

Brand resistance – vaccine naming

Overview

Amongst human healthcare products, vaccines occupy a uniquely special place thanks to their critically essential nature, the seasonality of some of the diseases they treat, their biological composition and their somewhat commodity-like status.

The recent coronavirus outbreak has shed light on the scale of both the financial value of the vaccines market (\$35 billion) as well as its growth patterns (sixfold increase over last two decades). The vaccines area is dominated by four big players (GSK, Sanofi, Merck & Co. and Pfizer) that account for 85% of the market.

The “long life” of vaccines which can treat a wide variety of conditions such as flu, pertussis, shingles and polio, means that they are reliably consistent drivers of revenue for their manufacturers. Merck's vaccines business, as a single industry example, has showed annual revenue growth of 9% since 2010.

Clearly vaccines represent a keystone of both global healthcare provision, accounting for the prevention of more than two million deaths annually, as well as highly lucrative profit generation in the sector (the worldwide market expected to reach \$62.2 billion by 2027). Just as the vaccines marketplace has characteristics specific to itself, so too the naming of vaccines largely conforms to very particular product-reflective parameters.

Vaccine names – functional imperative

Since all vaccines fundamentally do the same thing, offering either prevention of, or protection from, disease, the scope for incorporating meaningfully differentiated outcome communication within vaccine names is naturally finite.

When selecting, or administering, vaccine products functionality is key – names typically need to communicate either benefit, condition reference, composition (clinical detail such as valency) or indeed “vaccine” (to distinguish from other healthcare product categories). Overlap of same or similar word-parts is common. Naming strategies include both ‘family’ (common suffix, such as GSK's ~rix vaccines) and ‘stand-alone’ (unrelated) or mixed approaches.

Actual target audiences for vaccines are usually not patients, nor even prescribers/administrators, but mass-treating/bulk-buying organisations such as national health bodies, immunization providers, as well as state and federal governments. Decision-makers in such groups respond better to product-distinguishing descriptor-like names rather than arbitrary or emotionally evocative brands.

Looking forward

Functionality and disease reference will no doubt characterize much of the future naming for newly-developed vaccine products but there may also be room for a break from the norm in terms of impactful differentiation and long-lasting stand-out value in a commodity marketplace.

To contact Purple Fire Branding, specialists in brand naming, research and design, please telephone +44 (0)20 8166 1853 or visit www.purplefirebranding.com

Select vaccine product and brand names

ACAM2000	Fluad	Menactra	Poliovax	Trumenba
Acthib	Fluarix	Menhibrix	Prevenar	Twinrix
Adacel	Flublok	Menitorix	Prenar	Typhim
Afluria	Flucelvax	Menjugate	Priorix	Vagta
Agriflu	Flulaval	Menomune (Menquadri)	Proquad	Varivax
Ambrix	Flumist	Menveo	Quinvaxem	Vaxchora
BCG Vaccine	Fluvirin	M-M-R II	Rabavert	Vaxelis
Bexsero	Fluzone	M-M-Vax	Rabipur	Vaxigrip
Biopolio	Focetria	Nasovac	Recombivax	Verorab
Biothrax	Gardasil	Nimenrix	Rotarix	Vivofit
Boostrix	Havrix	Opvero	Rotateq	YF-Vax
Cellura	Hepatitis B	Pandemrix	Rotavac	Zostavax
Cervarix	Hexaxim	Panvax	Seriflu	
Daptacel	Hiberix	Pediarix	Shingrix	
Dengvaxia	Imovax	Pentabio	Synflorix	
Engerix	Infanrix	Pentacel	TDVAX	
Eupenta	Ixiaro	Pneumovax	Tenivac	
Fendrix	Jeev	Poliavax	Tice	
	Kinrix		Tioovac	

Other
GSK
Merck
Pfizer
Sanofi

Vaccines product and brand names commentary

- Vaccines tend, generally, to be descriptive/suggestive of:
 - Function/benefit (= protection, prevention)
 - Condition
 - Composition (valency, clinical detail etc.)
 - “Vaccine”
- Commodity-like status = meaningful differentiation/high stand-out not always necessary
- Extended family format best exemplified by GSK's Rixensart-inspired suffix names
- Even apparently meaningless names are rooted in significance, often referenced via acronym (Jeev = Japanese encephalitis [JEV], Opvero = oral polio vaccine [OPV], Bexsero = serogroup B)



GSK

- Mixed portfolio (often disease-referential brand names, includes acquired products but own discoveries are ~rix suffixed)

Ambrix
Boostrix
Cervarix
Engerix
Fendrix
Fluarix
Havrix
Hepatitis B
Hiberix
Infanrix
Kinrix

Menhibrix
Menitorix
Pandemrix
Pediarix
Priorix
Rotarix
Shingrix
Synflorix
Twinrix
Typhim
Varivax

Bexsero
Encepur
Flulaval
Menjugate
Menveo
Quinvaxem
Rabipur

Sanofi

- Mixed portfolio (several ~cel suffixed, disease and/or vaccine-referential)

Adacel
Daptacel
Pentacel
Quadrax

ACAM2000
Acthib
Dengvaxia
Flublok
Imovax
Ipol
Menactra
Tenivac
Typhim
Vaxigrip
YF-Vax

Pfizer

- Few products, “prevention”-suggestive and disease-referential approaches

Prenar/Prevenar
Trumenba
Nimenrix

Merck

- Mixed portfolio (includes unbranded products and brand-named vaccines, many ~vax suffixed or vaccine-referential)

Pedvax
Pneumovax
Recombivax
Varivax
Zostavax

Gardasil
Proquad
Rotateq
Vagta
Vaxelis

BCG Vaccine
M-M-R-II