Interview: Petra Exner – Managing Director DACH; Tobias Haber – Managing Director, INSIGHT Health Switzerland



"We should be very established in Switzerland and Austria soon and work with new solutions and satisfied customers."

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Petra Exner and Tobias Haber discuss the unique service offering of INSIGHT Health, one of the leading data providers to the healthcare market, the company's successful internationalization strategy, and why INSIGHT Health is the partner of choice.

Could you begin by introducing INSIGHT Health to our international audience?

INSIGHT Health is one of the leading data providers in the healthcare market. Our broad knowledge of the healthcare market is the basis of our databased services in the field of market research, patient-centred care as well as other business fields. With fast and transparent supply of data analyses we create individual solutions for the pharmaceutical industry, health insurance, scientific institutions as well as decision makers in the healthcare market. INSIGHT Health is based in Waldems-Esch near Frankfurt/Main with branches in Berlin, Vienna and Baar (Switzerland).

What is the basic idea behind INSIGHT Health as a Company?

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When the company was founded in 1999 by Roland Lederer the market for sales information in the healthcare sector was in a monopolistic situation. We worked out some USPs which were very

successful. Our source was the intensive work with the data.

We increased the level of data quality available. We integrated potential customers at a very early stage into the product design. The result was: We delivered the data about 10 days earlier than the competition. This was a huge success, because our customers' reps had the more recent data and were ahead of the competition. So as time went by we smoothly became a very reliable partner and we had a lot of companies and customers joining us.

This changed the entire market as new services came up and prices were adjusted. In the pre-existing monopoly, prices were dictated. We really changed the game.

Today we see ourselves as a solution provider for the entire healthcare market. We have the qualifications to support our customers individually and efficiently in numerous decisions in the healthcare field, e.g. for product launches, optimization of sales force, portfolio management, patient-know how etc.

INSIGHT Health prizes the gathering of anonymous information. There are indeed a lot of concerns today about confidentiality of patient data and the sharing of medical records. What role can INSIGHT Health play in moving this debate forward?

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The German data protection law is very strict by international comparison. We can proudly state, that we exceed its demands. It begins with the data we receive – it is already anonymized. Not even a malevolent person could retrieve personal information from our data. And if we zoom into micro regions, we never look at a single data source like an individual pharmacy. We combine several pharmacies in one "brick". Our bricks never fail to contain more single sources than the data protection law requires. We also have an internal data privacy team which actually checks every product design before it is offered to potential customers.

This way we can work with very detailed data but simultaneously can ensure the highest level of confidentiality. We do believe that market transparency and data security are both possible – it is just a matter of implementing intelligent, reasonable processes.

Tell us about the unique technologies and software used in gathering this data and what makes you such a reliable organization to your customers?

We aim to support our customers in various areas, for example product launches, product positioning, pricing, and so on. In doing so we combine our expertise and our experience in the

pharmaceutical industry. Concerning the software our solutions include what we call the “intuitive analysis software”. One of them is called IH-GALAXY analysis software. The local analysis platform IH-GALAXY brings together information all across the range of INSIGHT Health databases within one user interface. IH-GALAXY permits intuitive and rapid production of individual data analyses.

Customers can therefore analyse all kinds of data they buy from us, either selected segments like molecules or markets or the whole database. Beside IH-GALAXY we maintain a patent database and with Patient INSIGHTs we offer a patient centred dataset.

We are currently moving all our analytical software solutions into an online system. Customers can log in with one user ID and password and have access to the data like patent database, patient data, and sales data – services they have subscribed to. In the end we will combine different analytical services via one web solution.

From your German base, you have expanded in Austria and Switzerland. Could you detail the initial rationale for expanding solely into the German-speaking EU markets, and why not cater directly for those markets from Germany?

A certain amount of our customers are active in the DACH region and asked us to help them in Switzerland and Austria as well. Today we have an office in Baar – Switzerland and in Vienna – Austria. We also have cooperation partners in other countries, providing us data from the US, French and Russian markets.

In Switzerland and in Austria we maintain marketing and sales companies. The data will nonetheless be processed in Germany. There we have an experienced team of 25 people just taking care of production, data quality processes and so forth. This way we can minimize the risk of mistakes and have full control over the data.

INSIGHT Health is celebrating its second anniversary in Switzerland. What have been some of the key achievements and what does Switzerland mean to your Group?

INSIGHT Health always puts the customer and his needs in first place. Accordingly the satisfaction of our Swiss clients is the key achievement. We achieved it with our core competences: highest data quality, flexibility to customers’ needs and fast delivery of data. Combined with our dedicated customer service we have a really good package for the pharmaceutical market in Switzerland.

What is also important to mention is that we offer a DACH database. It is very useful for international companies to have an overview on the performance of brands and products in Germany, Austria and Switzerland simultaneously.

What is your action plan and growth ambitions for the Swiss office and DACH region?

Our objective is to reach a similar market share in Switzerland like the one we have in Germany. In Germany the share is split between us and IMS. The exact share differs from market to market, but in some sectors, we surpass the competition. We can reach this goal in Switzerland, too. Of course it takes some time.

How do you manage to differentiate yourselves from the competitors in your field of service?

We will convince our potential customers with good data quality and flexible customer-oriented solutions. Our data is very reliable. Every byte is processed in-house by data and pharma experts. This separates us from other companies which tend to outsource important production processes. Furthermore we listen to our customers and provide individual solutions for their needs. This way we improve the value of our data even further.

On the subject of market trends in your particular field of business, what has struck your mind?

We observe an increasing specialization of the market participants. The trend is towards specialty products and a decrease in the number of medical reps that are experts in their subjects.

We take that into account and therefore offer individual solutions to our customers who benefit from our broad experience in market research. A customer probably does not need a full database but specific information in a certain market segment. Our solutions are therefore more and more customized.

It is interesting to see that IMS has merged with Quintiles. It seems silos are more and more breaking down. What are your thoughts on this?

QuintilesIMS operates more and more in the field of consulting. This is not where we are heading. We feel very comfortable and concentrate on solution-selling. That means, we survey our customer’s requirements and offer target-orientated solutions for their benefit. This might be brand-management, patent-strategy, targeting or something different. Every service is entirely based on our high quality data.

What are your growth ambitions for this region and for Switzerland in particular in let’s say, five years’ time?

We should be very established in Switzerland and Austria soon and work with new solutions and satisfied customers. INSIGHT Health’s vision and strategy is to offer solutions in the Top Five EU markets of Italy, France, Spain and the UK. With presence in these markets we can provide solutions to European headquarters of globally active companies that we greatly find in Switzerland.

How do you see your Swiss office to be an opportunity to build stronger relations with Novartis and Roche for example? How do you see yourselves going from a regional to a global level, thereby accompanying such companies in data collection in other countries?

You identify that correctly as one of the reasons why we are intending to establish INSIGHT Health into other European countries like Switzerland. We can take our good relations in Germany and the other DACH countries into the headquarters of global companies. They are open for competition and looking for alternative sources for their relevant market data.

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