

Patient Assessment at the Point of Care

Trilogy Associates was engaged by a multinational client firm to conduct a multistep assessment of market opportunities for a totally new approach to patient assessment at the point of care (POC) and in the laboratory. Their new-product initiative was a radical departure for a company with limited experience in the medical products arena. The steps taken in meeting this challenge are briefly summarized here.

Target Markets and Clinical Needs

We began with a review of the relevant clinical and research literature dealing with the target blood analytes, their applications and their sites of use. This landscaping work was complemented by telephone dialogs with carefully chosen hematologists and clinicians known to be opinion leaders in the field. We identified the best-fit applications for the client's technology, along with several of the most important unmet needs within those applications.

Prospective User Acceptance

We developed a product concept description of our client's planned offering in broad strokes. This description was then shared with a variety of prospective users and purchase decision-makers to assess their interests in its clinical application in comparison to existing *in vitro* diagnostic products. Our findings contributed to the client's go/no-go decision in favor of proceeding with the initiative and an associated conditional R&D investment.

Commercial Viability

The next step was to reach out to a larger community of potential users to gauge initial response to the product concept, principal clinical/analytical uses and sites of use, price sensitivity, apparent limitations, suggested improvements, and detailed comparisons to competitive methods and their suppliers. Our methodology in this step was an online survey of US-based hematologists and clinicians.

Opportunity Sizing

We estimated the accessible US market associated with full commercialization of the planned product based upon our prior identification of best-fit applications, available published procedural and market data, competitor sales data, and inferences from prior telephone dialogs with key opinion leaders. As a result of this estimate, the client decided to move to a full product development activity.

Expert Panels for Development Guidance

Our final step was live interactions of key opinion leaders (KOLs) at two client-sponsored US events. The KOLs represented clinical backgrounds in hematology, clinical pathology, cardiovascular surgery, trauma surgery and anesthesiology. Trilogy Associates' roles were to identify and recruit the experts, host both two-day meetings at a hotel, create a "script" for the interactions, and lead the discussions. Our purpose was to provide critical development guidance to our client's team, including detailed definitions of the desired attributes, characteristics and specifications of the contemplated product. In addition, EU-based KOLs were identified for later in-depth interviews.