

Improving Demand Forecasting with Behavioral Science



In healthcare market research, no matter how you approach demand forecasting, no matter what data you use, at some point it is likely that you will need to show HCPs information about your new product and measure how they react.

Sometimes this is done qualitatively and sometimes this is done with larger quantitative samples. There are several well-tested techniques for exposing new product information to HCPs and getting feedback from them.

One of the perennial questions in this process is what are more effective methods of designing primary market research stimulus to generate more accurate reactions from HCPs? This question is especially acute when the new product requires a shift in treatment paradigm, and therefore requires respondents to think beyond their habitual treatment choices.

For example, "short-term symptom control" is often the standard of care because that is what the available treatments are capable of. But what if a new entrant has efficacy data that promises remission? This would require a realignment of HCPs' treatment philosophy, and the challenge is, in the environment of a market research study, how to push respondents to think in a future-forward manner?





1.

Give respondents hypothetical treatment scenarios that resonates with their lived experience. We do this in two ways. Firstly, we generate specific and tangible simulated patient cases rather than broad classes of patients. For example, rather than "think of all your second-line patients," it is better to subdivide that patient group into "second-line patients who are at high risk of disease progression" and "low risk of disease progression." This enables HCPs to better imagine the scenario and therefore provide more accurate choices.

Secondly, design the choice exercises around tangible discrete options rather than "percent of patients" treated. This much more closely approximates their real-world decision-making and therefore generates more accurate data. 2.

Make TPP information easier to process. One of the fundamental insights of behavioral science is that cognitive ease is central to productive information processing. Rather than crafting the TPP as a dense, text-filled table of technical endpoints, we have found that investing the time into creating visually compelling versions of that information allows HCPs to better internalize the information and therefore react more realistically. This visual approach also allows us to better focus respondents attention on more future-forward endpoints that more closely reflect the future state of the market when the new, innovative entrant has started its marketing campaign.

3.

Include psychometric assessment of respondents. When the research design includes choice exercises, it is productive to create behavioral segments of respondents based on which specific hypothetical clinical endpoints they are more or less sensitive to. For example, in one study we conducted, we found a segment of respondents who were only giving the new entrant significant share in patient subgroups at more advanced stages of disease progression. The psychometrics we included, revealed that the reason for this was that these HCPs were exhibiting open-option bias whereby they always like to keep the more powerful treatment in reserve as a psychological safety net. This insight provided validation of the demand forecast's internal structure, and suggested recommendations as to overcome this behavioral barrier to broader adoption.

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1. Give respondents stimulus that resonates

Giving HCPs simulated patient cases and specific treatment choices results in more realistic data

Please think about your 2L patients who are at high risk of disease progression? Given the options below, how would you treat such a patient?

ENDPOINT	Opt 1	Opt 2	Opt 3
Efficacy 1	High	Med	High
Efficacy 2	Low	High	High
Safety	Low	Med	Med
Dosing	Oral	SubQ	IV
Which would you be most likely to treat with?	\checkmark		
Which would you be least likely to treat with?		×	

2. Give respondents stimulus that resonates

Giving HCPs simulated patient cases and specific treatment choices results in more realistic data

Product Profiles



Key Standard of Case Standard of Case Standard of Case 0% 12% 26% 28% 100% Endpoint 1 Efficacy 1 0% 14% 34% 39% 100% Endpoint 2 11% 36% 100% 0% Endpoint 1 0% 12% 65% 100% Endpoint 2 0% 53% 77% 100% Endpoint 1 72% 82% 100% 0% Endpoint 2 0% 60% 100% Endpoint 1 0% 65% 100% Endpoint 2

Efficacy Endpoints

3. Include Psychometrics

Enables behavioral segmentation to deepen interpretation of respondent choices

Key Characteristics	Key Characteristics		
 Quick to adopt new treatments Driven by prevention of recurrence Patient needs always come first 	 Pride in personalizing treatments Adjusts treatment based on patient's complain Involves patients in decision-making 		
IDENTITY SCORES			
Empathy: very high	Empathy: very high		
Autonomy: high	Autonomy: medium		
Social Norms: low	Social Norms: medium		
Goal Pursuit: very high	Goal Pursuit: very high		
Curiosity: very high	Curiosity: very high		
Need for Control: very high	Need for Control: very high		

Using these techniques has enabled BEESY Strategy to construct market simulators that more accurately capture the dynamics of the future market state in which the new entrant has started to shape treatment the paradigm to reflect their new clinical endpoints. This more accurate simulation of the future ultimately results in more accurate reactions from respondents and thereby more realistic demand estimates.

Schedule a meeting with BEESY today

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Learn more about how understanding the non-conscious elements of decision-making can advance your brand's goals.

Contact us today: david.scowcroft@beesystrategy.com

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David Scowcroft Research Principal