing, L&D, patient services, and other cross-functional roles on a single customer engagement process. This framework ensured all teams were coordinated in their approach to customer engagement, breaking down silos and driving consistency across the organization.

2. THE CREATE PHASE

In Q2, PDG designed an integrated solution with several key components, all focused on driving behavior change while minimizing time spent out of the field—a crucial consideration given the high cost of pulling field teams away from their territories. This phase involved the development of the following initiatives.



100x INCREASE

100 times increase in patient reach, from 3,000 to 300,000

1. **A Launch Excellence Roadmap** that drove new field behaviors, aligning efforts across sales, marketing, market access, and operations. This comprehensive roadmap ensured leaders and representatives were aligned with the needs of the growing organization and moving toward common objectives.
2. **A Customer Engagement Model** to drive HCP progression in a 4-stage Customer Continuum from Learn (Awareness) to Advocate. While the client developed the engagement model, PDG provided coaching to front-line leaders, equipping them to guide their teams through strategic pre-call planning based on each HCP's position in their journey. The goal was to assess where the healthcare provider stood on the continuum, determine appropriate actions to advance them to the next phase, and support those actions with relevant materials, clinical evidence, and patient-centric narratives.
3. **A Comprehensive Change Management Plan** that included weekly communication briefings; regular coaching advisement for team leaders to reinforce specific strategic goals of the day/week; feedback, accountability, and systematic reporting mechanisms; and integration with existing workflows.
4. **On-Demand Knowledge Transfer Capabilities** to support continuous improvement without disrupting field time, PDG created short, self-directed segments, including podcasts and interactive scenarios that could be completed in the flow of work. The flexibility of these segments was key, as they allowed teams to access knowledge as needed, ensuring continuous reinforcement of key concepts and new behaviors with just-in-time support when needed most.
5. **A Measurement Strategy** that tracked both leading and lagging indicators of success. This wasn't just about tracking outcomes—it was about identifying early signals that would predict future success or indicate needed course corrections. While this remains a work-in-progress, baseline measurements were established. The real impact comes from tying the engagement approach to other field components, such as FCRs and workshops, ensuring continuous refinement and alignment with broader initiatives.



“This new framework helps reps leverage their skills and maximize their effectiveness with every HCP Engagement.”

— Client Front-Line Leader

6. **A Leader-Driven Model** with a robust coaching overlay. This was a critical element of the transformation strategy and included a cascade approach to capability development. The key to success was the VP of Sales' commitment to ensuring his leaders were proficient in the approach—and in turn, requiring the same of their leaders—creating a culture of accountability and reinforcement at every level.

3. THE EXECUTE STAGE

The framework was rolled out in Q3 2024 and operated on multiple levels simultaneously. PDG managed and supported the program execution, ensuring seamless coordination across all levels, functions, and systems.

A Cascade Approach to Sales Excellence

A key part of the Execute stage and transformation strategy was PDG's cascade approach to capability development and HCP engagement excellence. The initiative started with four first-line leaders (champions) and five internal L&D team members, who became experts in the new framework. These groups paired together to coach the remaining front-line leaders, who then coached their teams of customer-facing professionals.


To support this cascade, the PDG team developed comprehensive materials and coaching frameworks tailored to the initiative. PDG supported the training team in conducting regular check-ins with the champions, providing facilitation support and addressing challenges as they arose. This ongoing collaboration was instrumental in

maintaining momentum and ensuring quality as the initiative scaled—fostering the desired behavior changes and skill development over time.

Data-Driven Accountability. Accountability was embedded at every level. Using its Veeva CRM, the company tracked not just pre-call planning completion but also the quality and focus of call objectives. Regional leaders also identified team patterns, enabling targeted coaching and cross-functional collaboration. This data-driven approach fostered continuous improvement across people, processes, and technology, driving smarter, more effective engagement.

Skill Building and Reinforcement Activities. The in-person and online development segments were launched in a carefully orchestrated sequence, with weekly online pushes of just-in-time content. These bite-sized online activities kept core concepts fresh while allowing the field reps to continue to develop their skills in the flow of work. The team also developed motivational materials to continue the momentum, including “voices from the field” - success stories from leaders and top performers sharing their experiences with the new approaches.

Metrics and Reporting. PDG created a comprehensive measurement model, which the client's team used to monitor and report on key metrics throughout the implementation, providing actionable insights that enabled quick adjustments.



“This is a framework that will take all of our great representatives to exceptional.”

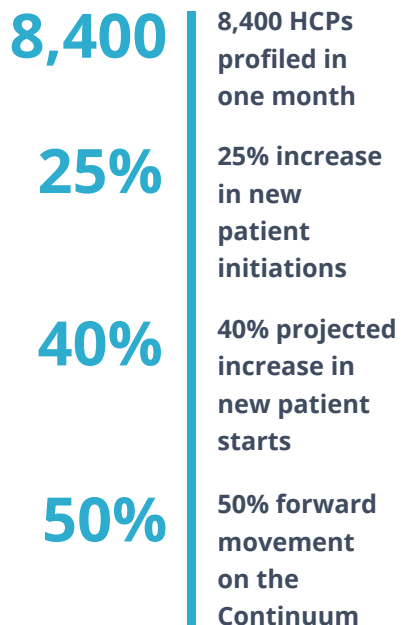
— Client Front-Line Leader

Ongoing Communication. PDG created a weekly communication plan and schedule, which were disseminated by the L&D team to keep managers informed and engaged while integrating new processes into existing workflows. This integration, particularly within their CRM system, helped embed both communications and changes into daily routines.

Results

The solution's impact was evident almost immediately. Within one quarter of the rollout, thousands of HCPs were profiled on the Customer Continuum and over half of the interactions moved an HCP forward on the Continuum. The company also saw an unprecedented 25% increase in new patient initiations for their existing indication—reaching their highest levels ever, with improvements ongoing. The new processes were embraced enthusiastically, with nearly 100% completion rates for skill/knowledge development activities. Client-facing teams are projecting a 40% increase in new patient starts based on their newly enhanced capabilities. Expectations are equally high for the new indication when it launches.

RESULTS AFTER ONE QUARTER

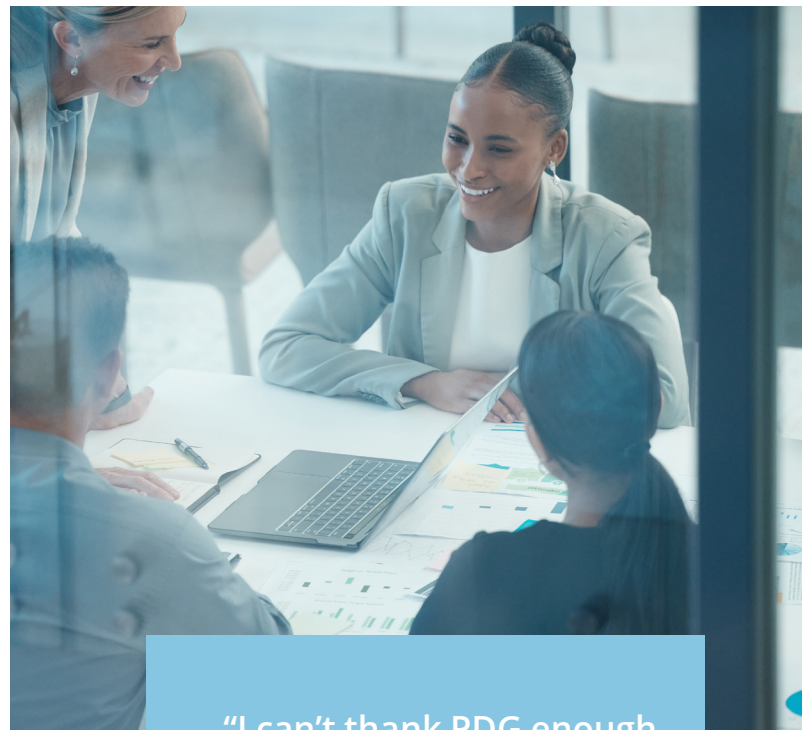


Q4 2024 brand revenues exceeded Wall Street expectations and were ~50% higher compared to Q4 2023, driven by this initiative and others deployed by the client.

Future Use

Speed to market is critical—especially for a smaller company. A key success driver was ensuring the client had the right people in the right seats to execute the strategy effectively. The strong results from this initial phase have led to an expanded partnership through 2025 and beyond. As the company prepares for its new indication launch in Q1 2025, they're extending the engagement model to more customer-facing roles (including Medical Science Liaisons (MSLs), Patient Services, and other cross-functional customer-facing roles). Advanced coaching programs for front-line leaders are being implemented, and robust measurement systems are being established to identify and address performance gaps.

This transformation illustrates how a strategic combination of executive sponsorship, structured processes, and data-driven accountability can position organizations to seize transformative market opportunities. By building sustainable behavior change through incremental steps, the company didn't just prepare for a product launch—they created a foundation for long-term commercial excellence.



"I can't thank PDG enough for their partnership in transforming this organization!"

— Vice President of US Sales

Change behavior. Transform business.



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