Interview: Alejandra Calderon & Andrés Rivera ,Operations & Sales Manager, Cegedim Colombia

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The operations and sales managers of Cegedim Colombia discuss the impact of healthcare reform on the Colombian pharma market, partnering opportunities in the country, and the outlook for CRM in 2013 and beyond.

operations-manager-cegedim-colombia-relationship-management.jpg

Can you briefly summarize Cegedim Colombia's scope of activities and operations, as well as the structure of the affiliate?

We are in charge of validating and guaranteeing operations and sales in the Andean Region and the Southern Cone. The Colombian affiliate focuses primarily in "Mobile Intelligence," our CRM solution, enabling our

customers to have a 360° view of all their stakeholders. Besides the CRM, Cegedim also focuses on database management activities. OneKey is the biggest database in the world, with more than 8.2 million records, and 100% accuracy and validated phone numbers. Sales activities are also focused on promoting other products, such as AggregateSpend 360° to control promotional spend, Primeum –Cegedim to manage incentive compensation, Xtelligence business intelligence reporting tool and Physician Connect to build influence networks.

How would you describe the integration process of both companies and what have been the main synergies between Cegedim and Dendrite in the Colombian context?

It had been a big surprise because Dendrite was much bigger than Cegedim in the Americas. While there were some difficulties to link two different cultures, each brought their own assets. Dendrite, a public company in the share market, was focused on profits and product personalization. Cegedim was more focused towards customer service, process optimization, employee training, etc.; and proposed standardized products that can be adapted. The tools are more affordable for our customers, and the Colombian affiliate has totally adapted to the French culture.

Given the recent healthcare reforms proposed by Minister Gaviria, what impact might this have on Cegedim's operations in Colombia, and what adaptations will you have to make as a result?

The system will be more efficient since the government will have more control. Price regulation will decrease the costs for the patients, and multinational companies will have to be more flexible. Cegedim will help these companies redesign their strategies to be even more competitive. Multinational companies need to focus on institutions in addition to the private market, and ensure strong customer relationships through good follow-up with patients about treatments. The service has to be complete: not only delivering a product but also providing good attention to the patient.

What is the number one piece of advice you find yourself giving clients these days about the life science industry?

They have to understand the changes that are going to happen with the reforms, so they can make more informed decisions and adapt their strategy accordingly.

What have been the main growth drivers in Colombia for 2013?

Mobile Intelligence is Cegedim's main product in terms of revenue. Consequently, one of the main growth drivers in Colombia and the region for 2013 will be the Mobile Intelligence regional deployments. Moreover, Cegedim Colombia will be offering some new products in order to increase its solutions portfolio. One of them is "AggregateSpend 360." This already exists in Europe and the USA. It allows companies to manage expenses related to samples, sales representatives, and promotional material. Also, "Premium – Cegedim," a product born from a joint-venture, enables the management of incentives given to the sales force.

Emiliano Gummati of Cegedim US said that he was looking increasingly at domestic companies for business, including biotech. Given the increasing biotech industry in Colombia, will you be tailoring your business to this crucial part of the pharma industry here?

Yes. We are also placing special focus on the larger Columbia-based companies – proposing standardized products that are more affordable. Cegedim is also diversifying by targeting medical devices companies. In this niche, Cegedim has developed a specific Mobile Intelligence configuration for medical device companies.

What makes Cegedim the partner of choice?

First of all, Cegedim is focused solely on the life sciences industry. This provides the company with a real advantage as we have knowledge of the industry through a vertical vision. Cegedim understands the industry and knows the needs of its customers. Secondly, we have the support of a truly international group; Cegedim operates in 80 countries with headquarters in Boulogne-Billancourt, France. Finally, we would say that the organization has good references; the biggest companies worldwide trust us. Our products are adapted to the needs of the industry. Our portfolio is a whole host of services: CRM, databases, business intelligence – reporting, incentive compensation, expense control and interactive marketing and support services.

Cegedim is an expert in marketing strategies and solutions, but what is your own strategy to further position your name in the Colombian pharmaceutical market?

Cegedim's strategy is to strengthen the relationships with its existing customers, providing them with quality products and services. We want to satisfy our customers, and be a strategic partner for them. Cegedim is close to its customers, all of whom are supported fully throughout the process.

If we were to return to Colombia in 3-4 years' time, what is your vision for this affiliate by then?

At that time, Cegedim Colombia should have consolidated its new products. We will still be number one in the market as the strategic partners for our customers.

What would you like to have personally achieved by that point as well?

Cegedim has been a school for us; and we are just starting to understand the many processes that lead to the prescription of a doctor. It is easy to become passionate about your work here, and there are many things to learn. The industry is moving through the institutional market, and there are less sales representatives. Cegedim is preparing as well to move the institutional market forward, developing products to support the key account management of companies (KAM). We are ready to support the customers.

What would be your final message to our customers?

The pharmaceutical industry and the medical device companies are going through many changes and challenges, such as reform, pricing regulation, increase of competition, and complexity of structure, just to name a few. Cegedim is helping them to look for better efficiency, and to create strong relationships. This process will lead to better treatment for the patient.

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