

PharmaWrite®

# Successfully Identifying and Organizing External Experts

A value brief that describes how PharmaWrite used a variety of techniques and skills to identify and organize external experts who best served their customer's needs.



# A Customer in Need



**In this scenario,** our client sought assistance in conducting a number of scientific advisory boards related to an area of research that was new to their company.

They were interested in learning more about the viability of biosimilar products in specific disease areas and wanted to gather feedback to help them determine the commercial opportunity for developing a biosimilar.

Our task was to identify external experts who had extensive knowledge of the disease area and the current marketed biologic product and invite them to serve on an advisory board. The general goal was 10 advisors with a mix of backgrounds to offer a variety of perspectives.

**To successfully address this customer request,** PharmaWrite used a variety of proven and experience-based techniques to identify individuals who would best serve the client's needs.

This approach allowed us to capture a diverse range of leaders and provide a wide but targeted selection of experts for our client.

# Proven Techniques



## **Searches of medical literature databases**

Searches were conducted after identifying relevant search terms related to the biologic product, competitor products, the disease state/therapeutic area, and other applicable terms and limiters.

## **Analysis of literature search results through use of a data-mining analysis tool**

This tool allows for the search results to be analyzed and reported in frequency tables for a variety of fields, including author, publications, and other publication-related fields. We quickly identified which authors were the most prolific in the relevant topics and which journals had published the largest number of relevant articles.

In addition to the numbers of publications, citation counts and the *h*-index were also considered. (The ***h*-index** is an author-level metric that attempts to measure both the productivity of authors and the citation impact of their publications.)

## **Identification of society leaders and other leaders and advocates**

We identified additional potential advisors through internet searches for Centers of Excellence, professional societies, patient advocacy groups, foundations, and government committees.

# Identification and Evaluation



## **Identification of journal editorial board members and reviewers**

Using the frequency tables created by the data-mining tool, we visited the websites of journals that published heavily in the relevant areas and compared their editorial board members and reviewers against the publication frequency tables.

## **Review of treatment guidelines in the relevant disease states and therapeutic areas**

Authors of guidelines were reviewed and compared against the frequency tables.

## **Identification of speakers at prestigious conferences**

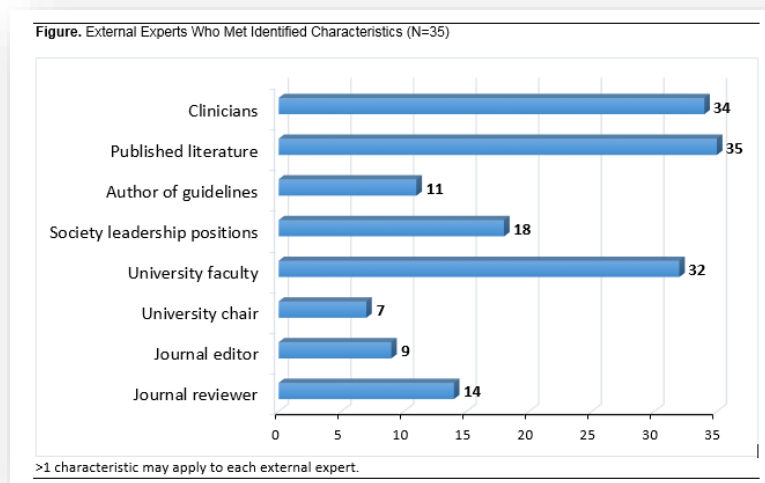
In addition to checking the speaking history of already-identified external experts, we assessed practitioners who had been invited to speak at multiple conferences and meetings relevant to the identified topics.

## **Careful Evaluation**

Once potential leaders were identified through the above methods, we applied our in-house evaluation tool to assign a score to each, also taking into consideration if the leader was an active clinician.

# Results from a Proven Partner

Through these methods we identified 35 potential external experts for presentation to the client, keeping in mind the target of 10 experts to attend an advisory board meeting. We found a good mix of academic experts, clinician thought leaders, community-based society leaders and advocates, and journal editors and reviewers. This diverse group fulfilled the mix of backgrounds targeted by our client. The graphic below identifies how many in the group of 35 potential advisory board members met each of the specified criteria.



A total of 11 advisors accepted the invitation to attend the meeting. During the course of the meeting it was revealed that the advisors were very knowledgeable in their respective areas but lacked familiarity with biosimilar products in general. This was likely due largely to the lack of biosimilar products in the disease state/therapeutic area. Many of the advisors were familiar with each other's work, and a few remarked that they were impressed with the advisor selection.

## Conclusion

The meeting provided valuable information on how the clinicians felt about existing and upcoming biologic drugs and how biosimilars may impact current treatment options and product selection. Feedback from the advisors will be a strong factor in the client's decision on how to proceed with the biosimilar product.

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