

# Interview with Piotr Kula, President, PharmaExpert

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What is PharmaExpert's role in the Polish pharmaceutical industry?

The information that PharmaExpert gathers enables us to give good insight about the evolution of the pharmacists market, the evolution of the prices in the pharma landscape, and of the level of reimbursement, among others. PharmaExpert created a model of explanation and interpretation of the healthcare system in Poland.

PharmaExpert constantly looks for innovative solution to get the best results in terms of collecting data, gathering it, and providing the industry with the best possible information: this is the core of PharmaExpert's activities. In these times of revolutionary changes in Poland, our point of view is very important, because as consultants we are the only fully neutral and impartial company. In that respect we work in the interest of the patients and for the effectiveness of the healthcare industry and the improvement of the healthcare system in Poland.

Could you give our readers an overview of the different pharmaceutical markets in Poland and their evolution in the recent years?

The total pharmaceutical market in Poland is divided in three segments. First, the prescription drugs market is a 12 billion zlotys market that has grown by 3.9% in 2010. The non-reimbursed drugs segment weights about 5 billion zlotys and has grown by 1.5%. Lastly, the third market gathers the rest of the products available in pharmacies: over-the-counter (OTC) products, dermo-cosmetics etc. It is a 9.5 billion zlotys market, where OTC products alone represent 7.5 billions

zlotys. Overall, the market growth has been in 2010 much slower than last year. In fact, 2010 is a completely different year compared with the last few years' trend, where it became especially tougher to be a player on the OTC market in Poland.

Government healthcare expenditures accounted for 8.7 billion zlotys in 2010, however the growth in public expenditures for healthcare dropped from 16% to 5.4% between 2009 and 2010. Although the government managed to decrease the copayment between 2009 and 2010 - the copayment was slightly below 30% in 2010 against around 35% in 2009 -, it is expected to go up again with the new Reimbursement Act.

As an industry researcher and analyst of the market, accuracy of data, credibility, exclusivity, speed of delivery, protection of information are, I would guess, very important for PharmaExpert.

What would you say are the main challenges in gathering and selling information in Poland?

Having worked for IMS before, I am in the position to compare and say that PharmaExpert offers the best speed of delivery of information in Poland. Pharmacists are connected to us online everyday, which allows this company to have an entire access to the sales, profits, and volumes of products sold in pharmacies. This quick access even enables us to see every single transaction, and we then deliver data on a daily basis. Every client receives information from us at nine o'clock the next day. If you compare this quality and efficiency of data delivery with what happens in other countries, Poland is a very modern country in this regard. Our PharmaExpert's motto tells a lot: we are addicted to Excellence. In fact, PharmaExpert is taking down IMS monopoly.

I created PharmaExpert together with a partner, who is a software specialist, a leader in the healthcare system in informatization. 12,000 pharmacists out of the 13,400 pharmacists that exist in Poland today are using my partner's system of collecting data, as well as most doctors and even the National Health Fund (NHF).

How do you plan on further diversifying your activities at PharmaExpert?

PharmaExpert needs to stay focused on its core activity, which is very enriching and challenging in Poland, considering everything is constantly changing. As an expert company, we need to show the trends, the risks and opportunities in the pharmaceutical industry in order for the key players to take the right decisions. Our role as consultants is thus limited to this: giving insight in order to guide the industry on how to approach the market. We never make unsafe assumptions, nor say that patients are ready to pay more or less for one particular product. We prefer to stick to providing the companies evidence based, accurate facts and figures.

How would like to grow in the coming years?

PharmaExpert's clear objective is to be the leader in Poland in the healthcare system, in our double role of provider of information and consultant. Pharmacists are the key element in this system to understand how works the pharmaceutical industry. By conducting surveys on pharmacists, I can see prescriptions, understand how doctors behave, how patients, I can see also the prices, the margins, everything. The market in Poland for reimbursed products changed a lot, so it is our duty to make sure that the industry keeps up with it. The market is definitely complicated in Poland, and so much changing, that if I were a manager in pharma, I am sure I would be really well prepared investing in Poland.

How do you gather the best people to work for PharmaExpert?

The secret of our success is that at PharmaExpert, we have fun in our daily work. Considering that the situation of Polish pharma is complicated, involving new specific issues every month, our work is always interesting, as we try to provide the industry with innovative solutions. Moreover, the company is growing, which is also very attractive for professionals. PharmaExpert's main competitive advantage is to be more proactive than the rest of the industry.

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