



IN THIS ISSUE

P1 Effectively gathering industry conference intelligence

P2 Important Steps to Take

P3 Upcoming Medical/Scientific Conferences

P4 Fletcher/CSI Experience Plus

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Healthcare Intelligence Insight

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Gathering Medical Conference Competitive Intelligence

For many organizations, gathering competitive intelligence at medical and scientific conferences can be a less than constructive experience. Most companies have many employees attending scientific symposiums and company sponsored presentations, but developing a methodology for effective intelligence gathering involves far more than simply attendance.

Fletcher/CSI's eighteen-years experience in gathering and analyzing intelligence at medical and scientific conferences has enabled us to create a successful research methodology and process that assures actionable results.

Fletcher/CSI's three-stage research approach to collecting and analyzing intelligence at medical conferences involves: pre-conference research, conference intelligence collection, and post-conference research.

PRECONFERENCE RESEARCH— PREPARING AND LEADING THE TEAM

The first step is to assign a conference quarterback to spearhead the conference intelligence initiative. The quarterback will be in charge of working with your

brand and R&D teams to help them assess the competitive environment and to develop realistic and appropriate key intelligence questions (KIQs). As a frequent quarterback for our clients, FCSI works with each client to break-down the conference agenda and analyze conference components, highlighting important sessions, symposia, and other sources of competitive information.

Conducting both primary and secondary conference related research prior to attending is critical. Research should be designed and implemented to find out more about key presentations or company sponsored poster sessions and to set up interviews with key opinion leaders. The quarterback works with the team to ensure everyone is not asking the same questions, or flooding the floor and raising red flags that could shut down your conference intelligence initiative. Sensitive key questions are often left to your CI conference partner to obtain a higher likelihood of response.

Training employees in how to solicit responses and handle questions posed to them is critical. Always remember - assume, and prepare for the likelihood that your competitors are also trying to uncover and investigate your initiatives and tactics, so counterintelligence training goes hand-in-hand with solicitation exercises.

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► Conference Time

► Important Steps to Take

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A small pre-conference counterintelligence exercise will go a long way to protect your intellectual capital and assets. At Fletcher/CSI Healthcare Strategies, we recommend that pre-conference counseling is conducted to maximize client ROI.

CONFERENCE TIME

At the start of the conference it is important to again review the agenda for changes and revisit your KIQs and subsequent pre-conference analysis to determine additional relevance and new actions to be taken. Work with your team to review relevant posters and symposia, attendance assignments and assigned KIQs. In addition to your team, your CI conference partner should be asking pertinent questions at the end of each session, interviewing presenters, competitors, exhibit hall participants and opinion leaders throughout the conference agenda.

The conference quarterback should conduct daily debriefs with the team. This serves as a forum to exchange information on the daily findings and sets forth the next day's research path, individual team member assignments and collection goals. Often, Fletcher/CSI Healthcare will have off-site researchers standing by to conduct ad hoc research to fill in conference finding gaps and to provide additional talking points for the on-site team. Be cognizant that your competitor may have their own competitive intelligence partners listening to your team conversations, so hold your daily debriefs in a private room (also serving as your team hub and quarterback location).



IMPORTANT STEPS TO TAKE

- Protect against any intelligence efforts of the competitors you are most likely to encounter. Take their name and telephone number to call back. The red flag should be raised high if they will not give out this information.
- Alert your booth representatives about potential competitors that have dropped by your booth asking questions
- Never misrepresent yourself
- Do not provide any more information than the question requires
- Do not talk about your job or your company business when you see another colleague. Anything spoken aloud is no longer your property... you cannot reclaim it!
- Do not leave behind articles (business card, notes on a company stationery, phone numbers or anything that can easily identify your affiliation
- Prepare in advance in two or three bullet points for conversational purposes on each major subject to facilitate conversations
- Understand the background/affiliations of the information source
- Avoid taking notes while speaking – listen, engage, and summarize the conversation soon after (but apart from the conversation)
- Share information to provide some level of value back to your source

Each Fletcher/CSI research team is uniquely skilled at capturing the breadth of market and competitor perspectives and insights that are highly valuable to sustaining competitive advantage.

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► Post Conference
Research

► Upcoming
Conferences

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POST CONFERENCE RESEARCH

When the conference ends, the hardest work begins. After the conference, it is important to review all of the research findings gathered to date, reassessing which KIQs were answered satisfactorily, what new information was discovered, and what KIQs still are left to be addressed. Fletcher/CSI Healthcare often conducts post-conference research for our clients in order to interview presenters and exhibitors to provide additional depth on what was presented and to obtain intelligence that was not immediately available at the conference. Once all research is gathered and analyzed, the conference quarterback should conduct a final meeting to review all research findings with the entire team, encouraging them to utilize, incorporate, and solicit feedback success from their internal clients.

UPCOMING MEDICAL/SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCES

The following is a partial list of upcoming medical and scientific conferences.
To learn more about other conferences occurring in 2006-2007, please visit our web site:
www.fletchercsi-healthcare.com or write: info@fletchercsi-healthcare.com

Anesthesiology

American Society of Anesthesiologists - 10/14/2006 - 10/18/2006 - Chicago, IL

Cardiology

Heart Failure Society of America - 09/10/2006 - 09/13/2006 - Seattle, WA

American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation - 09/14/2006- 09/17/2006 - Charleston, WV

American College of Chest Physicians - 10/21/2006 - 10/26/2006 - Salt Lake City, UT

American Heart Association - 11/12/2006 - 11/15/2006 - Chicago, IL

Critical Care

American College of Emergency Physicians - 10/15/2006 - 10/18/2006 - New Orleans, LA

Endocrinology

American Association of Diabetes Educators - 08/09/2006 - 08/12/2006 - Los Angeles, CA

American Thyroid Association - 10/12/2006 - 10/15/2006 - Phoenix, AZ

Gastroenterology

American College of Gastroenterology - 10/20/2006 - 10/25/2006 - Las Vegas, NV

Hematology

American Society of Hematology - 12/09/2006 - 12/12/2006 - Orlando, FL

Infectious Disease

Infectious Diseases Society of America - 10/12/2006 - 10/15/2006 - Toronto, Canada

Nephrology

American Society of Nephrology - 11/14/2006 - 11/19/2006 - San Diego, CA

Neurology

Congress of Neurological Surgeons - 10/07/2006 - 10/12/2006 - Chicago, IL

American Neurological Association - 10/08/2006 - 10/11/2006 - Chicago, IL

American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodiagnostic Medicine - 10/11/2006-10/14/2006 - Washington, DC

Society for Neuroscience - 10/14/2006 - 10/18/2006 - Atlanta, GA

American Epilepsy Society - 12/01/2006 - 12/05/2006 - San Diego, CA

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- ▶ Pharmaceutical and Biotech
- ▶ Medical Devices
- ▶ Consumer Products

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Experience Plus

For more than eighteen years, our team of dedicated experts has made the healthcare industry and its challenges our primary concern. We understand the challenging business environment you face where competition continually intensifies, making it essential that you have all the tools necessary to keep pace and stay atop of the demands of your market.

Pharmaceutical and Biotech

Since 1988, Fletcher/CSI Healthcare has conducted extensive global investigations in numerous therapeutic areas including cardiovascular, CNS, infectious disease, endocrinology, oncology, and neurology. Our customized pharmaceutical studies focus on key business elements that contribute to product success including:

- R&D, manufacturing and distribution
- Product positioning and marketing
- Sales force initiatives
- Life cycle management
- Licensing and benchmarking

Our proven expertise in understanding the challenges you face in the drug/delivery investigation, regulatory and commercialization process has produced highly actionable information for our pharmaceutical and biotech clients.

Medical Diagnostics, Device and Delivery Systems

Uncovering insightful and credible market and competitor knowledge for medical diagnostics and device companies requires an in-depth understanding of the industry's technology, partnerships and alliances, manufacturing procedures, regulatory processes, distribution channels, hospital purchasing structures, and reimbursement processes. For

nearly two decades, our team of specialists has researched medical diagnostics, device and delivery systems across all phases of the product continuum and across a broad spectrum of therapeutic areas including:

- Combination drugs and/or devices
- General surgical and hospital
- Therapeutic related technology, such as respiratory, ophthalmology, cardiovascular, orthopedics, dental, neurology, and physical medicine.

Consumer Products

Having a knowledge of competitor activities greatly assists our consumer goods and OTC clients with their strategic and tactical plans. We can explore your competitors' current and future initiatives within a wide range of subjects, such as:

- Rx to OTC switch initiatives and market potential evaluation
- Pipeline and portfolio assessment, profitability trends for market, retail channel focus, implementation support
- Advertising, brand investment and direction initiatives
- Competitor P.O.S. branding and shelf-positioning formulas and incentive programs, competitor marketing initiatives, product sales structure, distribution and fulfillment arrangements, and retail relationships.

In all cases, Fletcher/CSI Healthcare supplies the intelligence you need to anticipate competitive threats, improve strategic and tactical plans, identify new opportunities and better position yourself to exploit competitive vulnerabilities.

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