

Welcome to the spring edition of "MK&A News," a quarterly e-newsletter designed to familiarize you with our firm's offerings and highlight developments in constituency relations of interest to the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and device companies.

Spring is a busy season at MK&A where April showers lead not only to May flowers but also to a vast and varied array of patient and professional congresses, meetings, conferences and events. These gatherings are a perfect opportunity to engage your key stakeholders in face-to-face meetings and learn about their current goals and activities while also sharing company news, clinical updates and introducing new contacts. This issue offers tips for successful partnerships, whether you are meeting advocates for the first time or refreshing valued connections.

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## Building Strong Advocacy Partnerships



When approaching partnership possibilities with stakeholder groups, pharma, biotech and medical device companies need to find and focus on shared concerns. Relationships will gradually build into strong alliances as goals are confirmed, commitments are demonstrated,

and an open and honest dialogue addressing strengths - as well as weaknesses - takes place.

Developing relationships should be the responsibility of a designated professional within the corporate operational structure, separate from marketing or other business functions that may pose a potential conflict of

## About MK&A

MK&A is a health care constituency relations firm that focuses on helping pharmaceutical, biotechnology and medical device and diagnostic companies foster relationships with patient, consumer, and professional organizations that speed the development, approval, and appropriate use of innovative medical products and services so that all patients have access to the best available treatment options.

## Core Service

- Research and business intelligence
- Strategy
- Patient group relations
- Professional group relations
- Policy influencer outreach

## STAR Report

The STAR Report is a syndicated market research offering from MK&A and The Brooks Group, allowing you to benchmark your company's advocacy relations efforts against your competitors.

STAR 2011 available in May. For more information, [click here](#), or contact Amber Spierer at [aspierer@kruegerandassociates.com](mailto:aspierer@kruegerandassociates.com)

## Quick Links

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departments is employed to promote sharing of advocacy information and knowledge, as well as build strategic plans reflecting business goals. Ideally, the advocacy function would be centralized with its own decision-making power and budgets signaling a genuine long-term commitment to advocacy partners. However, variations in companies' size, culture, and operating policies can affect how advocacy relations is structured and handled.

While patient groups welcome cash contributions, they are often eager for information, including updates on experimental and approved products. Patients and their families, consumers, health care professionals, health care policy makers and the media rely on the credibility of these organizations. Providing this information may present regulatory and policy challenges, and thoughtful, transparent responses by leading companies are both appreciated and respected by stakeholder groups.

Once a partnership is established, make a commitment to your chosen group in dollars, time, and duration, and expect accountability. An effective strategy is to start small by choosing one project to partner on first, and then build the program over time, fine-tuning the logistics and the relationship. You may then also wish to consider other cooperative opportunities.

*MK&A has had extensive experience working with pharmaceutical, biotech and device companies helping them understand industry best practices and organizational structures to determine what approach will work best for their particular company with accompanying guidelines to ensure alignment.*

## DOs and DON'Ts of Patient Group Relations

### DO

- DO develop relationships based on mutual values and respect.
- DO clearly define your expectations, goals and desired outcomes.
- DO understand that group leadership and volunteers have varying levels of sophistication and influence.
- DO provide patient groups with timely, accurate



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- DO start small and let the relationship evolve over time.

### **DON'T**

- DON'T promote a product or issue. Instead, inform and educate.
- DON'T make assumptions about group's understanding of medical, scientific, or health policy language or constructs.
- DON'T let them learn about company information or breaking news from a third party or the media.
- DON'T expect financial support to mean that you can control or dictate what the group does.
- DON'T make decisions in a vacuum; patient groups value stability and long-term relationships.

### **Highlighting Healthy Advocacy Relationships: A Case Study**



Millennium: The Takeda Oncology Company maintains robust relationships with many advocacy partners and has been honored and recognized for its commitment to patients and caregivers in the fight against cancer.

Lisa Adler, vice president, corporate communications, considers Millennium's relationships with advocates to be one of the company's most valuable assets. Millennium frequently meets with advocate partners at global conferences and meetings and on occasion hosts its partners at the company's Cambridge, Massachusetts, headquarters.

In 2010, Millennium conducted a patient advocacy advisory board and invited advocates to tour the corporate research labs and speak with scientists. "The advocates were excited to have a behind-the-scenes look where a cure for cancer could someday be found," notes Lisa. In describing the company's approach to working with advocates, she shares the following tips:

- Trusted and mutually respectful relationships are established and maintained through transparency and frequent communication.

- Build long-term partnerships around shared goals, such as disease awareness, education or access to care.
- Recognize that partners may not always agree and it's important to take the long view and focus on areas of common ground.

Millennium's 1,000 Cranes of Hope initiative is an exceptional example of a partnership with advocates to raise disease awareness and funding. The ancient Japanese tradition of senbazuru promises that a person who folds 1000 cranes will be granted a wish. For every wish created during the months of March, April, and May, Millennium will make a donation to the International Myeloma Foundation, the oldest and largest foundation focused on multiple myeloma. To learn more, visit: [www.1000cranesofhope.com](http://www.1000cranesofhope.com).

### **In Closing...**

Whether it's the Orphan Drug Congress in Vienna, ASCO<sup>1</sup> in Chicago, IASLC<sup>2</sup> in Amsterdam, or ESPN<sup>3</sup> in Dubrovnik, MK&A looks forward to seeing you at an upcoming meeting. We welcome the opportunity to apply our firm's knowledge and expertise in patient, consumer and professional group relations to helping you achieve your goals.

Let us know how we can assist you by calling us at + 1 212 620 2770 or e-mailing: [mkrueger@kruegerandassociates.com](mailto:mkrueger@kruegerandassociates.com).

<sup>1</sup> American Society of Clinical Oncology

<sup>2</sup> International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer

<sup>3</sup> European Society for Paediatric Nephrology