ZS

SALES + MARKETING

A top-10 pharmaceutical company partnered with ZS to transform sales reporting across every therapeutic area in the U.S., creating significant efficiencies for commercial operations and the field.

Quality Over Quantity

TOP-10 PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY | U.S.

Commercial operations prepares sales reps by providing information. Reps need information from commercial operations. It's a simple relationship on the surface, but commercial operations has to be aware of the field's needs to enable them to drive business. When the field is overwhelmed with too many reports, or they don't have the right information, they reach out to commercial operations for ad hoc support too often. These requests overburden operations, making it even more difficult to provide quality reports to the field.

Furthermore, reporting needs evolve. Without a scalable and future-proof reporting platform, reports become dated quickly. But a change of this magnitude is more easily conceptualized than actualized, especially in large pharmaceutical companies with complex sales forces, where such changes have outsized impact. This leads to many key strategic questions: How do you develop the right reports? How do you deliver them on a future-proof platform? And how do you manage such a large-scale change?

A top-10, global pharmaceutical and biologics company recently was faced with this very problem in the United States. "If I was a rep, I could have gotten 20 to 30 reports in a given month, but how could I put all that together to make it useful? We saw significant opportunity for improvements," says this company's director of reporting for sales force operations, so the firm decided to partner with ZS to make its U.S. sales reporting streamlined, efficient, accurate and innovative.

The Problem

"Our reps probably felt like they were being ambushed by reports all the time," he says. "And commercial operations was struggling to keep up with reporting requests."

When the director of reporting took on a new leadership role at this company, his first priority was to dramatically improve reporting for both the field and commercial operations. The sheer number of reports was an issue in and of itself, but volume created other concerns, as well.

"We'd have people come to us with two versions of reports and ask us which had the right number," he says. "We were duplicating information across some reports, and it caused inconsistencies in the data."

The director also knew that he needed governance. "Every report anyone asked for, we built," he says. "We never said no, we never asked why." All of these requests put a sizeable burden on his team.

"There were homegrown reports being done in the field, circulated to peers, so getting control of this situation was important, too," the director says. "Those were the biggest challenges: too many reports, no single version of truth, and then the governance piece."

The director needed a partner to help transform sales reporting from design to adoption.

Impact where it matters.™

"A big part of this success is ZS's ability to understand our business environment. It's like they've been here for years. They can pick up on what I'm talking about and give me answers in minutes."

The Solution

The director put his faith in ZS as a partner. "We knew where we wanted to go. We formed our team, and then nine days later, the contract with ZS was live." After a few months of close partnership, the teams delivered their solution. Specifically, they:

+ Collaborated with sales leadership and the field to design a new reporting framework that was relevant to the reps' needs

+ Created one reporting platform that streamlined and consolidated more than 50 Excel reports into one dashboard

+ Built a governance model to review and prioritize ad hoc requests

+ Led a massive change management campaign within the company to drive adoption and discourage homegrown report creation

"Change management was huge," the director says. "There were more than 200 people involved in this transformation across every therapeutic area in the U.S., and it rolled out to more than 7,000 in the field. The collaboration with ZS was monumental, and critical to pulling this off."

Thanks to their collaborative efforts, the partners received the company's Commercial Effectiveness Award for the solution that they created.

The Impact

Because of the company's commitment to keeping the sales force prepared and the partners' willingness to learn from reps and build a smart, efficient reporting operation:

+ The field now has more valuable insights that are easier to find and consume

+ Reports have been streamlined by 55% across five business areas

+ Data quality and accuracy has improved

+ Report generation time has decreased from 160 hours per cycle to only a few hours

+ The time spent responding to ad hoc requests has been more than cut in half

The time savings for the director's team overall has been significant, and he says that the number of ad hoc requests is declining because the reports are more useful.

"Before we rolled this out, we would have two-hour status meetings," he says. "And three-quarters of the way in, we'd be looking for another meeting room because we knew we had another two hours of discussions. Now we're getting out 45 minutes early."

He adds: "We can turn questions from the field around on a dime now. A big part of this success is ZS's ability to understand our business environment. It's like they've been here for years. They can pick up on what I'm talking about and give me answers in minutes."