

Are you entering unexplored territory?

BACKGROUND

Our client had surprised themselves. From their own original laboratory research they had found a novel compound capable of treating a rare allergic condition.

However, owing to its rarity, our client had no knowledge of any leaders, experts or stakeholders in the field. The R&D department had access to a handful of lead investigators, but this was all they knew.

Our client wanted to understand the therapeutic ecosystem surrounding this severe condition within 15 European markets.

KEY ISSUES

Our client wanted to understand the extent to which patients, or their carers, used social media platforms to research the condition and share their views, opinions and experiences online. However, as the condition is seasonal, the window for conducting this social media research was very narrow.

Despite targeting 15 European markets, it became apparent that a number of these markets were actually 'emerging markets' which made accessing data (especially social media information) a challenge.

60% of those contacted participated in the survey

KEY LEARNINGS

After a period of research, it became clear that there were very low volumes of publications, guidelines and speaking events in relation to this condition. We found no conferences where the topic had been discussed in the previous five years, and social media activity in the markets under review was also very low. Coverage of rare diseases is truly rare, and in some cases invisible.

Once we had identified a cohort of experts in the field, we contacted them directly to engage in a short survey about their willingness to collaborate with a company conducting research in this area.

60% of those contacted participated in the survey – this showed us that while the condition is hard to navigate, once the right people are found, they're willing, keen and able to engage.

To be sure you're talking to the right people, talk to the right people