



SALES + MARKETING



Merrimack partnered with ZS to build a data and reporting infrastructure that enabled a brand-new commercial operation.

**ZS technology used:**

- + ARTiS™ for Oncology and Specialty Therapeutics

**TECHNOLOGY CASE STUDY:** Consulting + Business Technology

# Beyond Technology

MERRIMACK | ONCOLOGY AND SPECIALTY THERAPEUTICS | UNITED STATES

“If we didn’t get this right, it would have been like driving with a blindfold,” says Bob Bennett, business intelligence and analytics leader at Cambridge, Mass.-based Merrimack Pharmaceuticals. “Everything was at stake for the success of our first product launch.”

Before bringing ONIVYDE® to market, Merrimack had to build a new commercial operation supported by a technology ecosystem that didn’t currently exist. Merrimack chose ZS to design this ecosystem and began a partnership that has produced more than just technology.

## The Business Issue

### Commercial ops from scratch

When a biotechnology company prepares to introduce its first product to the market, the primary question is, “How?” For some companies, the answer is building their own commercial operation, which requires supporting technology—and the effectiveness of both depends on data.

Dealing with data is especially challenging in the oncology space, where the disparate data sources make customer insights all the more challenging to uncover.

Therefore, finding the right partner for such a launch is critical. A new biotechnology company needs help making decisions with future growth in mind.

## The Problem

### Knowing what you don’t know

“We had a viable product and made the decision to bring ONIVYDE® to the U.S. market on our own,” says Bennett, who led this transformation for Merrimack. Like any effective leader in his situation, Bennett’s first challenge was to determine what his team didn’t know and plan to fill those gaps as his team charted the future of Merrimack’s data and reporting ecosystem. Bennett knew that he needed a trusted technology partner.

“We had the data warehouse need and the reporting need,” Bennett says. “From our side of things, it seems pretty simple from a business-needs perspective, but when you’re building this solution and considering what data to use—inputs and outputs, reporting formats—there’s a lot. We needed a partner to help us.”

With so many intersecting variables to consider, working with multiple technology vendors—each of which might specialize in one area—presents its own set of challenges. Bennett was unwilling to risk working with several vendors, none of which might adequately understand the big picture.

Merrimack needed customer data and a way to clean, interpret and leverage it. To effectively educate their colleagues in the field, Merrimack would need regular and ad hoc reporting. And since the operation was new, Merrimack needed a solution that would scale as the business grew, and a partner that understood the company’s strategic objectives.

Learn more at  
[www.zsassociates.com](http://www.zsassociates.com)



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## The Solution

### A partner with domain expertise

In ZS, Bennett chose a partner with deep expertise in commercial operations and technology. “ZS isn’t a typical solution provider. They understand every aspect of our business, every touch point, and the downstream effects of every action. And because there was an educational component to this launch, their insights were essential,” he says.

“We started off with data strategy and working with ZS in education mode,” Bennett adds. “ZS helped frame a lot of what was coming down the road for us.”

Together, the partners built:

- + Merrimack’s long-term data strategy and road map
- + A technology ecosystem that pulls and manages data from multiple sources, powered by ZS’s own ARTiS™ for Oncology and Specialty Therapeutics
- + A data stewardship solution to clean challenging oncology data and make it useful and actionable
- + A dedicated ZS operations team that manages data and vendor relationships
- + HQ and field reporting solutions that Merrimack uses to analyze and manage field operations

“With ZS, we had a seasoned team,” Bennett says. “They were showing us what the future would look like, so we could be prepared and keep our attention on the big picture.”

## The Results

### Going to market, ready for the future

Merrimack has successfully launched its commercial operation, which is supported by robust and effective technology.

Together, Merrimack and ZS:

- + Created an IT road map and ongoing strategic partnership that continues to support Merrimack’s commercial operation
- + Provided a new operation with a best-in-class data, reporting and ad hoc analytics capabilities
- + Designed a future-proof and scalable technology ecosystem that will grow with Merrimack
- + Inspired high user satisfaction and adoption of HQ reports

“It’s critical to be able to project data in ways that different stakeholders throughout the organization can consume, from marketing to the field,” Bennett says. “Without this data and our reporting capability, insights would be disconnected.”

“But it went beyond just the technology with ZS,” Bennett adds. “It’s been an end-to-end consulting relationship. I’ve worked with vendors who are always in sell mode and there isn’t a high level of trust. With ZS, I can really brainstorm and partner with them, like they’re part of my team. It’s more of an ‘us’ instead of an ‘us and them.’”

ZS is the world’s largest firm focused exclusively on helping companies improve overall performance and grow revenue and market share, through end-to-end sales and marketing solutions—from customer insights and strategy to analytics, operations and technology. More than 4,500 ZS professionals in 22 offices worldwide draw on deep industry and domain expertise to deliver impact for clients across multiple industries. To learn more, visit [www.zsassociates.com](http://www.zsassociates.com) or follow us on Twitter and LinkedIn.