Interview: Dominik Bacher – CEO, Bacher Zoppi, Mexico



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Dominik Bacher, founder and CEO at Bacher Zoppi, explains the latest changes in the commercialization stage of the healthcare industry and showcases the value proposition of Bacher Zoppi to successfully implement sustainable sales strategies.

After slowing in 2012-13, Mexico's pharmaceutical sector is expected to grow on average 5.6 percent rising from USD 16.4 billion in 2013 to 21.5 billion in 2018. Could you please tell our international readers what steps the industry needs to take in terms of commercial optimization to keep performing at this level?

The pharmaceutical industry has been quite dynamic during the last decade with important changes in the Mexican market such as increasing generics penetration and an ageing population. From the commercial standpoint, we have seen several industry movements such as a relevant expansion of pharmacy chains affecting the market share of the traditional wholesalers and specialty drugs growing above the average market rate.

As a result, pharmaceutical companies have changed the targeting of their sales activities towards specialists and reduced the total number of sales representatives. National companies have enjoyed stronger growth than the transnationals by maintaining and growing their sales force headcount to protect their mature brands and launching renovated products.

Companies have to keep up with the latest dynamics of the market and this is where we have identified the added value of Bacher Zoppi as the partner of choice of the industry to fast execute

our clients’ sales and post-sales strategies according to the healthcare sector trends.

We have perceived an epidemiologic (chronic and non communicable) and demographic (ageing population) transition in Mexico, how has it impacted your clients needs?

Health challenges are evolving towards chronic and non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and cancer since Mexico is becoming a more developed country with an aging population. This also explains the relevant growth of *biologic* medical *products* and we have seen that several of our clients adapting their product portfolio to this trend.

As Bacher Zoppi is the leading contract sales company in Mexico we have been involved in multiple pilots and projects to implement and measure the productivity of new sales and post-sales strategies for the pharmaceutical industry. We have been also affected by such epidemiologic and demographic trend, historically we managed bigger sales teams promoting mature products, today we have smaller teams with precise targeting and more specialty focused.

The results speak for themselves since Bacher Zoppi is positioned as the national leader in commercial pharmaceutical and healthcare solutions. What has been your strategy to ensure such success considering the high dynamism of the industry?

Our success has always been based on delivering the results of the agreed key performance indicators which we establish with our clients for each project, and our capacity of implementing the defined sales strategy faster than the market. In addition, we have always considered an excellent service delivery to our clients and to the sales teams the center of our business model; as a consequence, we really enjoy a long-standing relationship with our clients.

Innovation is also an important factor in Bacher Zoppi, we are continuously improving our services and products by updating our expertise and specialization in managing sales forces to the latest industry trends and technological developments. In addition, we have also expanded our service portfolio through Up pharma, which is a different company within Bacher Zoppi group, offering market entry services and market expansion services to pharmaceutical manufacturers who want to enter the Mexican market.

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Bacher Zoppi has a quite unique business model offering a broad portfolio of services sorted out in four major business lines: talent pool, talent attraction, staffing and management. Could you tell our international readers what the added value is of each of them?

Our different business models are exclusively targeted to the pharmaceutical and healthcare industry, offering solutions for the commercialization of their products. Today our portfolio includes a wide variety of services such as recruiting sales talent, staffing, talent pool, full administration of sales teams and post-sales programs, adjusted to the clients' needs and their corporate strategies.

Recruiting sales talent has been always the pillar of our business. Bacher Zoppi has a specialized team with experienced psychologists distributed in the main cities all over Mexico to cover any job vacancy or implement completely new sales teams for the pharmaceutical industry. With more than 20 years in the market, we have built and maintain an updated database with more than 25,000 candidates for commercial and sales positions. Our experience and solid infrastructure allow us to cover specific job profiles in five days, and integrate a complete sales force up to 150 positions in less than three weeks.

Another example of how we add value to our clients is through Talent Pool. This service has been developed with our clients and its objective is providing candidates with high potential profiles, capable of adopting themselves successfully to the specific organizational culture, highly motivated and following a development plan to optimize and maximize their sales results, first within our pool and then contracted directly by the customer to continue their career within their organizations.

What is your breakdown of revenues per business line and where do you foresee the most growth?

70 percent of our total revenues come from traditional staffing services including recruiting, payrolling and administrating travel expenses for the different sales teams. 20 percent are generated from fully managed sales forces where we are responsible for delivering the agreed KPI's, training, recertification, deployment, incentive plans, and any other agreed responsibility. While the remaining 10 percent come from punctual services such as talent pool, sales force effectiveness, market entry and market expansion activities.

How do you carry out such innovation in your operations?

Our management team invests considerable time and effort in defining the future path of our company and this embraces the definition of new products, services and ways to improve our service delivery. Additionally, Bacher Zoppi has implemented a great number of projects promoting products to the doctor's office, to hospitals and to pharmacies, as well as executing patient loyalty programs and post-sales strategies in hospitals. These multiple experiences have allowed us to work with many stakeholders in the industry, to evaluate a variety of technological applications and to explore innovative sales strategies. Much of our expertise to innovate we accredit to the

intense collaboration with our clients and their trust in Bacher Zoppi.

We evaluate for each project the best fitting technological application working today with a variety of solutions. At the same time, we are aware that building a high- performance team is only possible through an enormous dedication to training, coaching and follow up by the field force managers.

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Your employees are one of your most important assets. How do you ensure that you attract and retain the appropriate talent aligned with your corporate objectives and strategies as well as your clients' needs?

We need to have a team onboard that really lives and believes our values and philosophy in order to ensure their alignment with our corporate culture. As you correctly mentioned, the employees are our main asset to deliver operational results and service standards that satisfy our clients' high expectations and the compliance policies of our industry. As experts in human resource processes, we make a continuous effort in hiring and retaining the best candidate for each position.

In addition, we heavily invest in training all our staff, each one of our employees has to undertake at least 43 hours of training every year. For that purpose, we have implemented a program taking advantage of the experience of our own managers which constantly train the whole team generating an accelerated development but at the same time also integrating the employees

What are the competitive advantages that differentiate Bacher Zoppi from any of its multinational competitors and make you the partner of choice for the industry?

We are 100 percent specialized on the pharmaceutical and healthcare industry and our extended experience with more than 20 years in the Mexican market helped to build the reputation of being the expert and leader in our sector. This market knowledge allows us to better understand the industry's needs and to adapt and personalize the services we offer. Speed in the implementation of our customers' sales strategy has been also a key factor in our success, attracting and administrating new talent as well as aligning such teams to the best practices and to processes required for each sales project.

What are the main objectives that you would like to achieve in the upcoming three years?

We would like to continue strengthening our long-standing relationships with our clients through outstanding results and excellent service delivery. Innovation in our services portfolio is also a

priority in the agenda offering new solutions which help to increase the commercial efficiency of our client. Finally, Bacher Zoppi’s key to success is its people. We will continue to recruit, and develop the most competitive talents in the pharmaceutical and healthcare industry, offering palpable results in real time in full accordance with the compliance policies of our clients.

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