

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 areas 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/administers, 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

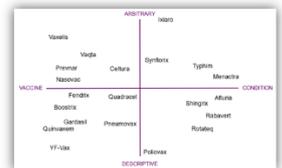
Select vaccine product and brand names

ACAM2000	Fluad	Menactra	Poliovax	Trumenba
Acthib	Fluarix	Menhibrix	Prevenar	Twinnrix
Adacel	Flublok	Menitorix	Prevnar	Typhix
Afluria	Flucelvax	Menjugate	Priorix	Typhim
Agriflu	Flulaval	Menomune (Menquadfi)	Proquad	Vaqtia
Ambrix	Flumist	Menveo	Quadracel	Varivax
BCG Vaccine	Fluvirin	Menveo	Quinvaxem	Varivax
Bexsero	Fluzone	M-M-R II	Rabavert	Vaxchora
Biopollo	Focetria	M-M-Vax	Rabipur	Vaxelis
Biothrax	Gardasil	Nasovac	Recombivax	Vaxigrip
Boostrix	Havrix	Nimenrix	Rotarix	Verorab
Cellura	Hepatyrix	Opvero	Rotasol	Vivofit
Cervarix	Hepilisav-B	Pandemrix	Rotateq	YF-Vax
Daptacel	Hexaxim	Panenza	Rotavac	Zostavax
Dengvaxia	Hiberix	Panvax	Seriflu	
Diftet	Imovax	Pediarix	Shingrix	
Dukoral	Infanrix	Pedvax	Synflorix	
Encepur	Ipol	Pentabio	TDVAX	
Engerix	Ixiaro	Pentacel	Tenivac	
Eupenta	Jeev	Pneumovax	Tice	
Fendrix	Kinrix	Poliorix	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, Hepatyrix, Hiberix, Infanrix, Kinrix, Menhibrix, Menitorix, Pandemrix, Pediarix, Priorix, Rotarix, Shingrix, Synflorix, Typhix, Varivax, Bexsero, Encepur, Flulaval, Menjugate, Menveo, Quinvaxem, Rabipur

Sanofi

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

Adacel, Daptacel, Pentacel, Quadracel, ACAM2000, Acthib, Dengvaxia, Flublok, Imovax, Ipol, Menactra, Tenivac, Typhim, Vaxigrip, YF-Vax

Pfizer

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

Prevnar/Prevenar, Trumenba, Nimenrix

Merck

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

Pedvax, Pneumovax, Proquad, Rotateq, Varivax, Zostavax, Gardasil, M-M-R-II, BCG Vaccine, Vaxelis