



POINT OF VIEW

# Three Approaches to Building a Successful Pharma Franchise



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In an increasingly crowded pharmaceutical space with novel and next-generation therapies being developed every day and at an unprecedented pace, investing broadly across a wide range of therapeutic categories may not always be the optimal approach. Companies unable to make tough choices to pursue a clear path to leadership might have difficulty competing with their highly focused rivals.<sup>1</sup> So when an opportunity arises, a franchise can make a lot of sense.

The desire to consolidate and maximize for efficiency can be accomplished through a franchise or from unifying a parent brand to govern over a portfolio of offerings. In some cases, this could be within a particular disease state or therapeutic area. In others, it could mean a combination therapy with different and/or multiple indications. A focused, specialized approach helps consolidate R&D resources and establishes a level of expertise within a particular category.

But does franchise building, consolidating resources, and unifying under the umbrella of a “brand house” dilute the value of the existing products or treatments? We don’t think so—if the correct approach is taken. Pharma companies will move forward in 2020 and beyond by expanding the use of breakthrough or existing drugs for additional indications and in new combinations with other treatments. This ensures better possible outcomes recognized by HCPs and their patients. Over time, successful companies will develop additional products in the category, firmly anchoring their leadership position.<sup>1</sup>

As an agency whose clients frequently ask how to navigate the challenges of franchise marketing in the pharma sphere, there is an appetite for providing ideas and support that result in implementing some standardized practices. When implemented, these strategic approaches foster strong brand identities and maximize our clients’ reputations as innovators and leaders in their respective categories into the future and over the long term. We have identified 3 specific strategic approaches from looking at successful pharma franchises that also maintain equity of individual treatments within their respective portfolios. The optimal goal is to effectively straddle both franchise and product, creating a halo effect that benefits their bottom line.

In a rapidly evolving market with increasingly crowded disease and/or treatment categories, pharma companies are starting to take active measures in developing franchises anchored in these 3 strategic approaches. A true franchise powerhouse will successfully balance each of these strategies without sacrificing the equity of the individual brands within its portfolios. As the trend of consolidating resources and investing in creating pharmaceutical franchises continues, how is your company positioned to grow?

**+ OWN A UNIQUE SPACE**

**+ DEVELOP A BEST-IN-CLASS SERVICE MODEL**

**+ SHOW A COMMITMENT BY INVESTING IN THE FUTURE**



## Three Approaches to Building a Successful Pharma Franchise

### — OWN A UNIQUE SPACE

**Stake your claim:** Laser-focus on a specific area to begin a unique conversation and capitalize on share of voice

With the breakthrough of any new technology (eg, gene therapies, RNAi, CAR T, CRISPR Cas9) comes the opportunity for a company to capitalize on a franchise and own a leadership position either through the technology or scientific approach that spans across therapies in development or from combination therapies.

Other companies are able to take a franchise approach by focusing their efforts on developing a range of treatments for one specific disease category. This essentially allows a pharma company to claim category ownership by specifically focusing its efforts on a disease category, whether it's rare diseases such as cystic fibrosis with a huge unmet need or more crowded categories like respiratory and immunology.

### — DEVELOP A BEST-IN-CLASS SERVICE MODEL

**Provide unparalleled, best-in-class service** by investing in a robust franchise service platform that supports individual brands within the portfolio

Having a well-defined service platform is an essential component in building a best-in-class franchise. We're seeing pharma companies developing independent platforms that act as a support arm for their brands. These operational support arms assist in the manufacturing process and logistics associated with certain treatments. The support then becomes a franchise-level benefit and incentive for physicians prescribing a product or combination therapies to patients.

Best-in-class service is also seen on the patient side with patient support programs that serve each individual treatment within a company's portfolio. Patient support programs can offer a wealth of resources and valuable lifestyle support—independent of a patient's individual treatment selection. Exploring opportunities such as telemedicine and other interactive treatment support can be a unique and competitive offering. These types of extensive support networks can be perceived as incentives to select a treatment within a portfolio.

In both cases, these services generate reciprocal value and equity between franchise (service) and treatment (product).

### — SHOW A COMMITMENT BY INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

**Communicate a vision and ongoing commitment to the future** by promoting and continually investing in a growing pipeline

Investing in the future can be a core differentiator in determining the ultimate success of a franchise. Innovation and an evolving pipeline are traits often associated with brands in the oncology, rare disease, or breakthrough treatment space. Articulating a clear mission, ongoing trial updates, and a robust pipeline for a variety of molecules or treatments is critical in establishing an evolving portfolio and ensuring a successful future. Companies and brands with a specialized focus in R+D and strong commitments to researching new targeted therapies help to ensure a promising future. To that end, we're seeing brands investing in more nontraditional channels and tactics that serve to more actively promote their pipeline (eg, experiential/digital).

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