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strategy and Marketing Plan for Pharmaceuticals

Generic Drug Metromycine example

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“Gratitude paints little smiles on everything it touches.”

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Lamia

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To everyone who has taught me, helped me, or inspired me along the way — thank you. Every lesson, every word of encouragement, every act of kindness brought me closer to this day.

With all my heart,

Lamia

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General Introduction

Introduction

The pharmaceutical industry stands as a strategic pillar of global economic development, encompassing a broad spectrum of activities — from scientific research and drug development to commercialization and post-market promotion. Among these, **medical promotion alone accounts for over 30% of industry expenditures**, underscoring its critical role in shaping market outcomes. In today's competitive landscape, **pharmaceutical marketing is no longer a supplementary function — it is as vital as research and innovation themselves**.

Marketing within the pharmaceutical sector serves not only as a commercial tool but also as a bridge between patient needs and therapeutic solutions. It enables companies to anticipate, communicate, and deliver value-driven healthcare interventions that align with both medical efficacy and patient-centric care.

In Algeria, the pharmaceutical industry is still in a developmental phase. Despite notable progress, it remains vulnerable due to gaps in expertise, limited strategic investment in non-production functions (such as marketing), and underdeveloped operational structures. Yet, these "non-priority" areas are often the very foundations upon which long-term sustainability and competitive differentiation are built.

Problem Statement:

In Algeria, as in many emerging markets, **pharmaceutical companies allocate substantial resources to promotional campaigns**—from scientific detailing to congress sponsorships. However, the return on these investments is not always guaranteed. Poorly executed campaigns can lead to **significant financial losses**, hinder market penetration, and in severe cases, precipitate the downfall of a company.

Given that **sales forecasts and revenue streams are closely tied to promotional success**, it becomes imperative to understand what drives an effective marketing strategy in this sector. This project seeks to address several core questions:

- What are the critical success factors for a pharmaceutical promotional campaign?
- How does strategic planning influence campaign outcomes?

- Should pharmaceutical companies adopt a business-driven, results-oriented marketing approach?

- What monitoring and performance evaluation tools can enhance marketing effectiveness?
- What would an ideal marketing plan look like for a generic drug manufacturer operating in the Algerian context?

Objectives :

The overarching aim of this project is to **analyze and contextualize the principles of pharmaceutical marketing**, with a focus on practical application in Algerian drug manufacturing firms. In doing so, the study will also examine structural challenges and propose tailored solutions that align with local market dynamics.

Specific objectives include:

- Clarifying the strategic role of the marketing function within pharmaceutical laboratories.
- Designing a framework for **segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP)** adapted to the Algerian healthcare market.
- Conducting **SWOT analyses** to uncover both opportunities and limitations within the local pharmaceutical environment.
- Crafting a robust and adaptable **marketing mix (4Ps)** model suitable for generics.

Developing a comprehensive, actionable **marketing plan for a new generic medicine** (to be specified later), integrating market research, launch strategy, promotional tactics, and performance metrics.

Part I: Structure and Functional Organization of Pharmaceutical Companies

Chapter 1 : Structure and Organization of Pharmaceutical Companies

1.1. General Overview of Pharmaceutical Companies

A company, in general, is an economic and social concept that can be defined as "an organizational unit producing goods and services, enjoying a certain autonomy of decision-making, notably regarding the allocation of its current resources."[1]

a. Categories of Pharmaceutical Companies:

Companies may pursue multiple objectives, but their activity orientation must be unique, classifying them into specific categories. Every company must have objectives that are concrete, achievable in the medium term, motivating, and mobilizing for its members.

Companies primarily aim to achieve three objectives:

- **Economic Objective**: Satisfying customer needs.
- **Social Objective**: Improving the moral and material condition of employees, creating jobs, etc.
- **Financial Objective**: Ensuring the profitability and financial stability of the company.

According to economists, the principal goal of a company is to generate profit — defined as the difference between revenues and costs. This financial objective differentiates companies from non-profit organizations.

However, business leaders may also pursue additional goals, such as maximizing turnover, expanding company size, developing new activities, or launching new products and services.

Furthermore, companies might integrate societal objectives alongside financial and strategic goals, such as employee welfare policies, environmental protection, and anti-discrimination measures[2]

Based on their orientation, pharmaceutical companies are classified into:

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[1] L'Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques français (***INSEE***) : https://www.insee.fr/fr/metadonnees/definition/c1496

[2] (https://www.lcl.fr/professionnel/mag-pro/creation-entreprise/qu-est-ce-qu-une-entreprise

a.1. Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Companies

They sell exclusively the medicines they manufacture to duly authorized wholesale distributors. Given the high degree of vertical integration in the pharmaceutical distribution chain, many manufacturers maintain their own distribution arms within their corporate groups—as is the case in Algeria with SAIDAL, which absorbed the

They sell exclusively the medicines they manufacture to duly authorized wholesale distributors. Given the high degree of vertical integration in the pharmaceutical distribution chain, many manufacturers maintain their own distribution arms within their corporate groups—for example in Algeria, SAIDAL absorbed the state distributor Digromed; Biopharm relies on its subsidiary Biopure; and AT Pharma distributes through Hydrapharm.

Still using Algeria as an example, manufacturers must, in particular:

1. Hold a valid operating license.
2. Entrust the technical management of their plant to a Pharmacist as Technical Director.
3. Demonstrate that they have developed manufacturing and control processes—including packaging, handling, and storage—that comply with Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP).
4. Maintain a quality-control protocol in accordance with Good Manufacturing Practices, ready for inspection at any time by the LNCPP (National Laboratory for Pharmaceutical Product Control) or the ANPP.
5. Submit monthly reports to the Ministry of Health detailing production volumes, finished-product inventories, raw-material import volumes, and raw-material inventories.
6. For manufacturers who also import finished products: commence local production within two years of receiving import authorization, under penalty of forfeiture of that authorization.

a.2. Pharmaceutical Distribution Companies:

Pharmaceutical distribution companies—commonly called wholesale distributors—are defined by Algerian law as “pharmaceutical establishments.” Under Article 219 of Law No. 18-11 of 18 Chaoual 1439 (July 2, 2018) relating to health, a wholesale distributor is a pharmaceutical establishment.

Article 218 of that same law states that:

“A pharmaceutical establishment is a company organized under one of the legal forms provided for by the Commercial Code and subject to the approval of the competent services of the Ministry of Health.”

Furthermore, under the provisions of Article R.5124-2 (5°) of the French Public Health Code (CSP), a wholesale distributor is defined as a company engaged in the purchase and storage of medicines (excluding investigational drugs), for the purpose of distributing them wholesale and in their original state [3]

- **Service Companies in the Pharmaceutical Field ("Scientific Promotion and Information Companies**

These firms offer marketing solutions dedicated to the pharmaceutical industry, providing a range of services to automate sales forces and marketing processes.

They focus on customer, prospect, and supplier relationship management, supporting marketing plan execution, medical promotion activities, and strengthening sales teams.

They also include advanced functionalities for resource planning across all communication channels, management of direct/indirect orders, customer request handling, and statistical reporting

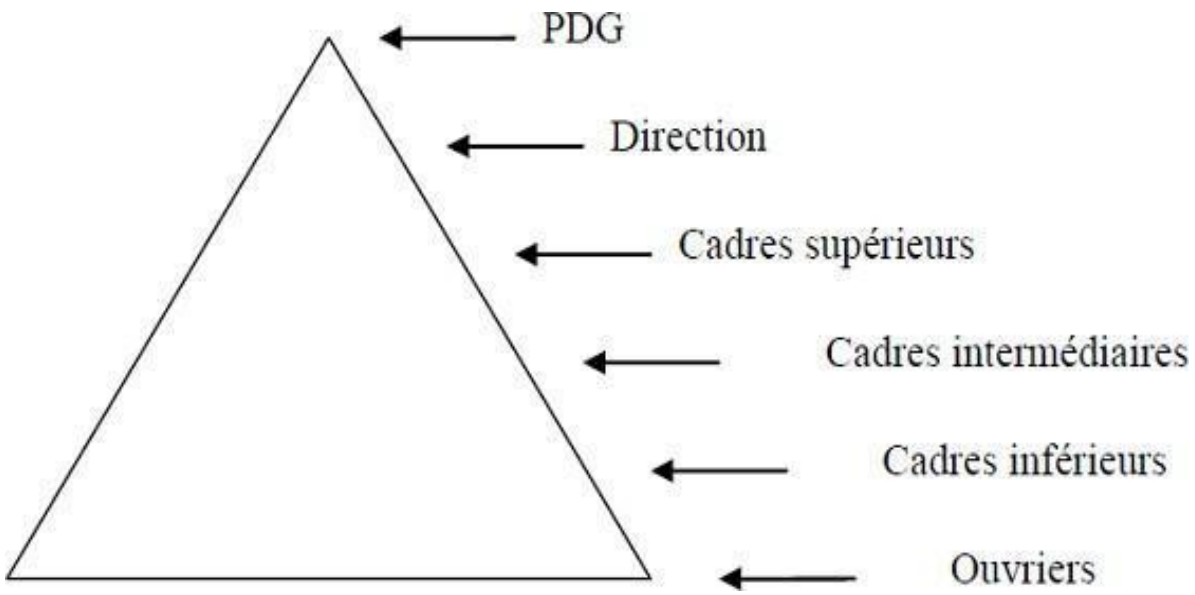
[3] Conseil de la concurrence, Étude sectorielle sur la concurrentiabilité du marché des médicaments à usage humain, 1e édition, APEC, Alger 2018, page 45

1.2. Components of a Company

A company is a structured and hierarchical human group, existing through the collaboration of various individuals. Tasks and functions are distributed among members who may be either internal or external stakeholders.

a. Internal Stakeholders:

- **Management**: The governing body that steers the company's operations and sets its objectives, organization, policies, and strategies.
- **Managers**: Those between the general workforce and management, responsible for more intellectual and high-level tasks.
- **Employees**: Workers handling basic and routine tasks



b. External Stakeholders

- **Shareholders**: Individuals or legal entities that invest in the company.
- **Customers**: Buyers of the company's goods or services.
- **Suppliers**: Providers of the necessary goods and services (e.g., raw materials).
- **Banks**: Financial intermediaries offering deposit and lending services.
- **Public Authorities**: Regulatory bodies ensuring legal and administrative compliance.

- **Trade Unions**: Employee representatives advocating for workers' interests.

1.3. Legal Forms of Pharmaceutical Companies

There are multiple legal forms for establishing a company depending on the founder's goals.

Choosing the right legal form is crucial as it determines tax treatment, legal responsibilities, and operational obligations.

a. Sole Proprietorship (Entreprise Individuelle)

- Suitable for **independent pharmacists** or small-scale pharmaceutical businesses.
- The business is owned by one person, and their personal assets are not separated from the business assets.
- A special version called **EURL (Single-Member Limited Liability Company)** helps separate personal and business assets, reducing personal financial risk.

b. Limited Liability Company (SARL - Société à Responsabilité Limitée)

- Common for **small to medium-sized pharmaceutical companies**.
- Limits the financial liability of owners to their investment in the company.
- Combines personal involvement with capital protection.

c. General Partnership (SNC - Société en Nom Collectif)

- Suitable for **groups of pharmacists or partners working closely together**.
- Based on mutual trust.
- All partners are personally and jointly liable for the company's debts.

d. Partnership Limited by Shares (SCA - Société en Commandite par Actions)

- More suited to **larger pharmaceutical businesses**.
- Has two types of partners:

- Managing partners (fully liable and in charge of operations), and
- Shareholders (limited liability investors who do not mana

1.4. Organization and Management of Pharmaceutical Companies

A company's management strategy is considered effective when it is built upon a quality system established within the organization to ensure high-quality results—from production through pharmaceutical marketing.

Numerous definitions have been proposed for the concept of Quality; we highlight the following three:

1. The French Standardization Association (AFNOR) defines it as "the ability of a product or service to satisfy users' needs."
2. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) offers a similar definition: "the totality of characteristics and features of a product, process, or service that determine its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs."
3. According to James Teboul, "Quality is, first and foremost, conformity to specifications. It is also the appropriately tailored response for the intended use—both at the time of purchase and in the long term. But it also encompasses the extra measures of allure and excellence, closer to desire than mere need."

Two essential concepts in any company's management—Quality Assurance and Total Quality Management—have become foundational for building and deploying a Quality function within an organization. Quality Assurance is defined as "the planned and systematic set of activities necessary to provide confidence that a product or service will fulfill requirements for quality."[4] Its processes are geared toward customer satisfaction. Total Quality Management (TQM) calls for the participation of everyone and aims for the satisfaction of all stakeholders, while respecting both the environment and society. Today, companies support their suppliers—not merely by inspecting incoming products but by training and encouraging them to meet the end customer's expectations.

[4] Afnor Norme X50-109, Décembre 1979, in FRANCOIS.C, VIRGINIE.L, SYLVIE.R, « La qualité au XXI siècle vers le management de la confiance », édition économica, paris, 2002, p 12

Since 2015, the quality management system has extended beyond customers to include all relevant interested parties within the organization's ecosystem. The goal is to manage, modify, and improve the quality management system—under top management's responsibility—by addressing the risks and opportunities deemed relevant to the organization, while taking into account its context, strategic challenges, and all stakeholder needs.

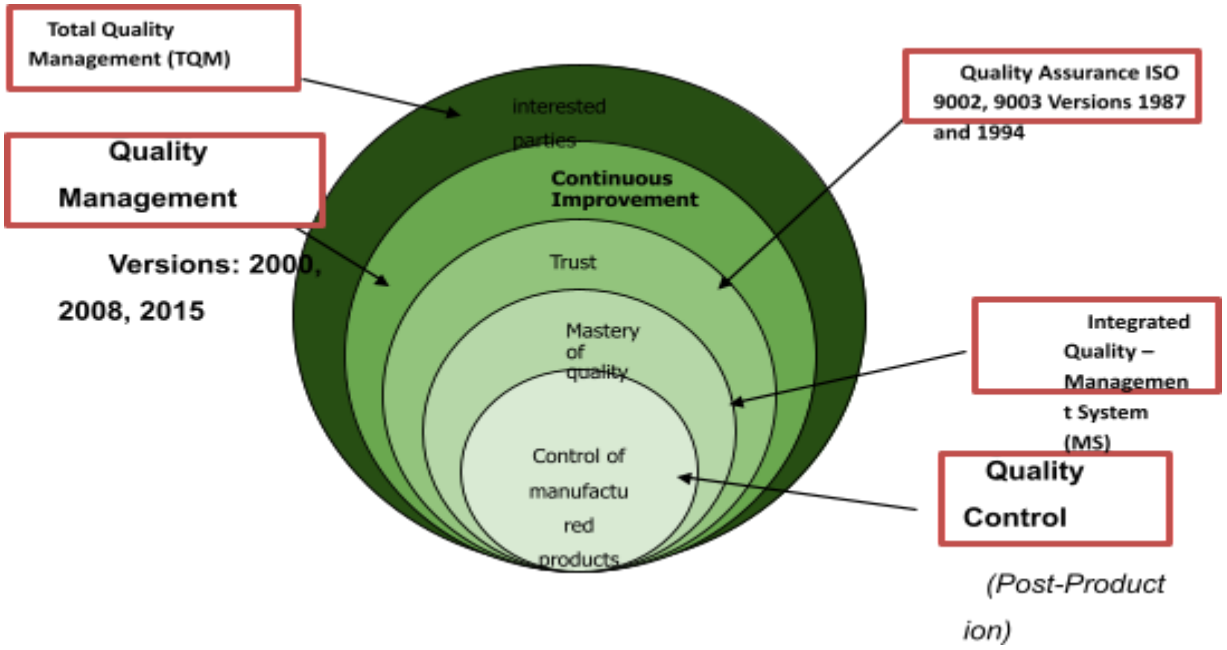


Figure 2 : Evolution of the concept of qualit

a. Quality management within pharmaceutical companies: Standards and Standardization

a.1. Standardization:

Standardization is a public-interest activity whose purpose is to provide reference documents developed by consensus among all interested parties. These documents relate to rules, characteristics, recommendations, or examples of best practices concerning products, services, methods, processes, or organizations.

It aims to promote economic development and innovation while taking sustainable development goals into account.[5]

In everyday terms, standardization refers to the process of clarifying and establishing codes to encourage and simplify exchanges between individuals. This involves putting in place a common code, much like different alphabets or numbering systems.

For several centuries, to standardize has meant harmonizing and defining procedures or rules in order to establish scales and units of measurement that can be used by as many people as possible (units of weight, distance, time, etc.). These rules

They are not universally mandatory (for example, the United Kingdom does not use the common units of measurement). However, to facilitate international trade in industry, establishing and adopting a common standardization system is essential: it simplifies codes for everyone's understanding and enables the smoothest possible "exchange" of goods. The technical advantages of standardization are indisputable and promote both production and economic growth.[6]

Broadly speaking, for any organization, a standard is a document that defines requirements, specifications, guidelines, or characteristics to be implemented in the production of a product or service.

[7]In the pharmaceutical field, several standards exist to ensure the quality of the final product—whether a medicine or a service. The most important include:

- **Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) :**

The WHO defines Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) as "one of the elements of quality assurance; they ensure that products are consistently produced and controlled according to quality standards suitable for their intended use and specified in the marketing authorization."

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[5] **Décret n°2009-697 du 16 juin 2009**, **Chapter I, Article 1**, concerning standardization, as signed by François Fillon

[6] http://www2.emergences.fr/dossiers/normes/notre-dossier/quest-ce-que-la-normalisation/

7 7https://www.iso.org/fr

- **Good Laboratory Practices (GLP) :**[8]

Good Laboratory Practices (GLP) constitute a quality assurance system for the organization and operation of laboratories (referred to as "testing facilities") that conduct non-clinical safety testing on chemical products.

The goal of GLP is to ensure the quality, reproducibility, and integrity of data generated for regulatory purposes. Recognized internationally, GLP helps to minimize the repetition of equivalent studies and reduce the use of laboratory animals.

- **Good Distribution Practices (GDP) :**[9]

Good Distribution Practices (GDP) are a set of recommendations and principles derived from Good Manufacturing Practices. They provide a general organizational framework for the distribution activities of pharmaceutical products, setting the standards to be followed to ensure the quality, efficacy, and safety of the products. All distribution activities must be clearly defined and systematically reviewed. All critical stages of the distribution processes and significant changes must be justified and, when necessary, validate There is no single universal document for GDP (Good Distribution Practices); each country drafts its own GDP guidelines based on GMP (Good Manufacturing Practices), and they are all generally similar

- **ISO Standards:**

ISO 9001 is an international standard that covers all activities of an organization, regardless of its sector (industry, services, education, etc.)[10]. The ISO 9001: 2015 version focuses on dynamic quality management, with better management of risks and opportunities. It also considers external issues relevant to the organization and includes stakeholders that are pertinent to the business.

There are several other ISO standards related to quality:

[8] Manufacturing Practices (GMP) for Vaccines and Biological Products, Part 2: Validation, May 2001, page 2
[9] National Agency for the Safety of Medicines and Health Products (ANSM): Principles of Good Laboratory Practices, May 2016, Version 3
[10] Isabelle GAPILLOUT, op.cit, p12

ISO 9000: Describes the fundamental principles of quality management and provides guidance on how to apply them in daily practices.

ISO 9004: Provides guidelines for ensuring sustainable performance through a quality management system.

ISO 19011: Offers guidance on conducting internal and external quality audits, helping prepare for audits in case of certification.[11]

b. Quality Management System (QMS)

The adoption of a Quality Management System is a strategic decision for an organization that can help improve its overall performance and provide a solid foundation for initiatives to ensure its sustainability. Therefore, a Quality Policy must be adopted within the organization. This Quality Policy will come to life through the Quality Management System that must be implemented to actualize this policy.

To better understand, we have defined the concepts related to the QMS, namely management system, quality management, and quality management system

b.1. What is a Management System?

According to **ISO 9001:2015**, a management system refers to a coordinated set of elements within an organization used to:

- Define strategic goals and policies,[12]
- Set measurable objectives,
- Design and implement the necessary processes to achieve these targets.

It represents the framework that allows an organization to systematically plan, execute, monitor, and improve its operations.

b.2. Defining Quality Management

Based on **ISO 9000 (2005)**, quality management is a type of management system specifically focused on directing and controlling an organization in terms of

[11] Famille ISO 9000 — Management de la qualité
[12] ISO 9001:2015 – Quality management systems — Requirements.

quality.[13]

This concept involves two key dimensions:

- A **drive for excellence** in processes, products, services, and performance—delivering high value efficiently.
- A **commitment to compliance**, ensuring that all outcomes meet regulatory, customer, and industry requirements, building trust with stakeholders and clients alike.

b.3. What is a Quality Management System (QMS)?

Establishing a QMS means implementing and maintaining a quality-focused framework tailored to the organization's context, challenges, and opportunities. This includes:

- Defining a **quality policy** and aligning it with clear **quality objectives**,
- Identifying and managing **key processes and documentation** that support operations,
- Ensuring integration and consistency between different activities and departments.

Moreover, organizations must be able to **demonstrate** that the system:

- Is properly deployed and actively followed,
- Is regularly assessed and updated,
- Adheres to the **Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA)** cycle for continuous improvement.[14]

While **ISO 9001** outlines the requirements for an effective QMS, **ISO 9000** provides the foundational principles and terminology needed to understand and apply those requirements effectively.[15]

[13] ISO 9000:2005 – Quality management systems — Fundamentals and vocabulary.
[14] https://asq.org/quality-resources/quality-management-system
[15] ISO 9000:2005 – Quality management systems — Fundamentals and vocabulary.9

1.5. Marketing Function within a Pharmaceutical Company

a. Marketing Function within a Pharmaceutical Company:

The marketing function in pharmaceutical companies operates within a unique framework shaped by regulatory, ethical, and medical considerations. Unlike consumer goods, pharmaceutical marketing must navigate strict rules related to pricing, advertising, and product communication. These limitations stem from the critical nature of the product — health. As such, marketing strategies in this sector must be especially careful, often targeting healthcare professionals rather than patients directly.

However, the role of the patient is evolving. With greater access to medical information and a growing emphasis on patient empowerment, pharmaceutical marketing is becoming more consumer-aware. This shift has encouraged companies to enhance their communication efforts by offering support tools like medical information hotlines, dosage guides, and mobile applications to assist doctors and patients alike.

Despite its specificity, pharmaceutical marketing still aligns with universal marketing principles. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), marketing management is “the art and science of choosing target markets and building profitable relationships with them.”[16] This applies even in healthcare: pharmaceutical firms must segment their markets, position their products effectively, and deliver value to both professionals and end-users, all while balancing profitability and compliance.

In short, pharmaceutical marketing remains a strategic business process aimed at identifying market needs and offering solutions that meet both commercial and ethical goals. While the execution differs from traditional consumer marketing, the core objective — to satisfy client needs sustainably and profitably — remains unchanged.

[16] **Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016).** *Marketing Management* (15th ed.). Pearson

b. Marketing Function within a Pharmaceutical Company:

To gain a clearer understanding of the marketing function in the pharmaceutical field, and before discussing the promotion and communication of pharmaceutical products (medicines and health-related products), it is important to first examine the role and position of this function within companies. For example, at Saidal, a leading pharmaceutical company, the marketing department plays a central role in coordinating product strategies, market analysis, and communication efforts to ensure the successful launch and sustained performance of their product portfolio.

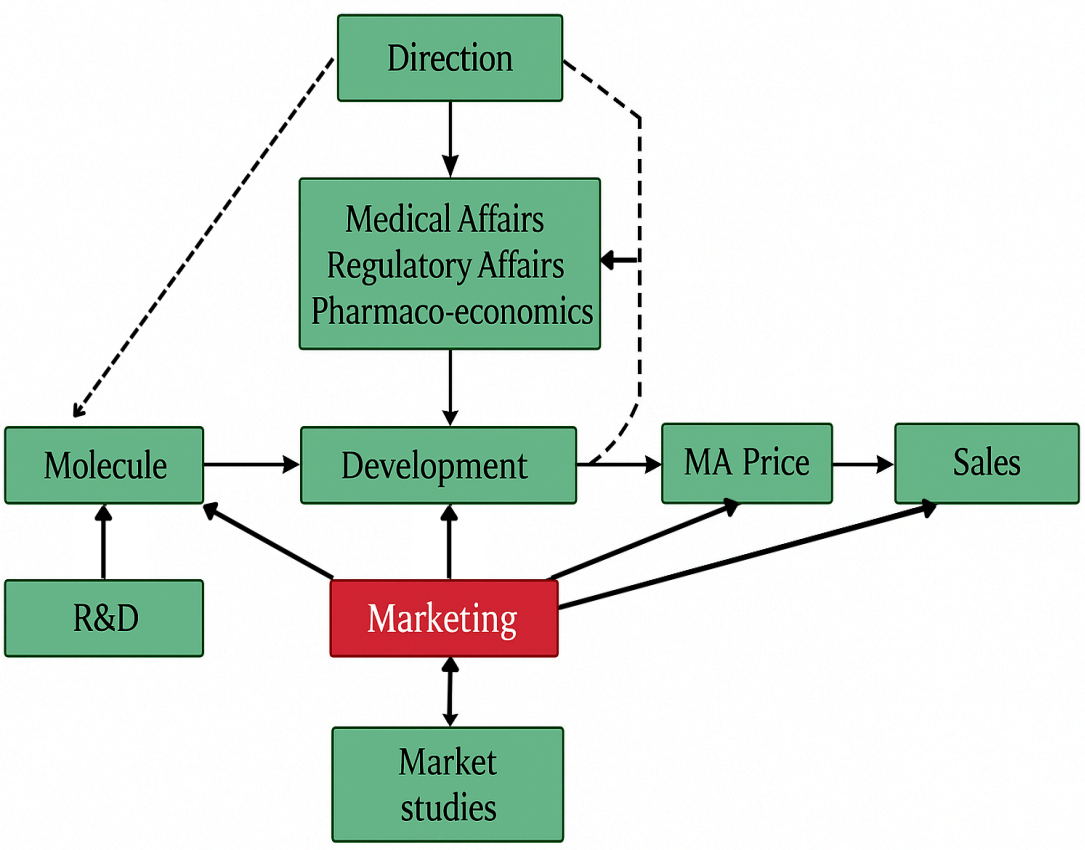
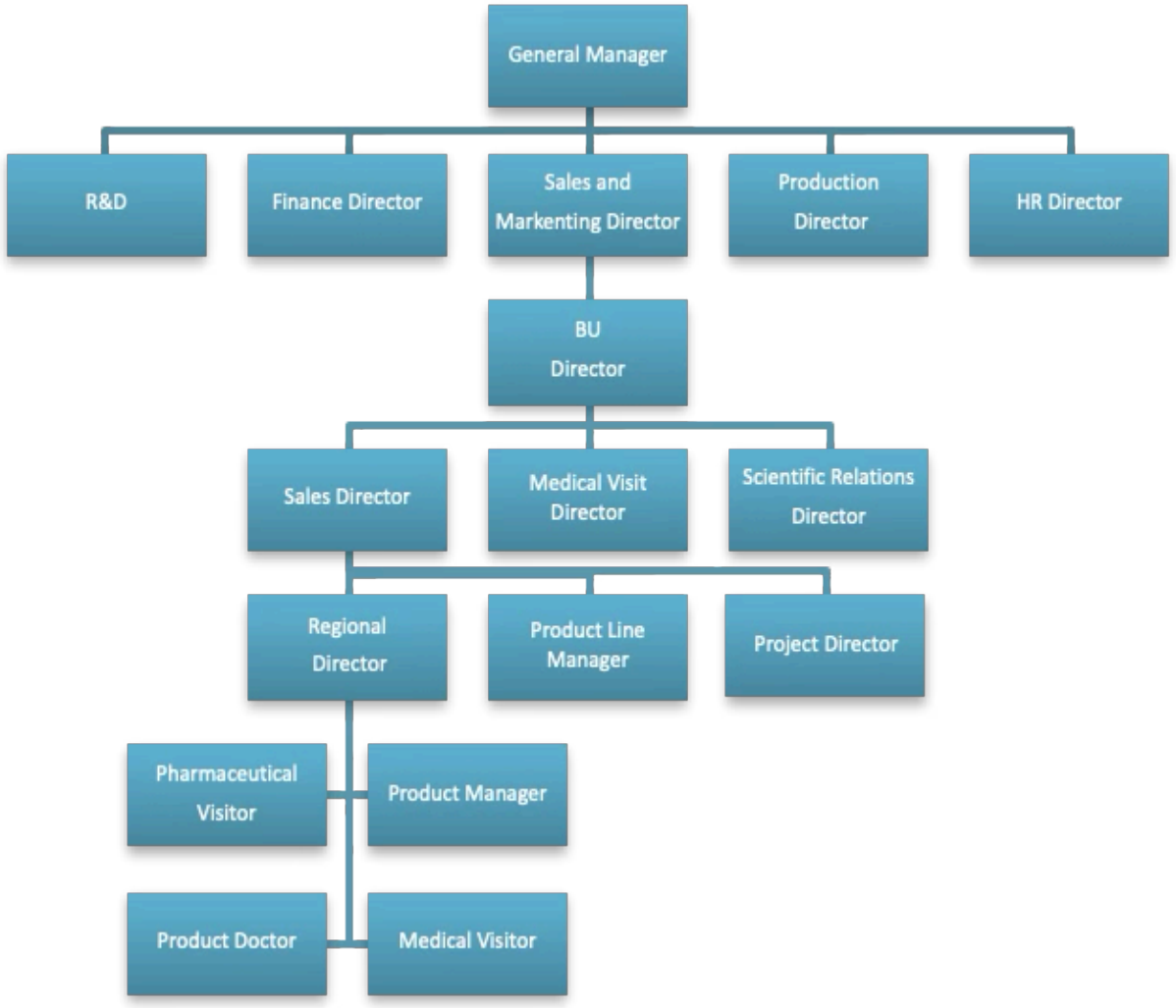


Figure 3 : Place du marketing dans une entreprise pharmaceutique[17]

Once a pharmaceutical company defines its objectives, it is up to the marketing strategy to determine the key components: the right product, delivered through the

[17] L'influence de la visite médicale et pharmaceutique sur la prescription des médicaments

right channels, aimed at the right target audience. The strategy is then implemented through a marketing plan, which outlines the main steps and tools required to achieve these goals effectively.



c. The Sales and Marketing Department Team in a Pharmaceutical Company

In pharmaceutical companies, the Sales and Marketing Department plays a critical role in shaping the brand image of products throughout their lifecycle—from pre-launch to post-marketing phases. This department includes various specialized roles that collaborate to ensure products are effectively positioned, promoted, and

sold, all while complying with strict healthcare regulations. Below is an overview of the key roles typically found in this department.

c.1. Sales and Marketing Director:

Responsible for defining and driving the overall marketing strategy. This role ensures adherence to local and international regulatory standards and manages the entire marketing team. The director also ensures alignment between strategic goals and team performance.[18]

c.2. Business Unit Director :

Leads operations and business development within a defined geographical or functional area. They set objectives, coordinate with general management to create business plans, and ensure reporting and performance tracking (budgets, profits, and resource allocation).[19]

c.3. Sales Director :

Develops and executes the promotional and commercial strategy. This includes defining sales targets, pricing policies, distribution channels, and promotional tools. The Sales Director also trains and supervises the sales team. A background in sales or science is typically required.[20]

c.4. Regional Sales Manager:

Implements national sales strategies at a regional level and manages local medical sales reps. This role involves market surveillance and feedback collection, which is relayed to upper management. Often filled by professionals with medical, pharmaceutical, or life sciences backgrounds.[21]

c.5. Pharmaceutical Sales Representative:

Promotes and sells over-the-counter (OTC) health products directly to pharmacies. They execute sector-specific action plans based on national and

[18] LEEM (2023). *Référentiels métiers – Directeur Marketing*. leem.org
[19] LEEM. *Fiches métiers – Directeur d'unité opérationnelle*.
[20] LEEM (2023). *Fiches métiers – Directeur des ventes*
[21] LEEM. *Fiches métiers – Responsable régional*. leem.org

regional goals. Typically requires training in pharmacy, medicine, biology, or business/marketing. Note: they are restricted to OTC products.[22]

c.6. Medical Visit Director:

Coordinates the medical sales team to maximize sales coverage and product visibility. Defines annual sales objectives and promotional strategies (sampling, targeted studies, post-marketing research), and manages HR-related responsibilities such as recruitment, evaluation, and training.[23]

c.7. Product Line Manager (Chef de gamme):

Develops marketing strategies for one or several products to increase revenue and profitability. Leads a team of product managers, ensuring alignment and training. Usually has a background in marketing or business.[24]

c.8. Product Manager (Chef de produit):

Implements tailored marketing strategies for assigned products. Manages planning, budgeting, PR, event organization (e.g., symposiums, congresses), and creates promotional materials. Also responsible for briefing the sales and medical information teams.[25]

c.9. Medical Advisor (Médecin produit):

Ensures scientific accuracy of all marketing content. Provides clinical data and study outcomes to support marketing claims and trains sales teams on the medical aspects of products. Typically a trained physician.[26]

c.10. Medical Sales Representative (Visiteur médical):

Acts as the primary liaison between the company and healthcare professionals. Promotes prescription products, answers clinical questions, and reports field data. Can have a medical, pharmaceutical, biological, or commercial background.[27]

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[22] LEEM. *Observatoire de l'information promotionnelle*.
[23]Homburg, C., Kuester, S., & Krohmer, H. (2013). *Marketing Management: A Contemporary Perspective*. McGraw-Hill.
[24] Hubert, K. (2013). *Chef de produit marketing*. Dunod.
[25] LEEM. *Fiches métiers – Chef de produit*.
[26] EMA (European Medicines Agency) Communication Guidelines.
[27] LEEM. *Visiteur médical*.

c.11. Healthcare Project Manager:

Coordinates strategic marketing and institutional projects across departments. Ensures ethical and regulatory compliance, manages timelines, budgets, and supports patient and healthcare provider engagement. They are responsible for collecting field data and aligning project execution with marketing strategies.[28]

d. The Regulatory Framework of Pharmaceutical Marketing

Marketing in the pharmaceutical industry operates under strict regulations due to the sensitive nature of the products and the ethical responsibilities involved. Unlike consumer goods, where advertising is generally unrestricted, pharmaceutical marketing must comply with legal frameworks that prioritize public health over commercial interests. In Algeria, this is governed by the Public Health Law No. 18-11 (2018)[29], which outlines specific conditions for pharmaceutical promotion activities.

Pharmaceutical companies and agencies specializing in medical promotion must obtain prior authorization from the Ministry of Health before disseminating scientific or medical information about their products (Article 238). This information must be comprehensive, including the product's formula, therapeutic effects, indications, contraindications, usage guidelines, and results from validated clinical, pharmacological, and toxicological studies (Article 235).[30]

It is also important to note that advertising pharmaceutical products to the general public is strictly prohibited in Algeria, regardless of the communication medium used (Article 236). Promotional communication is restricted solely to healthcare professionals and must be objective, non-misleading, and scientifically accurate. Any promotional material must receive prior approval in the form of a “visa publicitaire” issued by the National Agency for Pharmaceutical Products (ANPP), and this authorization is valid for a maximum of five years (Articles 240–243).[31]

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[28] LEEM. *Chef de projets santé*.
[29] **Law No. 18-11 (2018), Algerian Public Health Law**, Articles 235–247
[30] **Source:** Article 235, Algerian Health Law (2018).
[31] articles 240–243, Algerian Health Law (2018).

Only certain promotional tools are permitted under regulation, such as medical visits, scientific seminars, brochures, catalogs, and product information sheets. These tools must comply with ethical standards and be used responsibly. Furthermore, the 2018 Health Law explicitly bans the distribution of free medical samples for promotional purposes (Article 244).

According to the law, the role of medical representative (also referred to as pharmaceutical sales delegate) can only be exercised by qualified professionals such as physicians, pharmacists, dentists, veterinarians, or biologists. These individuals must be officially declared and registered to perform pharmaceutical promotion. Additionally, they are required to report any safety or usage-related information regarding the medications they promote (Articles 245–247).[32]

These strict regulatory measures aim to ensure accurate communication with healthcare professionals, promote the rational use of medicines, and protect the healthcare system and patients from unethical marketing practices.

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[32] Article 247, Algerian Health Law (2018)

Chapter 2 : PharmaceuticalMarketing Fundamentals and Strategies

2.1. Marketing Plan in a Pharmaceutical Company:

A marketing plan in a pharmaceutical company is a strategic document that defines how a company will promote, position, and distribute a drug product over its life cycle. Unlike traditional marketing, pharmaceutical marketing operates in a heavily regulated environment where promoting ethical use, patient safety, and adherence to legal standards is as important as achieving commercial success.

This plan typically spans from pre-launch preparation to post-launch monitoring and is coordinated across departments such as medical affairs, regulatory, compliance, sales, and market access.

a. Purpose and Scope:

The main purpose of a pharmaceutical marketing plan is to:

- Analyze the market landscape, including patient needs, competition, and prescriber behavior.
- Define short- and long-term objectives.
- Design strategies for launch, penetration, and growth phases of a product.
- Align marketing efforts with corporate strategy, ethical standards, and regulatory compliance.[33]

b. Essential Components of a Pharmaceutical Marketing Plan

Each component plays a specific role in the overall strategy:

[33] Source: Kotler, P. & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing Management* (15th ed.). Pearson.

Table 1 : Key Components of a Pharmaceutical Marketing Plan[34]

Component	Description
Market Research	In-depth data collection on disease prevalence, treatment patterns, and competitor analysis.
Situation Analysis	SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) provides internal and external evaluation.
Target Audience Identification	Defines the physicians, pharmacists, hospitals, and possibly patients to focus on.
Value Proposition	unique selling and differentiation based on efficacy ,safety ,price
Positioning Strategy	How the product will be perceived in the minds of prescribers or institutions.
Tactics and Execution Plan	Includes product sampling, digital marketing, medical detailing, and conference sponsorships.
Budgeting	Allocation of resources based on forecasted ROI.
Monitoring & KPIs	Metrics to assess prescription volume, market share, awareness, and compliance.

[34] Source: Lobo, F. & Bhasin, H. (2022). *Marketing Strategies for the Pharmaceutical Industry*. Journal of Pharmaceutical Marketing.

c. Real-World Example: SAIDAL Group (Algeria):

SAIDAL, Algeria's leading pharmaceutical company, offers a real-life illustration:

- **Launch Planning**: SAIDAL develops pre-launch activities such as medical education and physician training.
- **Market Analysis:** Focused studies on prevalent diseases in Algeria like diabetes and hypertension.
- **Ethical Marketing:** Emphasis on regulatory compliance with Algeria's Ministry of Health (Article 235 & 238 of 2018 Health Law).
- **Localized Strategy:** Products like Paracetamol SAIDAL are positioned for affordability and accessibility through local pharmacy networks.
- **Tools:** Collaboration with national healthcare programs and promotional materials approved by the Agence Nationale des Produits Pharmaceutiques (ANPP).[35]

d. Standard Structure of a Marketing Plan in the Pharmaceutical Sector

The structure of a marketing plan tends to be fairly standardized across industries, including pharmaceuticals. While the specific details may vary based on the type of product (e.g., prescription drug vs. over-the-counter medication), the core components remain consistent. A well-constructed marketing plan provides a roadmap to align business objectives with targeted actions, allocate resources efficiently, and monitor performance. Below is a typical structure used in pharmaceutical marketing planning:

[35]SAIDAL Group Annual Reports; Benkhadra, L. & Boudiaf, N. (2020). *Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices in Algeria*. *Revue des Sciences Commerciales*.

Table 2 : Typical Structure of a Pharmaceutical Marketing Plan

Section	Content
Executive Summary	A concise summary of the key recommendations and decisions proposed in the marketing plan.[36]
Marketing Situation Analysis	Comprehensive analysis of internal and external data, including a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats).
Diagnostic Evaluation	Extracts market opportunities and identifies major threats or pitfalls based on the situation analysis.[37]
Objectives	Clearly defined and quantifiable goals such as market share targets, sales volume, or profitability benchmarks.
Marketing Strategy	Strategic choices concerning market segmentation, target selection, and product positioning.[38]
Action Plan	Translation of strategies into actionable steps—who will do what, how, where, within what budget, and using which control instruments.[39]
Forecasted Income Statement	Quantitative projections of expected results such as revenue, costs, and profit margins for the defined marketing period.
Control System	Methods used to monitor, evaluate, and adjust the marketing activities and ensure alignment with strategic objectives.[40]

e. Components and Organization of a Pharmaceutical Company

A pharmaceutical company is a highly structured organization that integrates several functional areas to ensure the development, manufacturing, regulation, marketing, and distribution of medicines. These components are designed to work in

[36] Kotler & Keller (2016)
[37] Lobo & Bhasin (2022)
[38] Kotler & Keller (2016)
[39] Lobo & Bhasin (2022)
[40] IQVIA (2023)

synergy while complying with strict national and international health and safety regulations.

e.1. Core Functional Components

1- **Research & Development (R&D)**

This department is responsible for drug discovery and innovation. Scientists and researchers conduct clinical trials, preclinical testing, and formulate new molecules.[41]

2**. Regulatory Affairs**

Ensures compliance with drug safety laws. This team prepares regulatory submissions and communicates with authorities such as the FDA, EMA, or ANPP (Algeria).[42]

2- **Manufacturing and Quality Assurance**

Includes production facilities that adhere to Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP). Quality control teams test products at every stage.

3- **Medical Affairs**

Responsible for supporting the scientific accuracy of promotional claims, responding to medical inquiries, and monitoring post-marketing studies

4- **Marketing and Sales**

Focuses on market analysis, product promotion strategies, sales force training, and communication. Often divided into product management, sales operations, and medical representatives.[43]

5- Supply Chain and Logistics

Handles procurement, storage, inventory, and distribution of pharmaceutical products to healthcare facilities and pharmacies.[44]

[41] *Source: Kotler & Keller, 2016; Lobo & Bhasin, 2022*
[42] *LEEM, 2024*
[43] *Kotler & Keller, 2016; IQVIA, 2023*
[44] *IQVIA, 2023*

f. Organizational Structure Example

Pharmaceutical companies can adopt a matrix structure or division-based model depending on product lines, regions, or therapeutic areas. Below is a sample org chart:

Table 3 : Divisional Structure and Responsibilities in a Pharmaceutical Company

Division	Main Responsibilities
R&D Department	Drug development, clinical trials, innovation
Regulatory Affairs	Submission of regulatory documents, compliance monitoring
Manufacturing/QA	GMP adherence, production planning, quality control
Medical Affairs	Scientific support, medical communication, publications
Marketing Department	Strategy development, segmentation, targeting, branding
Sales Force	Field promotion, customer relationship, feedback collection
Distribution & Logistics	Warehousing, shipment tracking, forecasting

Regarding the process of developing the Marketing Plan, the team must follow the following framework:

Figure 5 : From Analysis and Diagnosis to the Formulation of the Strategy and Marketing Plan[45]

[45] Arnaud de Baynast et Julien Lévy, le MERCATOR, 12eme édition 2017 partie 04, section 05, page 664.

2.2. SWOT Analysis: A Strategic Tool in Pharmaceutical Marketing

SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) is a fundamental strategic planning tool used in pharmaceutical marketing to assess both internal and external factors that can influence a company's market position. This analysis provides an essential foundation for developing an effective marketing plan by identifying the company's core capabilities and the environment in which it operates.

The following matrix is a classic framework created for the marketing plan of a pharmaceutical company X.

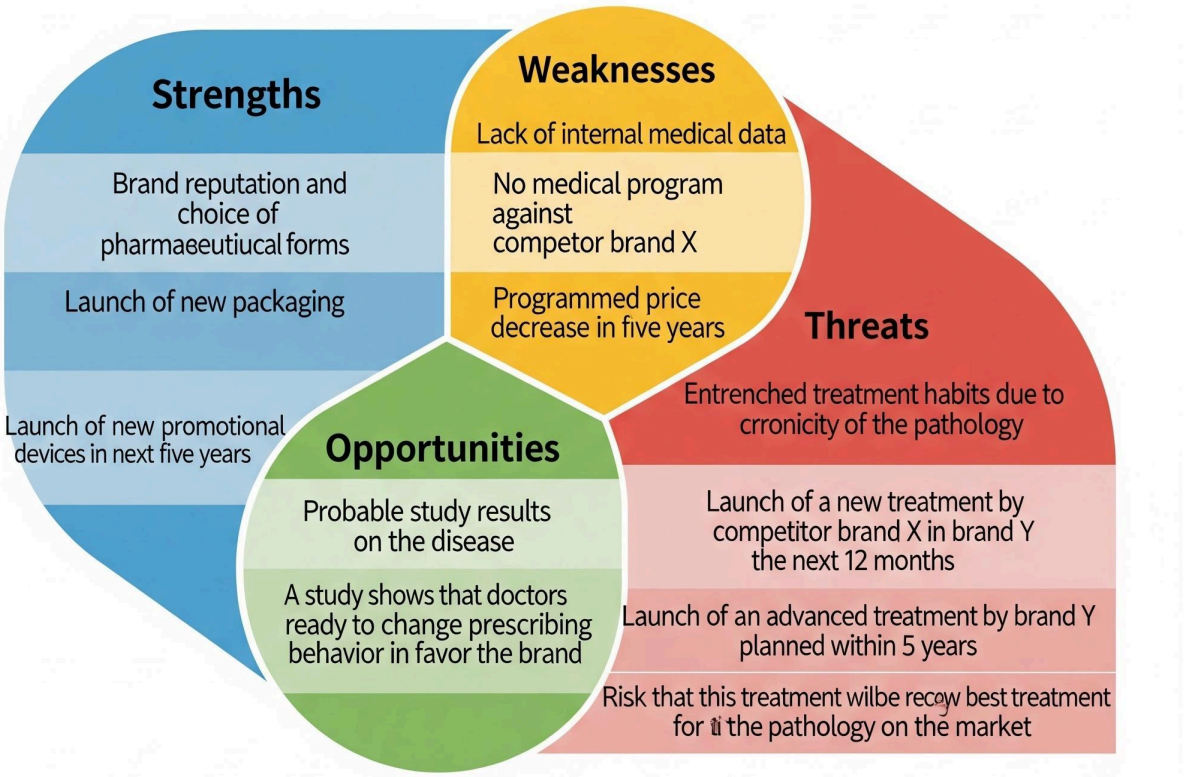

Figure 6 : SWOT Matrix of a Healthcare Product Marketed by a Pharmaceutical Company X

2.3. Marketing Objectives in a Pharmaceutical Company

Setting clear objectives is a fundamental step not only in marketing but across all business functions. It establishes the framework and expected outcomes, acting

as the starting point for every mission, project, or action, whether strategic or operational, and whether for the short, medium, or long term.

a. Why Set Marketing Objectives?

Establishing marketing objectives is crucial in the development and execution of the marketing plan. Objectives provide direction by defining the goal or desired result, ensuring full alignment with the company's overall strategy.

They serve as the foundation for medium- and long-term marketing strategies and their application in the short term (typically one year) through concrete operational plans.

Clearly defined objectives give meaning and guidance to the involved teams. When objectives are shared and agreed upon, this fosters synergy and enhances efficiency in execution.[46]

Moreover, objectives serve as an essential management tool for marketers, enabling precise and proactive monitoring of implementation to allow corrective actions if needed. They also facilitate measuring the outcomes and return on investment (ROI) of marketing programs, transforming marketing from a cost center into a profit center focused on performance and results.

b. How to Set Marketing Objectives?

Marketing objectives must align with the company's overall strategy and also be relevant considering market trends, environmental factors, and the company's strengths and weaknesses. It is essential to incorporate insights from a SWOT analysis when defining these objectives.

Objectives should be broken down into specific timeframes (one to three years) and subdivided into smaller, actionable sub-objectives, following a cascading approach. This ensures coherence between the company's vision, marketing strategy, and concrete actions in the marketing plan.

[46] Van Laethem et al. (2015), *Les Fiches Outils du Marketing*

Each objective should be paired with measurable indicators to track progress and evaluate ROI effectively.[47]

c. Types of Marketing Objectives

Marketing objectives vary depending on the company's priorities and can be broadly classified into four categories:

c.1. Volume, Revenue, Market Share:

Example, a pharmaceutical company may aim to increase its annual revenue by 5% or gain 3% market share within two years. Sub-objectives could include increasing product visibility among wholesalers, enhancing promotional efforts, and acquiring new customers.

c.2. Market Penetration

This involves increasing presence in specific target segments, distribution channels, or geographic zones. For example, gaining 10 percentage points of penetration among adolescents by improving brand image and encouraging trial and adoption.

c.3. Profitability

As marketing plays a financial role, objectives can include raising profitability by 5% in two years. This could involve optimizing the product portfolio, adjusting pricing strategies, or reducing promotional costs.

c.4. Qualitative Goals

These include objectives related to brand awareness, customer satisfaction, and perceived product quality. Sub-objectives might involve improving brand recall to 80%, enhancing proximity to clients, or promoting ISO certification and survey results.[48]

d. SMART Objectives Framework

To validate the relevance of any objective, it must follow the SMART criteria:

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[47]Lobo & Bhasin (2022), *Pharmaceutical Marketing Management*
[48] Van Laethem et al. (2015)

Specific: Clearly defined and relevant to a precise action or entity.

Example: "Increase market share of Brand X" instead of a vague "increase market share."

Measurable: Linked to quantifiable indicators.

Example: "Increase Brand X's market share by 4 points" is measurable, unlike a general statement.

Achievable: Balances ambition with feasibility. Define intermediate steps if necessary. Example: "Increase market share by 2 points per year over 2 years."

Realistic: Ensures resources (financial, human, organizational) are available.
Example: Requiring increased sales force, promotional campaigns, and communication.

Time-bound: Associates the goal with a specific timeframe.[49]

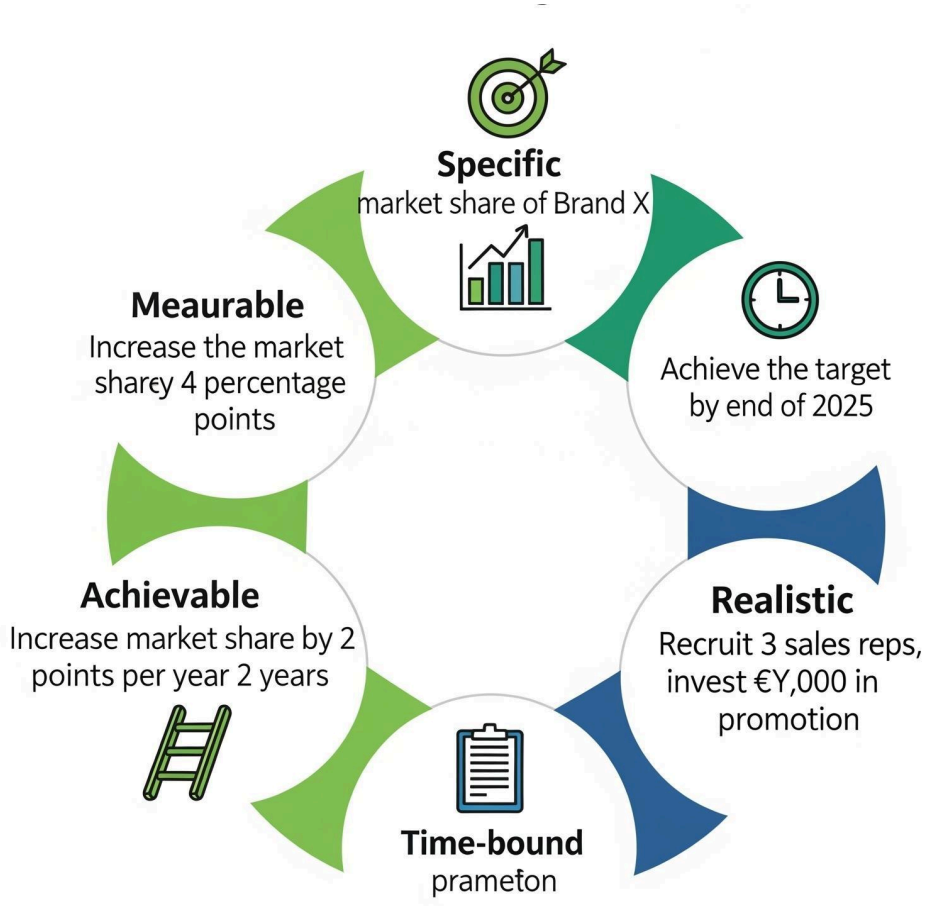

Figure 7 : SMART Objectives Breakdown for Pharmaceutical Marketing

2.4. Market Segmentation in the Pharmaceutical Industry

Market segmentation is the process of dividing a broad market into smaller, more manageable groups of individuals or professionals with similar characteristics, behaviors, or needs. In the pharmaceutical sector, segmentation is essential to better understand and address the diversity of patients and healthcare providers. It allows

[49] Van Laethem et al. (2015)

companies to offer the right products to the right people in the most efficient and targeted way.[50]

a.Objectives of Segmentation

Pharmaceutical companies segment their market to:

- Better respond to patient and physician needs.
- Customize marketing strategies and product offerings.
- Improve communication and sales effectiveness.
- Reduce costs by avoiding wasteful broad campaigns.
- Identify new opportunities or under-served market areas.
- Minimize direct competition by focusing on specialized segments.[51]

b.Types of Segmentation

1- **Geographic Segmentation :** Divides the market by location: country, region, city, or even neighborhood. This is useful for adapting distribution, packaging, or communication strategies according to local habits or regulations.

2- **Demographic Segmentation :** Based on characteristics such as age, gender, income, or family situation. In healthcare, age and gender can directly impact treatment type or dosage (e.g., pediatric vs. adult formulations).

3- **Health-Related Segmentation :** Focuses on the presence or absence of a disease or condition. This is the most relevant segmentation in pharma. For example, a company targeting diabetic patients will segment by the type and stage of diabetes.

4- **Behavioral Segmentation :** Looks at how people interact with a product or treatment: regular use, occasional use, treatment adherence, or brand loyalty. Some medications (e.g., seasonal cold remedies) are marketed based on usage timing or context.

[50] *Le Marketing*, 2nd ed., Dunod, p. 19
[51] *Marketing des Produits de Santé*, 2nd ed., Dunod, p. 187

5- **Psychographic Segmentation :** Based on values, beliefs, or lifestyles. This is more common in wellness products, but even in pharma, patient attitudes toward treatment (e.g., preference for natural remedies vs. conventional drugs) can influence positioning.

6- **Professional Segmentation :** When targeting healthcare professionals (HCPs), segmentation can be done based on specialty, prescribing behavior, openness to new drugs, location, or volume of patients treated.[52]

c. Segmentation Process

Segmentation can be:

- **A priori**: Based on predefined criteria (e.g., targeting people with asthma).
- **A posteriori**: Based on market research that identifies patterns in consumer behavior and needs.

To achieve accurate segmentation, companies often use:

- **Quantitative data** (e.g., prescription volume, patient statistics).
- **Qualitative insights** (e.g., interviews with doctors to explore attitudes and motivations).

d. Conditions for Effective Segmentation

For segmentation to be useful, each segment must be:

- **Measurable**: Clearly defined and statistically significant.
- **Accessible**: Reachable through sales reps, media, or digital channels.
- **Substantial**: Large enough to be profitable.
- **Actionable**: The company must be able to serve the segment effectively.[53]

Segmentation often involves multiple overlapping criteria. For example, a pharmaceutical company might target cardiologists (professional), working in large

[52] Serre & Wallet-Wodka, 2014, p. 190
[53] Philip Kotler & Kevin Keller, *Marketing Management*, 15th ed., Pearson, 2016

cities (geographic), treating elderly patients (demographic), with a preference for innovative treatments (psychographic).

2.5. Targeting

Targeting is a crucial strategic decision in marketing. Once a company has segmented the market into distinct consumer groups, targeting involves selecting one or more of these segments to serve. This choice significantly affects a firm's medium- to long-term performance. The selection is based on the economic potential of each segment, the company's ability to reach and serve them, and the competitive advantage it holds. After choosing the appropriate segments, the company designs a specific marketing mix

a. Concentrated Strategy

A concentrated targeting strategy focuses exclusively on a single market segment. This involves committing to one specific product-market pair. Such a strategy is often used by smaller pharmaceutical firms that specialize in narrow areas, such as a rare disease or a specific therapeutic class. The main benefit is the ability to build strong expertise and brand recognition, which can help avoid direct competition. However, this approach carries risk: a company becomes overly dependent on a narrow segment. If new drugs replace older treatments or if the disease prevalence shifts, the firm may struggle. To mitigate this, many companies eventually diversify.

b. Full Market Coverage

In contrast, some companies choose a broad market coverage strategy, targeting multiple or all segments. This is typical of major pharmaceutical companies such as Sanofi Aventis or Novartis, which offer products across most of the common therapeutic areas. This coverage can be implemented through differentiated marketing (a unique mix for each segment) or undifferentiated marketing (a single mix for all). However, in the pharmaceutical industry, due to the complexity of diseases and patient needs, a uniform approach is rarely effective. Most companies must adapt their strategies to each product-segment pair.[54]

[54] *Claude Demeure, "Aide-mémoire Marketing", 6th edition, DUNOD, Paris, 2008, p. 100–101*

c. Product Specialization

In a product specialization strategy, a company focuses on one type of product, which is then marketed to multiple segments. For instance, a company might develop a particular medical device or formulation and adjust its dosage or presentation for different age groups or usage contexts. This strategy allows for technical mastery and optimization of production and R&D efforts, while still addressing various market needs.[55]

d. Market Specialization

Alternatively, a company may choose to serve one specific customer group (market segment) with a wide range of products. This is often the case in B2B markets, such as hospitals. For example, Baxter Laboratories focuses exclusively on hospital clients, providing them with a diverse portfolio that includes IV solutions, surgical equipment, and injectable drugs. This creates deep loyalty and long-term relationships, even if the client base is narrower.

e. Conditions for Effective Targeting

For targeting to be successful, the selected segments must be adequately sized (to ensure profitability) and not overserved by competitors. Companies must avoid segments that are too small or highly vulnerable, as these are often unstable or attract aggressive competition. Typically, startups begin by targeting a single segment to establish themselves and then expand their reach as they grow. This reflects a transition from concentration to full market coverage over time. Strategic targeting must remain flexible, aligning with market opportunities, product evolution, and internal capabilities.[56]

2.6. Positioning

Positioning is the final step in marketing strategy, following segmentation and targeting. It refers to the strategic process of assigning a distinct and favorable position to a product or brand in the consumer's mind, especially in relation to competing offerings. In saturated markets, such as health and pharmaceuticals,

[55] *Serre & Wallet-Wodka, "Marketing des Produits de Santé", DUNOD, 2014, p. 194.*
[56] *Denis Darpy, "Le Marketing", 2nd edition, DUNOD, Paris, 2015, p. 26.*

where products often resemble one another in function or formulation, successful positioning becomes a tool for differentiation. It is not only about features but also about what the product symbolizes to the prescriber or end-user. A clear, compelling, and consistent message about the product's benefits, identity, and values is essential to ensure it stands out in the minds of stakeholders.[57]

a. Dynamic and Evolving Positioning

A product's position is not static. It must evolve in response to market conditions, including the entry of generic competitors, changing patient expectations, or regulatory updates. In the healthcare sector, particularly for reimbursed drugs, the primary audience is often not the end user but the prescriber (physicians), making the message and relevance to their practice critical. The success of a product depends on how well the company aligns its intended positioning with the perceived positioning held by physicians and healthcare professionals.[58]

b. Types of Positioning and Market Roles

Positioning strategies vary based on market entry timing and target segments. In every market, there are leaders, challengers, and followers (often called "me-too" products). Leaders, such as Mopral® in the anti-ulcer drug class, typically position themselves based on technological superiority or innovation (operational excellence). Others, like Zantac®, may emphasize reliability and fewer side effects, while longstanding brands like Tagamet® gain from historical trust and prescriber loyalty.[59]

c. Positioning Elements: What to Emphasize

The positioning of a pharmaceutical or health product may focus on various aspects, including:

- **Product characteristics**, such as composition, packaging, or galenic form (e.g., syrup vs. capsule).
- **Functional benefits**, like faster relief (e.g., "Kamol, stronger than pain").

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[57] Source: Denis Darpy, "Le Marketing", 2nd edition, DUNOD, Paris, 2015, p. 27.
[58] *Marie-Paule Serre & Déborah Wallet-Wodka, "Marketing des Produits de Santé", 2nd edition, DUNOD, 2014, p. 201.*
[59] *Serre & Wallet-Wodka, "Marketing des Produits de Santé", DUNOD, 2014, p. 202.*

- **Usage occasions**, such as seasonal fatigue (e.g., “Supradyn for temporary tiredness”).
- **User segments**, such as pediatric versions (e.g., “Rhinatiol for children”).
- **Comparison to competitors**, e.g., “Nurofen acts at the heart of the pain,” differentiating from standard analgesics.

Positioning is most effective when based on a single, strong attribute—a “Unique Selling Proposition (USP),” a concept introduced by Rosser Reeves in 1961. Multiple studies have shown that consumers retain only one or two attributes, so clarity and simplicity are essential.[60]

d. Strategic Positioning in the Pharmaceutical Sector

In pharmaceuticals, where differentiation is difficult due to regulatory constraints and prescriber-based decision-making, companies must rely on **both tangible and symbolic tools** to establish their product’s position.

To better visualize the key dimensions that support an effective positioning strategy in the pharmaceutical industry, the following figure illustrates the five fundamental pillars on which a brand can build and maintain a competitive mental position in the market.

A successful positioning strategy is based on **five pillars**:

1- **Product**: Technical or therapeutic performance, patented molecules, unique formulation.

2- **Services**: Educational materials for prescribers, patient monitoring programs.

3- **Personnel**: Sales reps or medical delegates must embody and communicate the product’s values.

4- **Distribution channel**: OTC (over-the-counter) products use point-of-sale tools (e.g., pharmacy displays), unlike prescription drugs.

[60] *Rosser Reeves, “Reality in Advertising”, 1961.*

5- **Brand image**: Logos, sponsored events, and media engagement help shape perception.[61]

e. Differentiation Through Positioning

Differentiation is key to sustainable positioning. A product should stand where competitors are weak and where consumer demand is high. This means selecting attributes that are relevant, distinctive, and difficult for others to imitate. A product that tries to claim too many strengths may appear unfocused or unbelievable, while one emphasizing minor or irrelevant traits risks being under-positioned. Positioning is the foundation for all future marketing decisions; it informs communication, pricing, and sales strategies.

2.7. Marketing Strategy and Product Life Cycle

A pharmaceutical product's commercial strategy must align with the various stages of its life cycle, a process that differs significantly from that of traditional consumer goods. Due to regulatory constraints, prescriber influence, and high R&D costs, managing the product life cycle (PLC) becomes essential in pharmaceutical marketing.

a. The Product Life Cycle in Pharma

Unlike most consumer products, a drug's life cycle starts long before it reaches the market. The full development process spanning molecule discovery to regulatory approval can take 12 to 14 years. Once authorized, the drug enters its commercial life cycle, often illustrated by the Gompertz curve, which represents sales evolution over time[62]

b. The Four Stages of a Drug's Commercial Life Cycle

The commercial life cycle of a pharmaceutical product can be divided into four main phases. Each stage presents unique challenges and opportunities, requiring tailored marketing strategies to optimize the product's success over time.

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[61] *Serre & Wallet-Wodka, "Marketing des Produits de Santé", DUNOD, 2014, p. 205.*

[62] Marie-Paule Serre & Déborah Wallet-Wodka, *Marketing des Produits de Santé*, 2e éd., DUNOD, 2014, p. 204

b.1. Introduction

This is the first stage of the product life cycle. Once a product is developed, the first step is its introduction into the market. During this stage, the product is released into the market for the very first time. This product development life cycle stage is at high stake but does not decide whether the product will be successful or not. Additionally, a lot of marketing and promotional activities are undertaken, and capital is pooled so that the product reaches the consumers. At this stage of product life cycle management, companies are able to understand how users will respond to the product. Precisely, the idea is to create a huge demand.

b.2. Growth

In the growth stage, consumers start to take action. They buy the product; the product becomes popular and results in increased sales. There are other companies also that notice the product as it starts getting more attention and revenue. When the competition is heavy, a higher amount of money may be pooled into the market. The market for the product expands and it may also be tweaked at this stage to ensure some features, etc., are improved. Competition may also force you to cut down the prices. Nonetheless, sales increase and therefore the product and market growth.

b.3. Maturity

In the maturity stage, sales slow down, indicating that the market has begun to reach saturation. This is also one of the stages of the product life cycle when pricing becomes competitive. This makes the profit margins thinner. In this stage, the purpose of marketing is to fend off competition and sometimes, altered products are introduced.

Decline – While companies make all efforts throughout the different stages of the product life cycle to ensure that it stays alive in the market, an eventual decline cannot be ruled out. This is why it becomes important to know what product life cycle is at first. When a product is in the decline stage, the sales drop due to a change in consumer behaviour and demand. The product loses its market share and competition also deteriorates. Eventually, the product retires from the market.[63]

[63] https://emeritus.org/blog/different-stages-of-product-life-cycle/

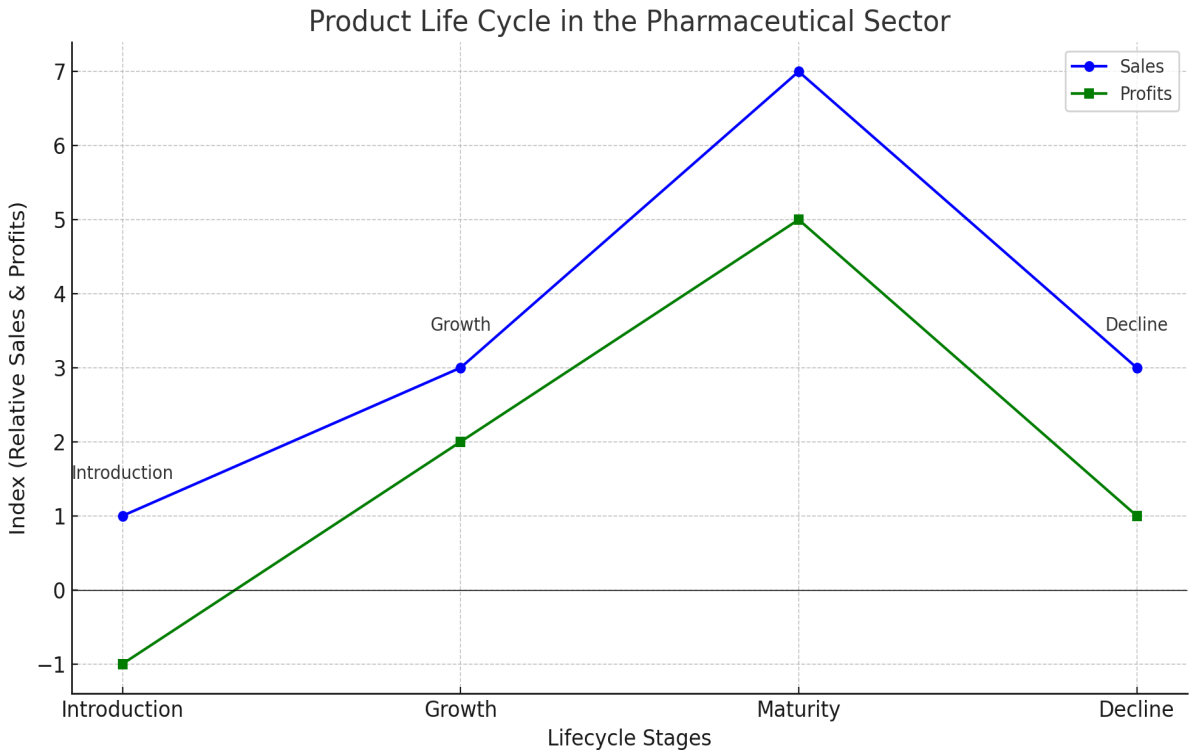

Figure 8 : schema representing the product life cycle in the pharmaceutical sector

c. Product Life Cycle Strategy and Management

Product life cycle to ensure Having a properly managed product life cycle strategy can help extend the life cycle of your product in the market.

The strategy begins right at the market introduction stage with setting of pricing. Options include ‘price skimming,’ where the initial price is set high and then lowered in order to ‘skim’ consumer groups as the market grows. Alternatively, you can opt for price penetration, setting the price low to reach as much of the market as quickly as possible before increasing the price once established

Product advertising and packaging are equally important in order to appeal to the target market. In addition, it is important to market your product to new demographics in order to grow your revenue stream.

Products may also become redundant or need to be pivoted to meet changing demands. An example of this is Netflix, who moved from a DVD rental delivery model to subscription streaming.

Understanding the product life cycle allows you to keep reinventing and innovating with an existing product (like the iPhone) to reinvigorate demand and elongate the product's market life.[64]

d. Example of a Lifecycle Management Strategy

Many products or brands have gone into decline as consumer needs change or new innovations are introduced. Some industries operate in several stages of the product life cycle simultaneously, such as with televisual entertainment, where flat screen TVs are at the mature phase, on-demand programming is in the growth stage, DVDs are in decline and video cassettes are now largely redundant. Many of the most successful products in the world stay at the mature stage for as long as possible, with small updates and redesigns along with renewed marketing to keep them in the thoughts of consumers, such as with the Apple iPhone.

Here are a few well-known examples of products that have passed or are passing through the product life cycle:

d.1. Typewriters

The typewriter was hugely popular following its introduction in the late 19th century due to the way it made writing easier and more efficient. Quickly moving through market growth to maturity, the typewriter began to go into decline with the advent of the electronic word processor and then computers, laptops and smartphones. While there are still typewriters available, the product is now at the end of its decline phase with few sales and little demand. Meanwhile, desktop computers, laptops, smartphones and tablets are all experiencing the growth or maturity phases of the product lifecycle.

d.2. Video Cassette Recorders (VCRs)

Having first appeared as a relatively expensive product, VCRs experienced large-scale product growth as prices reduced leading to market maturation when they could be found in many homes. However, the creation of DVDs and then more recently streaming services, VCRs are now effectively obsolete. Once a

[64]https://www.twi-global.com/technical-knowledge/faqs/what-is-a-product-life-cycle#ProductLifeCycleStrategyandManagement

ground-breaking product VCRs are now deep in a decline stage from which it seems unlikely they will ever recover.

d.3. Electric Vehicles

Electric vehicles are experiencing a growth stage in their product life cycle as companies work to push them into the marketplace with continued design improvements. Although electric vehicles are not new, the consistent innovation in the market and the improving sales potential means that they are still growing and not yet into the mature phase.

d.4. AI Products

Like electric vehicles, artificial intelligence (AI) has been in development and use for years, but due to the continued developments in AI, there are many products that are still in the market introduction stage of the product life cycle. These include innovations that are still being developed, such as autonomous vehicles, which are yet to be adopted by consumers.[65]

2.8. Marketing Mix:

The marketing mix refers to the set of actions and strategies developed by a company to position itself on the market. More precisely, it is based on four levers of action that allow it to win customers: the product, the price, the distribution and the communication .

Each variable is specific but must be carefully chosen in relation to the other variables (4Ps). This is why we talk about a marketing "mix." The entire process must be focused on the customer's needs.

a. 4Ps of the marketing mix :

The marketing mix strategy, like the marketing plan, is based on the 4 historical Ps of marketing : product, price, placement and promotion.

[65] https://www.twi-global.com/technical-knowledge/faqs/what-is-a-product-life-cycle#Examples

Figure 9 : schema representing the product life cycle in the pharmaceutical sector

a.1. Define your product strategy

You need to be able to determine your product strategy. The product is the first P because it is the basic element of the marketing mix . The other three variables depend entirely on the product. For a brand, it is the first vector of communication .

A product exists because it meets a consumer's expectation or need. Indeed, consumers purchase products because they are seeking to fulfill a need or desire. Consumers are interested in a product if, and only if, it meets their expectations and if its use provides the benefits they are seeking.

The product therefore has several characteristics:

- an image (which reflects the values and belonging of the company)
- a function (product performance)

To better determine the product, the entrepreneur must consider the customer's needs, the company's added value compared to its competitors, and the product's life cycle.

a.2. Establish your pricing strategy

Establishing a pricing strategy is an essential part of any marketing strategy. Price has an immediate impact on sales volume . The company's image is also guaranteed by price. Pricing must be based on the costs of manufacturing, marketing, distribution, and selling the product.

a.3. Determine your distribution methods

Place (the third P of the marketing mix) refers to all the resources needed for the customer to choose a product and to research and purchase it. In other words, when developing a marketing plan, the company must take these places into account , which can be physical or online.

a.4. Define your communication strategy

Communication strategy refers to the strategy a company adopts to promote its products or services to its customers. Promotion is often seen as the definition of "marketing." It constitutes the overall communication campaign around the product offered to customers (advertising, in-person sales, sales promotion, social media marketing, SEO, etc.).[66]

b. The marketing mix with 7Ps

While product, price, promotion, and distribution are the four basic pillars of the marketing mix, many enrich the model by considering three other components. Three Ps are added to the four described above.

[66] Mix-marketing-definition-et-strategie-marketing-4P www.e-marketing.fr

Figure 10 : The marketing mix with 7Ps

b.1. People

The members of an organization are the first ambassadors of the product or service they promote.

Through management, strengthening corporate culture, and developing customer-oriented service, we can improve the experience of all those who trust you.

They will be able to adhere to the culture promoted around your products and in turn become new ambassadors.

b.2. Processes

This pillar aims to define and improve the way you produce and deliver your product or service to customers.

Each organization can distinguish itself from others through the processes it puts in place, seeking to gain efficiency, guarantee quality, reduce costs and offer an optimal user experience.

b.3. The physical environment (Physical evidence)

The physical elements that support customer interaction also represent a major challenge in marketing a product.

We're talking about branding here, which can be reflected in the premises where you meet your customers, your product displays, their packaging, the design of the website on which you offer your products, or even the dress code applied at the heart of your organization. [67]

c. Product Policy

Currently, to obtain marketing authorization, any innovation must demonstrate significant benefits compared to existing treatments.

However, the performance level of current therapies sets a very high standard. The current trend is shifting toward the identification of specific targets that allow for optimized treatment effectiveness.

This clinical segmentation has therefore become a key component of a laboratory's product offering.

d. Pricing Policy

To regulate healthcare expenses related to the cost of medicines, countries have adopted health regulations and policies aimed at controlling drug prices at the national level. The vast majority of European countries have a system of price setting and control managed by the state. These systems are specific to each country and based on various elements that influence drug prices in different ways.

The main elements used in price control systems are:

- **Direct Price Control**

[67] https://blog.hubspot.fr/marketing/marketing-mix

The State sets the price of medication through legislation. Since 2005, drug prices have been determined in accordance with the provisions set out in Ministerial Decree No. 137/MSPRH/MIN of October 18, 2005, regarding the organization and operation of the Economic Committee.

The committee is composed of representatives from the structures of the MSPRH (Department of Pharmacy, Finance, Planning), LNCPP, and a representative of clinical experts.

In Algeria, the price of medicines is determined by:

- The MSPRH (Ministry of Public Health and Hospital Reform) for the FOB price (Free On Board) and the PCSU (Ex-Factory Price),
- And by the Ministry of Commerce for the PPA (Algerian Public Price).

The responsibility for setting drug prices, entrusted to the Economic Committee, concerns:

- Locally manufactured drugs: setting the PCSU (ex-factory price) expressed in Algerian Dinars (DA).
- Locally packaged drugs: setting the FOB price (in foreign currency) and the PCSU (in DA).
- Imported drugs: setting the FOB price.
- **Reference Price/Tariff :** The state sets a reimbursement price for a group of similar (homogeneous) drugs.
- **Manufacturer Profit Control :** The state defines a maximum profit margin allowed for manufacturers, based on a fixed scale.
- **Generic Drug Pricing Policy :** The government sets a maximum price for generics as a percentage of the price of branded drugs.
- **Encouraging Generic Prescription :** For certain medications, the government only reimburses up to the price of the generic version.
- **Generic Substitution :** Pharmacists are allowed to offer a generic version of a drug even if the prescription specifies a brand name.

- **Patient Copayment :** Patients are required to contribute to the cost of their medications to encourage more responsible and optimal use of available treatments.

e. Distribution Policy

Distribution is a key component of pharmaceutical policy and an important element in the development of local drug production. Ensuring medicine availability involves three main actors:

- **Importers**

They are responsible for ensuring pharmaceutical availability in line with the specifications defined in their importation programs.

International suppliers who import products for resale in their original state must also assume territorial pharmaceutical responsibility, including guaranteeing product availability.

- **Wholesalers**

They ensure the availability of pharmaceutical products—both imported and locally produced—across the national territory by supplying retail pharmacies.

- **Pharmacies (Retail Outlets)**

They represent the final and essential link in the medicine supply chain.

With over 12,000 pharmacies, pharmacists ensure wide geographic coverage and pharmaceutical access throughout the country.

- **Governmental Measure (May 23, 2010)**

To support the development of the national pharmaceutical industry, the Algerian government issued a directive banning wholesalers from distributing locally manufactured or packaged medicines.

As a result:

- Manufacturers must sell directly to pharmacies.
- They must establish their own distribution networks.

f. Communication Policy

For pharmaceutical laboratories, communicating the benefits of their treatments is a top priority. These benefits must be patient-centered and framed in a way that distinguishes them from competing offers.

The communication strategies of pharmaceutical companies are strictly regulated for ethical and legal reasons, but they can be optimized using:

- Market research, which provides valuable insights into the perceptions and practices of healthcare stakeholders.

These factors, which are constantly influenced by regulatory changes and competitor activity, must be regularly monitored so that laboratories can adapt their positioning quickly and effectively[68]

2.9. Strategic Monitoring and Performance Tracking of the Marketing Strategy

Check the company's position on the market, in relation to its competitors (monitoring) and the implementation of its marketing strategy.

Strategic monitoring is the essential foundation of any marketing policy, known as benchmarking. It involves staying continuously informed about current activities and "best practices" in the market.

Performance tracking consists of quantifying the impact of the mix in terms of sales volumes and profitability.

a. Strategic Monitoring

Competitive intelligence involves three major steps:

- Data collection: doctors, conferences, publications, public relations.
- Reconstruction of the competitor's strategy

[68] Dr Ahlam Abrkane ,Université Batna-2- Faculté de Médecine Cours de gestion pharmaceutique

- Ongoing monitoring with possible correlation to the strategic direction.

b. Performance Tracking

The goal is to measure sales in the pharmaceutical market. To do so, laboratories use panel data.

In the pharmaceutical industry market, a panel refers to:

- A periodic collection of information.
- Based on a sample of a population that is nearly identical from one period to the next, even if a renewal rate of the sample is allowed.
- A standardized questionnaire.
- For the benefit of several client laboratories.
- Who share the results delivered on a fixed date.
- Who pay a lower price than if they had to implement the study on their own.

Laboratories therefore subscribe to private companies whose role is to collect data on sales, drug prescriptions, and promotional activities carried out by laboratories, to analyze them, and to return them to their subscribers at regular intervals.[69]

[69] Dr Ahlam Abrkane ,Université Batna-2- Faculté de Médecine Cours de gestion pharmaceutique

Chapter 3 : Generic Drugs

3.1. Definition and Legal Framework

a. Definition of Medicine (Algerian Law)

In Algeria, medicine is defined by Law No. 85-05 of February 16, 1985 on the protection and promotion of health.

According to Article 170, a drug is “any substance or composition presented as having curative or preventive properties for human or animal diseases, and any product that may be administered to humans or animals for the purpose of making a medical diagnosis or restoring, correcting, or modifying their organic functions.”

b. Prescription Obligation

Article 174 of the same law requires practitioners to prescribe only products listed in the National Nomenclature, established by a National Nomenclature Commission.

Article 181 addresses the acquisition of drugs based mainly on a prescription.[70]

3.2. Generic Medicine

a. Definition

A generic drug is a medication that is identical or equivalent to a branded drug (called a princeps, the original drug protected by a patent).

The active substance (or active ingredient) is either identical or equivalent to that of the branded product.

The only other possible differences are the presentation, the form of administration (only for the oral route), and the excipients, with an acceptable tolerance in the maximum plasma concentration between the original drug and the generic.[71]

b. History of Generic Medicines

Generic medicines have been known since the early 20th century, but their definition and market conditions have evolved over time.

[70] ZAIDI. Z LES MEDICAMENTS GENERIQUES P2

[71] Mathieu Guerriaud (préf. Éric Fouassier), Droit pharmaceutique, Issy-les-Moulineaux, Elsevier-Masson, 2016, 264 p.

- The first patent system was developed in Venice in 1474, followed by England in 1623, and the United States in 1790 after independence.
- In 1920, the concept of generics emerged with aspirin from Bayer.
- In 1962, the Kefauver-Harris Act in the U.S. introduced the first requirement to prove safety and efficacy for generics before marketing, including preclinical and clinical studies, resulting in high costs and long delays.
- In 1975, the European Commission made marketing authorization (MA) procedures mandatory in all EU member states.
- In 1984, the Hatch-Waxman Act allowed generics to enter the market without repeating clinical trials already performed for the brand-name drug, as long as they prove:

- The same active ingredients
- The same effects[72]

c. Types of Generic Medicines

Generics can be classified into three categories based on their similarity to the original drug:

- **Copy-copy or full generics :** Identical to the brand-name drug in substance, dosage, form, and excipients. Often produced by the same manufacturer.
- **Similar or equivalent generics :** Same active substance, dosage, and form, but different excipients. Bioequivalence must prove that the difference does not affect absorption.
- **Equivalent generics with modifications :** Alterations may exist in the form, chemical structure, or excipients, requiring proof of bioequivalence.[73]

[72] Ouazouz.M (2013/2014). Etude d'un produit pharmaceutique,, Faculté des Sciences, Université Badji Mokhtar d'Annaba.
[73] Brahimi.M, Boukabous.M (2012/2013). Etude comparative de la cinétique de dissolution du générique Rénipril® (5mg) et de sa spécialité Triatec® (5mg)Master en Génie pharmaceutique, Faculté de Génie mécanique et Génie des procédés, Université des Sciences et de technologie. Houari Boumediene

d. Quality, Efficacy, and Safety of Generics

The evolution of the legal definition of a generic confirms that one can no longer claim today that generics are as effective as princeps medicines.

Indeed, the generic has evolved from a strict copy of the princeps drug to a product whose appearance, and even quantitative composition in both active ingredients and excipients, may vary[74]

These complementary criteria (Quality, Efficacy, Safety) are difficult to separate and together express the broader sense of quality.

d.1. Quality

The assurance of the quality of generic medicines and their compliance with regulatory requirements is a very important point for their therapeutic efficacy.

For the generic to obtain a marketing authorization (MA), the applicant laboratory must provide proof of its bioequivalence, as well as a dossier confirming its pharmaceutical quality. All commercialized medicines undergo physicochemical, and where applicable, microbiological analyses to verify the absence of toxic residues and infectious risk; their organoleptic qualities, proper preservation, packaging, and the information provided in the leaflet [75].

The quality of generics depends on the raw materials, the manufacturing, the packaging, and the validation of analytical procedures.

Quality is also ensured by audits carried out by inspectors from regulatory authorities to determine compliance with Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), which must meet three criteria: Quality, Efficacy, Safety].[76]

d.2. Efficacy

Generic drugs are rarely the subject of clinical studies concerning their efficacy. They contain the same active ingredient as the brand-name medicine, in the same

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[74] ouazouz.M (2013/2014). Etude d'un produit pharmaceutique,, Faculté des Sciences, Université Badji Mokhtar d'Annaba.

[75] Viault.C (2006). Développement galénique d'un médicament générique : du pré formulation à la formulation d'un comprimé immédiate .Doctorat en Pharmacie, Faculté de Pharmacie, Université Nantes

[76] OMS, 2008, Autorisation de mise sur le marché des médicaments à usage humain notamment d'origine multi source (génériques): manuel à l'usage des autorités de réglementation pharmaceutique

quantity. However, what may vary are the excipients, the substances that carry the molecule in the body. The generic must have the same bioavailability as the princeps, meaning that the active ingredient must spread through the body in the same way.

Bioequivalence corresponds to the equivalence of bioavailabilities. Bioavailability is the measurement of the speed and intensity of the absorption by the body of the active substance, from a defined pharmaceutical form. Generic medicines must show bioequivalence to their reference drugs, so that they can be interchangeable, and therefore therapeutically equivalent, meaning that both medicines (generic and princeps) are absorbed into the bloodstream at the same rate and in the same amount .

d.3.Safety

Safety or harmlessness is determined by pharmacokinetic, toxicokinetic and toxicology studies, as well as studies on carcinogenesis and teratogenesis. Theoretically, generics are strictly bioequivalent to princeps, however, the excipients may be different. Depending on the patient, a product change that occasionally results in a change of excipients may lead to a serious clinical risk.

In fact, excipients likely to affect gastrointestinal transit (sorbitol and mannitol); absorption (surfactants or excipients affecting transport proteins); or in vivo solubility (co-solvents) — several studies have documented that the difference in excipients is related to the loss of treatment response with generic formulations .[77]

e. Marketing Authorization (AMM) for Generic Medicines

Any pharmaceutical specialty or any other medicine manufactured industrially or by a method involving an industrial process cannot be marketed without a marketing authorization (MA) issued by the competent and authorized authority, namely in Algeria, the Pharmacy Directorate of the MSPRH (in France, by Afssaps or by the European Community).

To place a generic drug on the market, a pharmaceutical laboratory must of course obtain an MA from the health authorities. The MA application for a generic drug is based on a simplified dossier since the preclinical and clinical development

[77] ouazouz.M (2013/2014). Etude d'un produit pharmaceutique,, Faculté des Sciences, Université Badji Mokhtar d'Annaba

data of the original drug are considered known, as they are available in the public domain.

Only pharmaceutical data are required, covering aspects related to the quality of raw materials and manufacturing, as well as specific bioavailability studies that are provided to ensure bioequivalence between the generic and the princeps.

The generic drug is identified by the INN (International Nonproprietary Name) followed by the name of the laboratory, or by a fantasy name. Once approved, the medicine is published in the Official Journal and entered into the generic specialties directory. In this directory, generics are grouped by active ingredient, designated by its common name and by route of administration.[78]

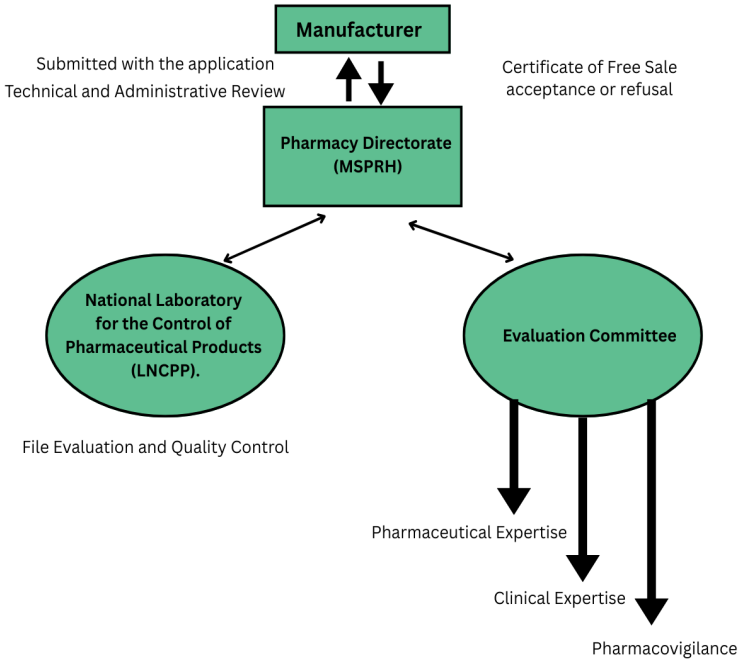


Figure 11 : Registration of Pharmaceutical Products (Issuance of a Marketing Authorization - MA)

f. The Pharmaceutical Market in Algeria

General data on the national pharmaceutical market are relatively well known and identified. Based on various documents published by the Ministry of Health and UNOP (Union nationale des opérateurs de la pharmacie), the following can be noted:

[78] Le médicament générique(2012) Bulletin bimestriel édité par l'association du corps médicale privé de la wilaya de Chlef. N° 43.

- A market valued in 2011 at approximately 300 billion Algerian dinars, which has seen very rapid growth in recent years.
- Until now, this growth has been driven mainly by importation.

  National production, meanwhile, has doubled in five years but still lags behind this rapid growth and currently represents about 35% of the market.
- Generic drugs represent less than 35% of total consumption in value, versus 65% for brand-name (princeps) drugs.
- This is despite the fact that a developing country like Algeria especially needs to optimize the use of its financial resources while improving citizens' access to medicine and basic healthcare.
- French laboratories hold the leading position among the countries that have registered their drugs in Algeria, with 1,565 medications out of a total of 4,766 (representing 32%).

  These drugs are original and reimbursed by Algerian social security, whereas Algerian medications, estimated at 1,501 drugs, struggle fiercely to gain reimbursement by social security — despite the government's ongoing encouragement of:

- Local production of medicines
- Use of generic drugs To preserve the financial balance of the Social Insurance Fund

The increase in medical coverage and per capita health spending, along with rising investment in local production, health infrastructure, the hospital sector, and specialty products (oncology), as well as greater generic drug penetration, will be the main growth drivers of Algeria's pharmaceutical market.[79]

g. Advantages of Generic Medicines

Generic medicines offer several advantages for patients, healthcare professionals, and also for the State. The expiration of patents on active substances has allowed for a decrease in the selling price of generic medicines and has

[79] Abedlghani.F(2016), article le midi libre quotidien national d'information, L'industrie pharmaceutique, Etat des lieux, enjeux et tendances lourdes dans le monde et en Algérie.

increased competition between laboratories. These categories of medicines are more accessible, as most of them are not subject to a medical prescription. They can be purchased freely at pharmacies.

Thanks to a good understanding of reference medicines, the prescription of generic medicines will no longer pose major problems for healthcare professionals. The existence of this type of medicine strengthens the existing partnership between doctors and pharmacists. For example, the latter can suggest to patients that the reference medicines listed in their prescription be replaced with generics, provided that none of them is marked “non-substitutable”.

For the State, the acceptance of generic medicines by patients helps reduce healthcare

h. Disadvantages of Generic Medicines

The main issue faced by generic medicines is undoubtedly the refusal by patients. This is, for example, the case with elderly individuals who refuse to change their healthcare habits, or residents of rural areas who believe in preconceived ideas due to a lack of information.

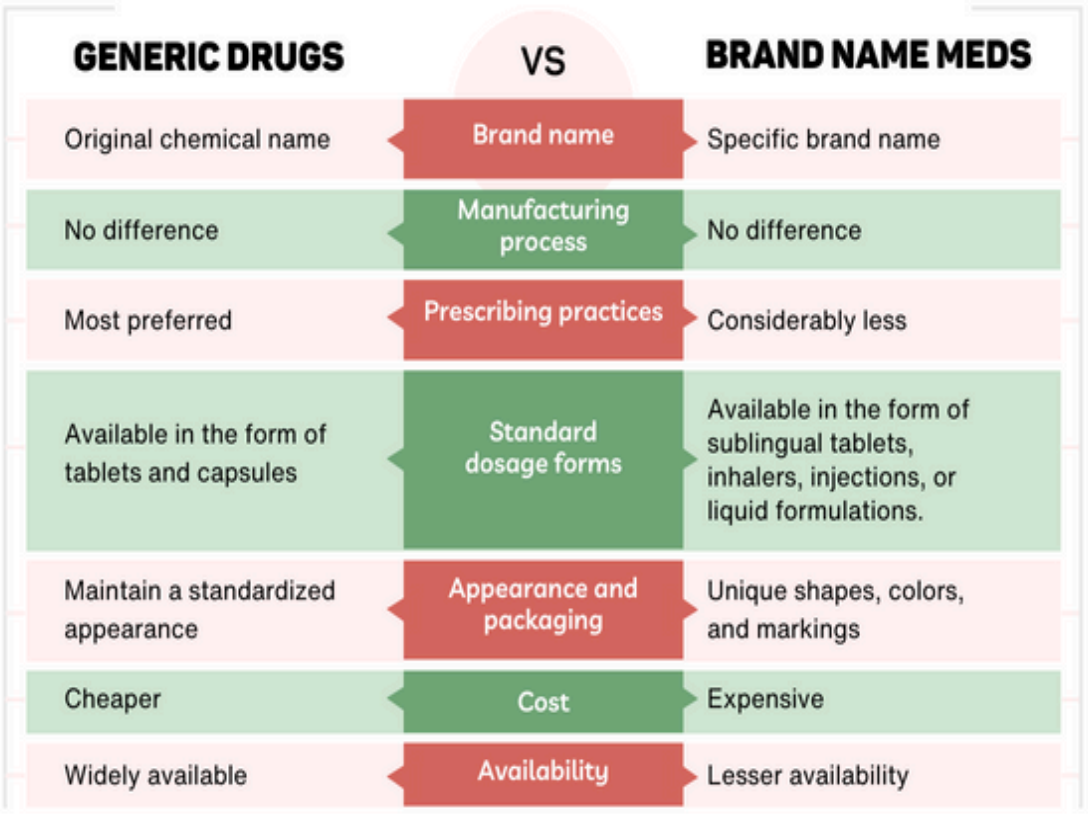
The lack of continuity in the availability of generic medicines also represents a major obstacle for healthcare professionals spending related to medications.[80]

i. Differences and Similarities Between Generic and Original Medicines

A generic medicine is a highly regulated concept: it is a copy of an original drug, but not necessarily a strictly identical copy. It must have:

[80] quipe d’Economie Solidaire (1 juin2O11).http://www.economiesolidaire.com/2011/06/01/medicaments-generiques-avantages-et-inconvenients/, (consulté le 20/04/2018)

Table 4 : Differences and similarities between generic and original[81]



j. Generic Name or International Nonproprietary Name (INN)

Assigned by the World Health Organization **(WHO)** following a request submitted by the manufacturer, the generic name or INN identifies the active substances contained in the medicine (WHO, 2016).

Instead of using examples like sodium warfarin or valsartan, we can refer to products from **SAIDAL**, such as:

- **Saidal-Amoxicillin®** (INN: Amoxicillin)
- **Saidal-Paracetamol®** (INN: Paracetamol)
- **Saidal-Captopril®** (INN: Captopril)
- **Saidal-Ciprofloxacin®** (INN: Ciprofloxacin)

[81] A.N.S.M.P.S (14/12/2012). Médicament générique: lever l'opacité.

The INN is recognized internationally and remains the same in all countries. Generic drug manufacturers like SAIDAL often incorporate the INN into the brand name of their products.

Thus, there is a difference between the "generic name" (INN) and the "generic medicine" itself .

k. Chemical Name

This designation is more complex than brand or generic names. The chemical name corresponds to the chemical formula of the active ingredient (the drug substance).

For example, **for Captopril, produced by SAIDAL,** the chemical name is:

(2S)-1-[(2S)-2-methyl-3-sulfanylpropanoyl]pyrrolidine-2-carboxylic acid (SAIDAL, 2020)

This name can be found in the drug monograph and remains the same whether the product is a brand-name or a generic medicine .[82]

l. Pharmaceutical Forms (with SAIDAL examples)

The pharmaceutical form of a drug refers to its physical presentation. The route of administration is how the drug is taken, and the dosage is the quantity to be taken per day, over a defined period (e.g., 1 tablet 3 times a day for 5 days).

[83]Here are several pharmaceutical forms available from SAIDAL :

- **Tablets**: SAIDAL produces tablets such as **Saidal-Paracetamol®** and **Saidal-Captopril®**, in various shapes (round, oval, etc.).
- **Capsules**: For example, **Saidal-Amoxicillin® capsules**, containing powdered medicine inside two rigid gelatin shells.
- **Syrups**: For example, **Saidal-Dexchlorpheniramine® syrup**, a sweetened liquid administered with a spoon.

[82] Leclerc J., Blais C., Guenette L. et poirier P. (2016).Médicaments génériques et Médicaments originaux. Pharmacovigilance 2-ACFA, 13(5), 40. Références

[83] Pharmaciens Sans Frontières. (2004). Notions de base sur les médicaments. Rapport : Comité - International Unité Pharmaceutique, 5-6.

- **Suspensions**: For example, **Saidal-Azithromycin® oral suspension**, a powder to be reconstituted with water before use.
- **Ointments**: For example, **Saidal-Nystatin® dermal ointment**, used for fungal skin infections.
- **Eye drops (Collyria)**: For example, **Saidal-Timolol® eye drops**, used to treat glaucoma, applied directly into the eye.
- **Injectables**: For example, **Saidal-Gentamicin® injectable**, used for severe infections — administered intramuscularly or intravenously

m. Phases in the Development of a Generic Drug: From Research to Regulatory Approval

m.1. Literature Review

The first phase involves a comprehensive review of scientific and regulatory literature. This includes studying the **chemical properties** of the active substance, examining **drug-excipient interactions**, and assessing suitable **container types** and packaging materials. This step helps define critical parameters that affect drug stability, formulation, and safety.

m.2. Specification Setting

In this phase, developers establish **quality standards** for the generic drug based on **pharmacopoeial guidelines** and **in-house specifications**. This ensures that the drug will meet regulatory requirements and internal quality benchmarks throughout development and production.

m.3. Formulation Development

This step involves creating **10 to 30 trial formulations**, experimenting with different excipient combinations and processing techniques. The goal is to identify a formulation that meets desired performance criteria. Developers must also check for existing **patents** to avoid infringement and ensure freedom to operate.

m.4. Stability Study

Stability testing is conducted to assess how the formulation behaves under various conditions. This includes **accelerated stability studies** (e.g., high temperature

and humidity) and **long-term stability studies**. These tests ensure the product maintains its identity, strength, quality, and purity over its shelf life.

m.5. Pharmaceutical Equivalence Study

This stage confirms that the generic drug has the **same dosage strength**, **form**, and **route of administration** as the reference (brand-name) drug. Key tests include **assay**, **uniformity of dosage units**, and **in vitro dissolution tests**, which assess how quickly and completely the drug is released.

m.6. Bioequivalence Study

This critical phase involves testing the generic in **30 to 50 healthy volunteers** to ensure it delivers the **same therapeutic effect** as the reference product. The study compares the **rate and extent of absorption** of the generic versus the original drug to confirm **bioequivalence**.

Note: The number of volunteers may vary depending on study design and subject variability.

m.7. Common Technical Dossier (CTD) Preparation

The final step is compiling the **Common Technical Dossier**, which includes:

- The **administrative section** (regulatory documents, application forms),
- The **quality part** (manufacturing processes, analytical methods),
- The **clinical part**, and
- The **non-clinical part** (which is often not required for generic products).

This CTD is submitted to regulatory authorities (e.g., ANPP in Algeria, FDA in the U.S., EMA in Europe) for **marketing authorization**.[84]

[84] Kotchawan Lertchairitthikun Pharmaceutical Drug Development https://www.linkedin.com

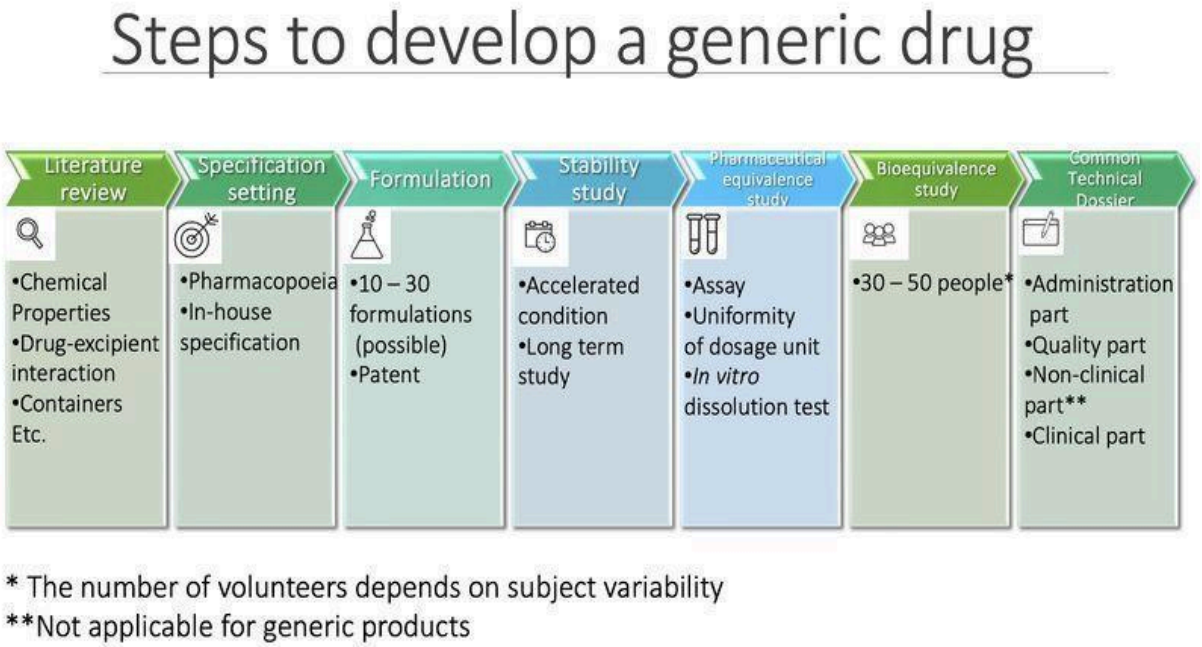


Figure 12 : steps to Develop a Generic Drug

Part II : Case Study – Marketing Plan for Metromycine (Saidal)

Chapter 1: Market Analysis and Positioning of Metromycine

Chapter 1 : Market Analysis and Positioning of Metromycine

1.1 .Introduction

The pharmaceutical industry is a strategic sector marked by rapid innovation, strict regulation, and intense competition. In this context, a company's ability to accurately analyze its market environment and position its products effectively is crucial for achieving commercial success. This is especially true for Saidal, a leading public pharmaceutical group in Algeria, whose mission includes ensuring the availability of quality medicines that meet public health needs.

This chapter presents a detailed market analysis of Metromycine, one of Saidal's anti-infective products, developed to treat oral and dental infections. Combining spiramycine and métronidazole, Metromycine offers a broad-spectrum therapeutic option for odontostomatological pathologies. However, despite its pharmacological value, the product faces several challenges: strong generic competition, limited market awareness, and the absence of structured promotional activities.

The objective of this chapter is to examine Metromycine's current position in the Algerian pharmaceutical market. It begins by describing the product's composition, indications, and characteristics, followed by an analysis of the national anti-infectives market, a review of competitive forces, and finally a breakdown of segmentation, targeting, and positioning strategies adopted by Saidal. This analytical foundation is essential for understanding the strategic choices made by the company and for proposing informed recommendations in the subsequent marketing strategy chapter.

1.2 Product Presentation

a. Composition

Metromycine is a fixed-dose combination drug that brings together two active pharmaceutical ingredients with complementary mechanisms of action. The first is Spiramycine, a macrolide antibiotic that acts primarily by inhibiting bacterial protein synthesis through binding to the 50S ribosomal subunit. The second is Métronidazole, an antibiotic from the nitro-5-imidazole class, known for its activity against anaerobic bacteria and certain protozoa.

This combination leverages the synergistic effect between a macrolide and a nitroimidazole to provide enhanced coverage against both aerobic and anaerobic microorganisms, which are commonly found in odontostomatological infections. The formulation targets a wide spectrum of pathogens involved in polymicrobial oral infections.[85]

b. Indications

Metromycine is indicated for both curative and preventive purposes in the management of oral and maxillofacial infections, particularly within the field of odontostomatology.

- Curative indications apply to adolescents from age 15 and adults experiencing:
  - Acute, chronic, or recurrent stomatological infections, including:
    - Dental abscesses
    - Phlegmons
    - Maxillary cellulitis
    - Pericoronitis
    - Gingivitis
    - Stomatitis
    - Periodontitis
- Preventive indications concern the prophylaxis of local infectious complications following oral and dental surgery.

These indications position Metromycine as a suitable therapeutic option for a range of inflammatory and infectious conditions of the oral cavity that involve polymicrobial flora. Its inclusion in post-operative prevention strategies also highlights its clinical utility in managing surgical infection risks.

c. Characteristics

Metromycine is distinguished by several key characteristics that enhance both its therapeutic value and patient compliance. Notably:

[85] Slide 2 under the title *"IDENTIFICATION DU PRODUIT"*.

- It provides a broad spectrum of antimicrobial activity, covering both aerobic and anaerobic bacterial strains involved in oral infections.
- Its synergistic action ensures effectiveness in complex polymicrobial environments.
- The dosing regimen is simplified, with one tablet per day over three days, which promotes adherence to treatment.
- It is presented in packs of 10 tablets, a format consistent with short-course therapies.
- Metromycine is also fully reimbursed, removing financial barriers for patients.
- The product demonstrates a good safety and tolerability profile, making it suitable for a wide range of patients within the indicated age group.

These characteristics support its strategic positioning as both an effective and convenient option for the treatment of stomatological infections.

d. Veterinary Use of Metromycine

d.1. Introduction and Composition

Metromycine is a broad-spectrum antimicrobial agent composed of two active substances: **spiramycin**, a macrolide antibiotic, and **metronidazole**, a nitroimidazole compound. The combination of these two molecules provides complementary antibacterial action against both **aerobic and anaerobic organisms**, making it particularly effective in treating **mixed infections**.

d.2. Clinical Use in Veterinary Medicine

In veterinary medicine, Metromycine is primarily used in **small animal practice**, especially in **dogs and cats**, where **oral and dental infections** are frequent. It is commonly prescribed to treat **gingivitis, stomatitis, dental abscesses**, and infections following **tooth extractions**. It is also used in **maxillofacial infections**, **deep tissue abscesses**, and certain **gastrointestinal disorders** involving anaerobic bacteria or protozoa.

d.3. Mechanism of Action

Spiramycin works by inhibiting bacterial protein synthesis and is mainly effective against Staphylococcus spp., Streptococcus spp., and some mycoplasmas. It also has mild anti-inflammatory properties, which can support healing in inflamed oral tissues.

Metronidazole, on the other hand, is active against **anaerobic bacteria** (Bacteroides spp., Fusobacterium spp.) and **protozoa** (Giardia, Trichomonas), acting through DNA disruption. The synergy of both components ensures broad antimicrobial coverage, which is especially important in **polymicrobial oral environments**.

d.4. Pharmacokinetics and Tissue Penetration

Pharmacokinetically, **spiramycin** achieves good concentrations in **saliva and gingival fluid**, making it well-suited for dental infections. **Metronidazole** diffuses effectively into **abscesses, necrotic tissue**, and even the **central nervous system**. Both drugs are primarily **metabolized in the liver** and excreted through **bile and urine**, which supports their use in infections involving **inflamed or poorly vascularized tissues**.

d.5. Restrictions and Considerations

It is important to note that **metronidazole is banned in food-producing animals** in many countries, including Algeria, due to its potential **mutagenic and carcinogenic risks**. As a result, **Metromycine is reserved for use in companion animals** only, particularly dogs and cats.

1.3 Study of the Anti-infectives Market in Algeria

The Algerian anti-infectives market is a substantial segment within the national pharmaceutical sector. According to IMS MAT 07/2015, **88.3%** of the market in value is dominated by **monotherapy products**, while only **11.7%** is occupied by combination therapies, such as Metromycine. Furthermore, **macrolides and related molecules** (including spiramycine) represent **11.7% in quantity** and **631 million DZD in value**, compared to a total market value of **5.36 billion DZD** for anti-infectives .

The market for products combining **spiramycine and metronidazole** has shown a positive trajectory over the last three years, reflecting a **growth rate of 6% annually**,

which signals both stability and opportunity for expansion in this therapeutic area. Despite the competition, this trend demonstrates a rising demand for oral anti-infectives in stomatology

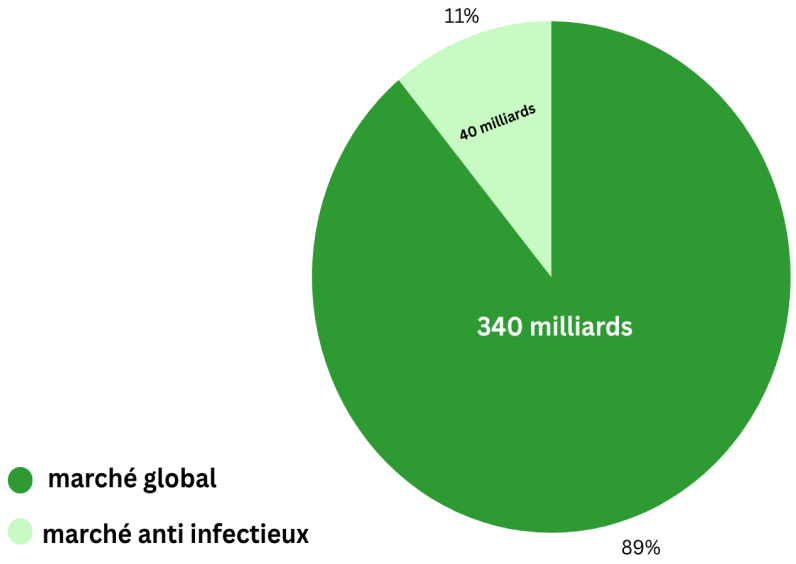


Figure 13 : Market of Anti-Infectives in the National Market (DZD)

1.4 Competitor Analysis

The competitive landscape for Metromycine is defined by the presence of generic products, which often benefit from high commercial flexibility. Key competitors such as Biocare and Biopharm are known for their aggressive practices, including discount offers of up to 30%, although such promotions are not consistently applied (Slide 8).

Notably, these competitors also lack active medical promotion strategies, which leaves a market gap that Saidal could exploit. However, the average product rotation for Metromycine remains moderate, at around 8 boxes per pharmacy per week, a performance influenced in part by the product's relatively low market visibility (Slide 8).

The product is often prescribed in 50% of cases as a first-line treatment, and 50% in cases where monotherapy fails. This highlights the importance of awareness campaigns to promote Metromycine's utility as both a first-intention and fallback treatment option.

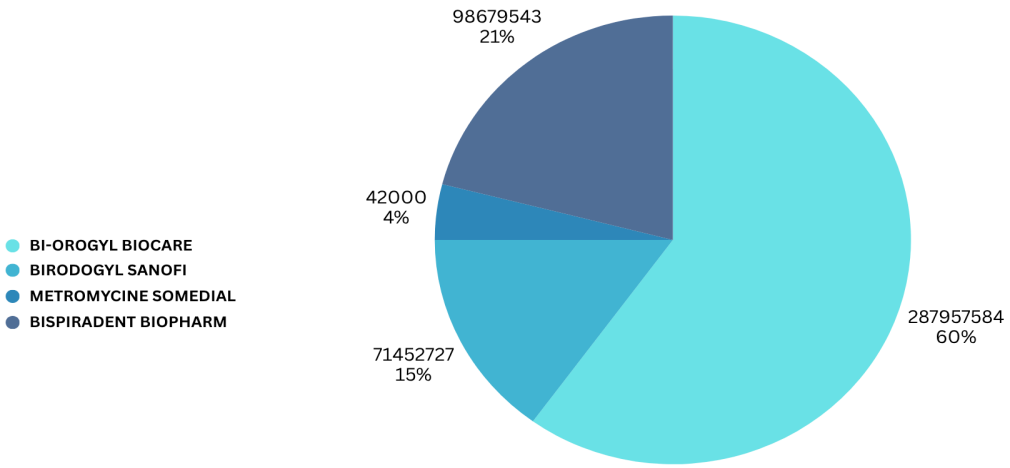


Figure 14 : Market Share of Related Macrolides by Brand in Value

1.5 Segmentation, Targeting, and Strategic Positioning in the Algerian Pharmaceutical Market

a. Market Segmentation Strategy for Metromycine

In pharmaceutical marketing, segmentation plays a crucial role in identifying and addressing distinct market subgroups based on clinical, demographic, and behavioral characteristics. For Metromycine, Saidal adopted a segmentation model rooted in therapeutic specialization, prescriber behavior, and patient demographics, aiming to maximize commercial efficiency and medical relevance.

Metromycine targets a well-defined pathology area: odontostomatological infections, which are common yet often polymicrobial in nature. The market is thus segmented along three major axes:

- Therapeutic segmentation: The product is designed specifically for oral infections, particularly those involving anaerobic and aerobic bacteria. This limits its scope but allows for a focused therapeutic impact.
- Professional segmentation: The key healthcare professionals involved are dentists, due to the nature of the infections treated, and general practitioners who frequently manage dental abscesses and similar infections in general practice settings.
- Behavioral segmentation: Prescribing behavior plays a role in this segmentation. Metromycine is intended for prescribers who may start treatment with monotherapy (e.g., amoxicillin, spiramycine alone), and escalate to combination therapy when monotherapy fails or when an infection is deemed mixed in nature.

Additionally, the patient segment is composed of individuals aged 15 and above, which excludes pediatric use and narrows the target audience to adolescent and adult populations with recurrent or post-surgical infections.

By clearly defining this niche, Saidal is able to tailor its communication, training, and promotional campaigns to prescribers whose profiles align closely with Metromycine's indications. This precise segmentation supports cost-effective marketing, ensures message relevance, and strengthens the clinical value proposition of the product.

b. Target Audience Selection and Deployment Strategy

Following segmentation, Saidal implemented a targeting strategy based on direct engagement with key market actors who influence the prescription, distribution, and sale of Metromycine. The approach is both vertical (targeting different levels of the healthcare system) and measurable, allowing for performance tracking.

The primary prescription influencers are:

- Dentists, who represent the core target, given that the product is specifically formulated for oral infections.

- General Practitioners, who often encounter dental emergencies and infections in primary care, especially in rural or underserved areas.

Additionally, pharmacists are a secondary but strategic target. In many Algerian contexts, pharmacists provide informal recommendations, especially when patients seek antibiotics without prescriptions — a common practice due to self-medication culture. Ensuring pharmacists are aware of Metromycine's benefits increases its point-of-sale influence.

On the distribution side, wholesalers and depot managers are targeted to maintain product availability, especially in private pharmacies across urban and semi-urban zones.

To operationalize this strategy, Saidal relies on a trained team of Visiteurs Médicaux (VMs). Each VM is assigned a specific geographical zone and follows a structured visit plan:

- 15 visits per week
- 5-week cycles
- 9 cycles per year
- 675 total visits per VM annually

This well-defined field strategy ensures broad national coverage, facilitates feedback collection, and provides a basis for monitoring marketing performance.

Such a quantitative approach to targeting ensures that each actor in the medication value chain from prescription to sale is engaged with the right message, at the right time, by the right channel.

c. Strategic Positioning of Metromycine within the Anti-Infectives Segment

Positioning refers to how a product is perceived in the minds of target stakeholders compared to competing alternatives. Saidal has positioned Metromycine as a broad-spectrum, combination antibiotic tailored for the treatment of oral infections offering both clinical effectiveness and practical advantages.

Metromycine is marketed not just as a backup option for treatment failures but as a first-line therapy in cases where polymicrobial infection is suspected. Its

formulation allows it to simultaneously target aerobic and anaerobic organisms, which are frequently found together in dental abscesses and periodontitis.

Its strategic positioning includes several differentiators:

- Therapeutic benefit: Combines the strengths of two antibiotics in a single formulation, reducing the need for multiple prescriptions and increasing compliance.
- Ease of use: The 3-day treatment with 1 tablet per day is simple, promotes adherence, and is well-suited for outpatient use.
- Economic accessibility: Priced at 386 DA, Metromycine is fully reimbursed, making it more accessible than some imported competitors. The price is aligned with the Tarif de Référence (387.5 DA), which reinforces its competitiveness.
- Quality assurance: Manufactured according to Bonnes Pratiques de Fabrication (BPF), the product benefits from Saidal's reputation for compliance with national standards.
- Trusted brand image: The Saidal name itself adds value. It is a well-established public manufacturer, recognized for serving national healthcare needs. This creates a layer of institutional trust among prescribers and pharmacists.

In addition, the presence of trained VMs in the field helps ensure the brand message is properly delivered, scientifically accurate, and aligned with Metromycine’s therapeutic goals.

This positioning strategy reinforces the product’s identity as a clinically appropriate, affordable, and accessible solution to common oral infections — making it attractive to both the public sector and private dispensers.

Chapter 2: Marketing Strategy Applied to Metromycine

2.1. SWOT Analysis of Metromycine

The SWOT analysis serves as a strategic diagnostic tool to assess both internal capabilities and external market dynamics influencing the performance of Metromycine. As part of Saidal's portfolio, the product presents a complex mix of assets and challenges, set within an evolving anti-infectives market characterized by price-driven competition and limited brand differentiation.

a. Strengths

Metromycine benefits from the institutional weight and credibility of Saidal, a public pharmaceutical leader with national recognition. This allows the product to benefit from a degree of baseline trust among prescribers and pharmacists. Additionally, the product is supported by a trained sales force specializing in infectiology, enhancing the accuracy and relevance of its scientific messaging. The brand's high SMR (Service Médical Rendu) rating (+++) confirms its therapeutic utility, supporting its inclusion in prescribing practices. Saidal has also adopted automated tools for managing its sales force, which contributes to consistent field coverage and performance tracking.

b. Weaknesses

Despite these strengths, Metromycine suffers from significant weaknesses. Chief among them is the total absence of structured medical promotion, which limits awareness among healthcare professionals. Moreover, the product is price-sensitive, with rotation figures remaining modest — around 8 boxes per pharmacy per week, indicating sub-optimal sell-through. The lack of visibility and promotional push impedes brand recall, particularly in comparison with more aggressive generics.

c. Opportunities

The anti-infectives market in Algeria has demonstrated a sustained growth rate of 6% annually over a five-year period, which presents a clear expansion opportunity for Metromycine. The targeted pathologies, such as oral infections, are frequent and often recurrent. Another notable opportunity lies in the inactivity of competitors regarding medical promotion, which creates space for Metromycine to capture attention through renewed detailing efforts. Additionally, the product's reimbursement

status and its dual usage (first- or second-line therapy) enhance its adaptability to varying clinical scenarios.

d. Threats

Nevertheless, the product faces considerable external threats. The market is highly competitive and dominated by generics, such as those from Biocare and Biopharm, who utilize aggressive commercial strategies and price-based positioning. These competitors also benefit from greater commercial flexibility, including the ability to offer up to 30% in discounts, even if irregularly. Furthermore, many competitor products maintain price points below the national reimbursement tariff (TR), giving them a financial edge in pharmacy-level negotiations.

2.2. Definition of Objectives

The internal presentation developed by Saidal for the Metromycine marketing plan outlines a set of objectives that are exclusively commercial and operational in nature. These objectives are presented in terms of expected performance at several levels of the marketing and distribution chain, namely by **region**, by **pharmacy**, and by **medical sales representative**. The focus is placed on the **achievement of sales targets**, which are used to measure the success of the product's commercial deployment. Although the document does not provide a textual or theoretical definition of what constitutes an objective, it makes clear that the strategy is centered on controlling and optimizing the field execution through quantifiable indicators. No qualitative objectives are stated in the document, and no goals are described in terms of brand awareness, prescriber loyalty, or communication effectiveness. Therefore, based solely on the contents of the presentation, the marketing objectives defined for Metromycine are limited to numerical and logistical targets related to product circulation and field activity.

a. Quantitative Objectives

The sales targets for Metromycine are clearly delineated by territory and actor. According to Slide 9, Saidal sets objectives based on:

- **Annual Performance per Region**

The marketing plan for Metromycine, as outlined in Slide 9, includes clearly defined performance expectations at the **regional level**. Saidal sets **annual objectives by region**, allowing the company to adapt its commercial efforts to the unique demand and market characteristics of each geographical area. This approach ensures that resources are allocated proportionally to the potential of each region, creating a localized strategy that aligns with national sales targets.

- **Sales Volume per Pharmacy per Medical Representative (VM)**

Each **visiteur médical (VM)** is assigned precise sales objectives measured in **unités de vente (UV)**. These targets are linked directly to **individual pharmacies** within the VM's territory. By setting sales expectations at the pharmacy level, Saidal reinforces a model of individual accountability and creates conditions for **tight field monitoring**. This system ensures that the sales force is not only promoting the product but also actively driving rotation and availability in key points of sale.

- **Number of Active VMs (From 16 to 24 Representatives)**

To strengthen its market coverage and intensify field activities, Saidal plans to **increase the number of active medical representatives from 16 to 24**. This expansion reflects a strategic effort to extend promotional reach and improve prescriber engagement across a wider area. The scaling of the team also supports more frequent visit cycles and a deeper presence in high-potential zones, which is critical for improving product visibility and capturing market share.

- **Monthly Targets by Wholesaler and Pharmacy**

In addition to VM-level targets, the document also mentions **monthly objectives set for wholesalers and pharmacies**. This granular planning ensures that promotional activity is aligned with **supply chain logistics**, facilitating consistent product availability and stock rotation. By managing monthly targets across multiple stakeholders, Saidal enhances coordination between marketing execution and distribution performance.

These metrics form the backbone of Saidal's **activity-based control system**, where the success of field operations is measured not only by volume but by adherence to structured coverage plans.

2.3. Marketing Mix Deployment

a. Product

Metromycine is a fixed-dose combination therapy that includes **Spiramycine**, a macrolide antibiotic, and **Métronidazole**, a nitroimidazole compound. This combination is specifically formulated for the treatment of **oral and stomatological infections**, offering a **broad-spectrum antibacterial effect** that covers both aerobic and anaerobic bacteria. The therapeutic profile of Metromycine is defined by its **synergistic activity**, making it particularly effective for complex infections such as dental abscesses, gingivitis, and periodontitis. One of the major advantages of the product lies in its **simple and short dosing regimen** — one tablet per day for three days — which improves **patient adherence** and reduces the risk of treatment failure due to poor compliance.

The product is **packaged in boxes of 10 tablets**, which is appropriate for the standard 3-day treatment. It is manufactured under **Bonnes Pratiques de Fabrication (BPF)**, ensuring pharmaceutical quality in accordance with national standards. Moreover, Metromycine is listed as a **fully reimbursed medication**, which removes cost as a barrier for patients and strengthens its competitiveness in the public health system. All these characteristics combine to position Metromycine as a practical, effective, and accessible solution for the treatment of infectious oral conditions.

b. Price

In terms of pricing, Metromycine is positioned to align with the national reimbursement framework, ensuring affordability without sacrificing margin. The product is priced at a **Prix Public de Vente (PPA)** of **386 DA**, which is nearly identical to the **Tarif de Référence (TR)** set at **387.5 DA**. This strategic pricing enables the product to be **100% reimbursed**, an important factor in the Algerian pharmaceutical market, where cost coverage significantly influences both prescriber behavior and patient access.

By aligning closely with the TR, Saidal ensures that Metromycine is accessible to a wide range of patients while remaining attractive to pharmacies and healthcare professionals who are bound by reimbursement systems. The pricing is therefore not

only competitive with generic alternatives, but also aligned with institutional expectations, allowing Saidal to maintain consistency between public policy and commercial strategy.

c. Place (Distribution)

The distribution strategy for Metromycine is designed to ensure wide availability across both public and private pharmaceutical networks. The product is primarily distributed through **wholesalers and pharmacies**, enabling national-level access. To support its commercial launch and encourage adoption by pharmacists, Saidal has introduced **targeted commercial offers**, including **discounts of up to 30%**. These promotional discounts are strategically timed, occurring during two key periods of the year: **January–February** and **August–September**. These months likely correspond with periods of higher patient demand or align with internal sales cycles.

Saidal also encourages wholesalers to **pass on these discounts to pharmacies**, thereby enhancing the product's attractiveness at the point of sale. This tactic aims to stimulate stocking behavior and increase rotation rates in pharmacies. By using this coordinated distribution strategy, Saidal ensures that Metromycine is not only present in the supply chain but actively promoted at every level from warehouse to pharmacy shelf.

d. Promotion

Among the four elements of the marketing mix, **promotion** represents the area where Metromycine currently faces the greatest limitations. As explicitly stated in the internal presentation, there is **no structured medical promotion** currently in place. This lack of field activity places the product at a disadvantage, especially in a competitive market where presence and repetition are essential to maintaining visibility among prescribers and pharmacists.

Nevertheless, Saidal's strategy does propose corrective promotional actions. These include strengthening **medical detailing activities** aimed at key prescribers, particularly dentists and general practitioners, who frequently treat oral infections. In parallel, efforts will also focus on **educating pharmacists** regarding the therapeutic advantages of Metromycine, as well as reinforcing its **full reimbursement status** and

ease of use. The company's messaging will highlight practical features such as "1 dose/day for 3 days" and "1 box = 1 complete treatment," both of which are expected to improve patient adherence and simplify pharmacist communication with clients.

Although these promotional plans are not yet active, their design reflects a coherent intent to reposition Metromycine in the minds of healthcare professionals. Proper implementation of these initiatives will be critical to improving visibility, reinforcing credibility, and ultimately increasing prescription rates.

2.4. Field Communication Strategy: Plans A and B

As part of its commercial strategy for Metromycine, Saidal has developed a structured field communication plan that targets the key stakeholders in the prescribing and dispensing process. This communication is divided into two main operational plans: **Plan A**, which focuses on direct engagement with prescribers, and **Plan B**, which targets pharmacists. Both plans are designed to maximize the effectiveness of the company's medical representatives (VMs), ensuring that product messages are tailored to each audience's role in the treatment decision-making chain.

a. Plan A: Prescriber Engagement

Plan A outlines a **structured medical visitation program** targeting healthcare professionals involved in the prescription of antibiotics for oral infections. The core of this plan is built on a **geographic distribution model**, where each **visiteur médical (VM)** is assigned a specific territory. The visitation rhythm is precisely defined: **15 visits per week per VM**, organized into **5-week cycles**, with a total of **9 cycles per year**. This results in a total of **675 visits annually per VM**, ensuring consistent coverage and repeated contact with prescribers throughout the year.

The **primary audience** for these visits includes **dentists**, who are the most frequent prescribers for stomatological pathologies, and **general practitioners**, who also manage oral infections in their clinical practice. This approach allows Saidal to maintain a continuous presence in the field while reinforcing key product messages such as dosing simplicity, therapeutic relevance, and reimbursement status. The

structured nature of Plan A reflects an intent to systematically influence prescribing behavior through regular and targeted engagement.

b. Plan B: Pharmacist Messaging

In parallel with prescriber-focused actions, Plan B addresses the strategic role of **pharmacists** in the healthcare value chain. Although pharmacists are not prescribers, they are often consulted by patients seeking advice, especially in cases of self-medication or repeat infections. The messaging in Plan B is therefore centered on **practical, patient-oriented arguments** that can support the pharmacist in recommending Metromycine when appropriate.

The communication emphasizes the product's **simple dosing regimen** — one tablet per day for three days — and the fact that **a single box contains a complete course of treatment**. This not only simplifies dispensing but also reduces the risk of **inappropriate self-medication** or dosing errors. In addition, pharmacists are reminded that Metromycine is **fully reimbursed** and widely available, which increases its relevance in both public and private settings. Saidal also encourages pharmacists to **stock and recommend the product**, highlighting its therapeutic reliability and convenience for patients.

By addressing both prescribers and dispensers through tailored, structured communication efforts, Saidal reinforces the full marketing cycle — from prescription to patient adherence — while making optimal use of its VM network to support commercial goals.

Chapter 3 : Action Plan and Performance Monitoring

3.1. Structure of the Commercial Action Plan

The commercial action plan for Metromycine is structured around a well-defined, cyclical, and territory-based model. Saidal relies on its network of medical representatives (VMs), each assigned to a specific region, with a standard rhythm of 15 visits per week. These visits are grouped into five-week cycles, repeated nine times per year, resulting in a total of 675 visits annually per VM. This structure ensures frequent and consistent interaction with healthcare professionals, particularly dentists and general practitioners, who are the key prescribers of the product.

To support pharmacy-level uptake and product rotation, Saidal implements two commercial campaigns each year, offering up to 30% discounts during the periods of January–February and August–September. These commercial incentives are designed to boost product distribution and encourage wholesalers to pass discounts down to pharmacies, improving access and availability at the point of sale. This combination of field promotion and coordinated commercial offers reflects a cyclical planning model that facilitates both execution and internal performance tracking.

3.2. Performance Indicators

The commercial performance of Metromycine is measured using quantitative indicators, specifically through sales volumes expressed in units (UV). These objectives are structured across three operational levels: per medical representative, per pharmacy, and per wholesaler. Each VM is assigned a specific UV target to be achieved within their designated pharmacies. Pharmacies are also given monthly sales goals based on their capacity and demand, and wholesalers are subject to monthly volume expectations to maintain supply consistency.

In addition to setting these performance objectives, Saidal plans to expand its sales team from 16 to 24 VMs. This strategic increase is intended to enhance national field coverage and intensify contact frequency with healthcare providers. No qualitative indicators, such as prescriber satisfaction or brand awareness, are presented in the documentation, suggesting that the focus remains entirely on quantifiable performance metrics.

3.3. Monitoring and Adjustment Mechanisms

Although a formal performance control system is not described, the structure of Saidal's field plan allows for implicit monitoring and adjustment. The repetitive cycle of visits provides natural checkpoints for evaluating VM performance against the set UV targets. At the end of each five-week cycle, performance results can be reviewed to determine progress and identify underperforming areas.

The two annual commercial campaigns also offer an opportunity to assess the impact of price incentives on pharmacy orders and overall product movement. If sales do not increase during these periods, adjustments can be made to promotional strategies, messaging, or field coverage. Furthermore, the coordinated performance objectives set for VMs, pharmacies, and wholesalers enable internal comparison and cross-verification, helping Saidal detect performance gaps and respond accordingly.

3.4. Communication Strategy and Promotional Tools

The communication strategy implemented for Metromycine is entirely based on field execution and is structured around two dedicated operational plans. These are referred to as **Plan A**, which targets prescribers (primarily dentists and general practitioners), and **Plan B**, which focuses on community pharmacists. The communication is conducted exclusively through Saidal's **medical representative network (VMs)**, with the aim of delivering consistent, targeted, and persuasive messaging to professionals directly involved in prescribing and dispensing the product.

a. Plan A: Communication Targeting Prescribers

Plan A is centered on a structured field deployment toward medical professionals. Each medical representative is required to perform **15 visits per week**, following a strict cycle system. A cycle consists of **5 consecutive weeks**, and there are **9 cycles per year**, amounting to a total of **675 visits per VM annually**. These visits are carefully distributed across Saidal's defined geographic zones, ensuring systematic and repeated exposure to the product among the prescribing community.

The prescriber communication emphasizes several key advantages of Metromycine:

- **Ease of prescription**: the treatment requires **one tablet per day for three days**, which simplifies therapeutic protocols and increases patient compliance.
- **Therapeutic effectiveness**: as a **broad-spectrum antibiotic combination** (spiramycin and metronidazole), it is particularly effective against mixed oral infections.
- **Reimbursement advantage**: Metromycine is **fully reimbursed**, which eliminates financial barriers for patients and facilitates prescriber confidence.
- **Manufacturing standards**: the product is produced under **Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP/BPF)**, ensuring quality, safety, and regulatory compliance.
- **Indications**: it is especially recommended for conditions such as **dental abscesses**, **periodontitis**, and other common orofacial infections.

The overall objective of Plan A is to reinforce Metromycine's position as a **first-line or second-line** treatment for oral infections, supported by Saidal's national credibility and public-sector reputation.

b. Plan B: Communication Targeting Pharmacists

Plan B addresses the strategic role of pharmacists as key actors in both product rotation and patient guidance. Pharmacists are often the first point of contact for patients seeking treatment for oral infections, and their recommendations can heavily influence product uptake. The communication delivered to pharmacists is structured around practical benefits and patient-facing arguments.

The key messaging in Plan B includes:

- **A complete treatment in one box**: Metromycine is packaged to deliver a full course (3 days) in a single unit, simplifying pharmacy handling and reducing the risk of misuse.
- **Clear dosage and limited self-medication risk**: because of its short regimen and strong antibiotic profile, it discourages inappropriate long-term use.
- **Accessibility**: the **full reimbursement status** supports its availability and affordability for all patients.

- **Relevance to real-world practice**: pharmacists are reminded that oral infections are among the most frequent complaints in community pharmacies, making Metromycine a reliable option for advice and guidance.

Pharmacists are thus encouraged to support Metromycine by maintaining stock and proactively recommending it when appropriate, especially in alignment with prescriptions or symptomatic requests.

c. Communication Channels and Promotional Tools

The deployment of the communication strategy relies on both **direct and indirect promotional channels**, allowing Saidal to establish a multi-contact presence within the healthcare professional environment. The main channels identified are:

1- **Direct Medical Detailing :** The most important channel is direct medical engagement through VM visits. The strict rhythm of 675 visits per VM annually allows for high-frequency exposure and regular reinforcement of product messaging.

2- **Public Relations (PR) Activities:** Saidal engages in public relations efforts that support the brand image and scientific legitimacy of Metromycine. These may include institutional presence, medical articles, or public campaigns aligned with health authorities or professional societies.

3- **Sponsorship Initiatives :** Sponsorship of conferences, workshops, or continuing medical education sessions is used to increase visibility in medical communities, particularly in dentistry and infectiology. These events reinforce Metromycine's association with relevant therapeutic discussions.

4- **Support for Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) :** Saidal also engages in targeted outreach to influential physicians and pharmacists. These KOLs are often consulted by peers and can serve as amplifiers of positive clinical experience with Metromycine. Their support is seen as a valuable asset in driving product trust and clinical endorsement.

Together, these communication tools contribute to a comprehensive visibility strategy that combines **repetition, credibility, and scientific positioning**. The integration of field actions, medical education, and stakeholder engagement ensures that

Metromycine is presented not only as a product, but as a trustworthy therapeutic solution promoted by a national pharmaceutical leader.

Chapter 4 : Comprehensive Strategic Marketing Proposal for Metromycine in the Algerian Pharmaceutical Market

Chapter 4 : Comprehensive Strategic Marketing Proposal for Metromycine in the Algerian Pharmaceutical Market

4.1. Introduction:

Metromycine, a combination antibiotic based on spiramycin and metronidazole, has solid pharmacological foundations. It offers a simple dosage, broad therapeutic coverage, and full reimbursement all of which position it well within the treatment of oral and stomatological infections. However, despite these strengths, its current market performance does not reflect its full potential.

This gap can be attributed to limited differentiation, weak prescriber recall, and underutilized communication channels. In a competitive market saturated with generics, pricing is no longer the only factor: prescriber trust, scientific legitimacy, pharmacist engagement, and patient awareness are now decisive levers.

Saidal, as Algeria's national pharmaceutical leader, has both the infrastructure and brand legitimacy to lead a transformation. This chapter presents a strategic marketing proposal designed to reposition Metromycine as not only a clinically relevant product, but a **national reference in oral infection treatment**. It includes actionable marketing innovations, new field tactics, and long-term branding elements, all tailored to the Algerian healthcare environment.

a. Strategic Objectives

The strategy is structured around five main strategic objectives. Each one addresses a specific market challenge and supports both commercial performance and public health responsibility:

1- **Expand prescriber engagement and geographic field coverage** through an optimized VM network and structured visit plans, especially in underserved wilayas and rural zones.

2- **Position Metromycine as a differentiated, evidence-based treatment**, moving away from price-centered messaging and toward scientific credibility.

3- **Mobilize and educate pharmacists** to shift their role from passive dispensers to active recommenders and brand promoters.

4- **Develop long-term scientific influence** by engaging key opinion leaders, academic institutions, and professional associations.

5- **Implement measurable, multidimensional performance tracking**, including qualitative feedback loops, to evaluate the effectiveness of communication, not just sales volume.

These objectives serve both tactical (sales, coverage, awareness) and strategic (trust, credibility, longevity) priorities for Saidal.

b. Target Audience Segmentation

Effective targeting is essential for resource allocation and message alignment. This strategy divides the audience into four strategic tiers based on their role, influence, and potential return on engagement.

b.1. Primary Prescribers

- **Dentists** (public and private): handle the majority of stomatological infections requiring antibiotic treatment.
- **General Practitioners**: manage oral and orofacial infections, particularly in underserved areas.
- **Approach**: scientific communication, field detailing, clinical scenarios.

b.2. Pharmacists

- **Role**: frontline dispensers and patient advisors. Often substitute prescriptions or guide self-medication.
- **Approach**: POS visibility, educational materials, loyalty programs, patient counseling aids.

b.3. Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs)

- Influencers in clinical practice, academia, or association leadership.
- **Approach**: co-development of content, event sponsorship, national visibility.

b.4. Students & Young Professionals

- Future prescribers and dispensers (pharmacy and medical faculties).
- **Approach:** university-based programs, branded case studies, sponsorship of academic events.

Each audience receives tailored communication, frequency, and promotional assets, maximizing engagement and cost-efficiency.

c. Proposed Marketing Actions

This section presents the specific actions proposed across four strategic axes:

- Expand VM network to cover 100% of high-potential wilayas.
- Field Force Optimization: Enhancing VM Reach, Efficiency, and Smart Targeting.
- Introduce a geographic segmentation model (Zone A/B/C):
  - A = high prescriber density
  - B = moderate access areas
  - C = rural or remote zones needing periodic rotation
- Equip each VM with a **tablet-based detailing system**, including:
  - Digital slide decks
  - Dosing algorithms
  - Stock tracking by region
- Add AI functionality to the CRM to **recommend visit plans**, record prescriber sentiment, and generate daily activity reports.
- Introduce **performance KPIs**: not only UVs, but also prescriber conversion rate and message recall rate.

4.2. Strategic Initiatives to Enhance Metromycine Brand Performance

a. Pharmacist Engagement

Building Long-Term Recommendation and Retail Loyalty

Pharmacists are more than dispensers; they are gatekeepers and influencers in Algerian pharmacies.

- Launch the **“Metromycine Pharmacy Alliance”** initiative:
  - Free access to branded POS displays (posters, shelf markers, digital stands)
  - Educational kits on product advantages and counseling techniques
  - Quarterly challenges with product vouchers or training session prizes

- Introduce a **certified e-learning program**, offering a digital badge upon completion
- Provide pharmacists with a **QR-linked flyer** to give patients simple, visual dosing guidance

b. Scientific Leadership and KOL Activation

Building National Influence and Clinical Credibility

Scientific legitimacy is essential in a prescription-sensitive category like antibiotics.

- Create a **Metromycine Clinical Advisory Board** made of respected national experts.
- Sponsor symposia, roundtables, and CPD-accredited events in:
  - Infectiology
  - Dental therapeutics
  - Pharmacovigilance and AMR (antimicrobial resistance)
- Co-develop content with KOLs:
  - Clinical case brochures
  - Webinars and videos
  - Local survey-based publications

c. Brand Innovation and Visibility:

Disruptive Tools to Build Recall and Differentiation

c.1. Smart Packaging and Patient Tools

- Color-coded tablet blister: Day 1, Day 2, Day 3
- Printed pictogram instructions
- QR code leading to 60-second video in Arabic/French with a local doctor voiceover

c.2. Metromycine Oral Infection Kit

- Packaged with mini antiseptic mouthwash and a dental hygiene tip card
- Ideal for hospital dental departments or community pharmacy sales promotions

c.3. Public Awareness Campaign: “3 Days to Heal”

- Launch digital and in-pharmacy campaign with tagline: “3 Days. 1 Box. Full Recovery.”
- Communication channels:
  - Instagram/TikTok health influencers
  - Radio ad spots in morning segments
  - Print campaign in university health centers

c.4. University Clinical Partnership Program

- Collaborate with 5 major Algerian faculties (pharmacy & medicine)
- Offer branded teaching content and sponsor an “Infection Treatment Challenge”
- Provide Metromycine-branded folders, cases, and exam prep packs

4.3. Conclusion

The proposed marketing strategy aims to elevate Metromycine’s market performance through structured, impactful, and sustainable actions. By combining field excellence, stakeholder empowerment, scientific credibility, and brand innovation, Saidal can reposition Metromycine as a national reference in stomatological infection treatment.

This proposal does not simply improve execution — it redefines the product’s identity, its communication architecture, and its long-term role in Algerian healthcare. With proper deployment, Saidal would not only boost sales but secure long-term brand equity, professional trust, and alignment with its public health mission.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The pharmaceutical industry stands at the intersection of science, public health, and commercial enterprise. Within this complex and highly regulated ecosystem, marketing plays a critical role in ensuring that therapeutic innovations reach the right stakeholders — physicians, pharmacists, and ultimately, patients — in a manner that is both effective and ethically responsible.

This study set out to explore and analyze the essential principles and real-world applications of pharmaceutical marketing, using both theoretical frameworks and practical examples. The first part of the project provided a foundational understanding of how pharmaceutical companies are organized, the roles of key departments such as R&D, regulatory affairs, medical affairs, and sales, and how they all align under a unified corporate strategy. The distinctiveness of pharmaceutical marketing — bound by strict legal and ethical regulations — was clearly demonstrated, especially in comparison to traditional consumer marketing.

The second part of the research focused on the creation and execution of a pharmaceutical marketing plan. We examined its structure in depth, detailing core components such as market research, SWOT analysis, value proposition development, stakeholder segmentation, and post-launch performance monitoring. These components are not isolated actions, but rather interconnected stages in a continuous strategic process.

The SAIDAL Group, as Algeria’s national pharmaceutical leader, served as a valuable case study. It provided insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by companies operating within a local regulatory context and under public health imperatives. SAIDAL's adherence to national health policies, its investment in local production, and its strategic focus on accessibility and compliance illustrate how pharmaceutical marketing can align with national development goals.

The final section of the project presented a targeted marketing proposal for **Metromycine**, an antibiotic developed by SAIDAL. This included innovative strategies tailored to Algerian market realities, such as pharmacist engagement programs, continuing education initiatives, smart packaging, and a national awareness campaign. These proposals were not only designed to improve brand performance and market penetration, but also to reinforce trust, therapeutic adherence, and professional partnerships. The strategy highlighted how a product’s success depends

not only on clinical efficacy, but also on how well it is communicated, understood, and supported across the healthcare ecosystem.

In conclusion, this PFE has demonstrated that pharmaceutical marketing is both a science and an art — requiring technical expertise, cross-functional collaboration, ethical vigilance, and local adaptation. A well-crafted marketing plan serves as a blueprint for sustainable product success, reinforcing not only company profitability but also public health outcomes. For Algerian pharmaceutical companies like SAIDAL, the integration of innovative, ethically sound, and patient-focused marketing strategies can pave the way for stronger national leadership, improved healthcare delivery, and increased international competitiveness.

As the pharmaceutical landscape continues to evolve with scientific advances, digital transformation, and growing health challenges, the role of marketing will only become more central. Future success will depend on companies' abilities to combine evidence-based planning with genuine stakeholder engagement — a principle that underpins the entire approach developed in this project.

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Thesis Summary: Strategy and Marketing Plan for Pharmaceuticals – Case Study of the Generic Drug Metromycine

This graduation thesis explores the strategic role of **pharmaceutical marketing** in the context of **generic drugs**, with a particular focus on the **Algerian pharmaceutical industry**. The study uses **Metromycine**, a broad-spectrum **antibiotic** developed by **SAIDAL**, as a case study to demonstrate how structured marketing tools and strategic planning can enhance the visibility and performance of a product that already has therapeutic value but remains commercially underexploited.

In recent years, Algeria has made significant progress in **local drug production**, especially in the manufacturing of **generic medicines**, which are crucial for expanding access to healthcare. However, this advancement has not been matched by equal progress in the field of **pharmaceutical marketing**. Many companies remain focused on **research and development (R&D)** and **regulatory compliance**, while neglecting structured **marketing strategies**, **scientific promotion**, and **market positioning** — elements that are essential for success in a competitive market.

The first part of the thesis presents an overview of the **organizational structure** of pharmaceutical companies, the **marketing function**, and the regulatory framework that governs the industry. It introduces the core tools of **strategic marketing**: the **SWOT analysis** (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats), the **STP model** (Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning), the **marketing mix (4Ps)** — Product, Price, Place, Promotion — and the concept of the **product life cycle**, all of which are essential in building and executing an effective marketing plan.

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In the second part, the thesis focuses on Metromycine, a **generic combination drug** composed of **spiramycin** and **metronidazole**, primarily used to treat **oral and dental infections**. In addition to its application in human medicine, Metromycine is also relevant in **veterinary medicine**, particularly for the treatment of **oral infections in companion animals** such as dogs and cats. Despite its wide spectrum and affordability, the product suffers from **low brand awareness**, **minimal differentiation**, and a **lack of targeted communication**, which limits its reach in both human and animal health markets.

Through detailed **market analysis**, the study evaluates the **competitive landscape**, identifies **segmentation opportunities**, and analyzes consumer and prescriber behavior. The **SWOT analysis** of Metromycine reveals untapped strengths and opportunities that could be leveraged through a structured strategy. Based on this analysis, the thesis proposes a complete **strategic marketing plan**, including:

- Clear **marketing objectives** aligned with the **SMART framework**
- A customized **marketing mix**
- A **field communication strategy**, with two separate components:
    - **Plan A**: engagement with **prescribers** (doctors, veterinarians)
    - **Plan B**: communication targeting **pharmacists**
- Practical tools for **scientific promotion**, **educational support**, and **brand visibility**

A dedicated section covers the **veterinary use of Metromycine**, highlighting its effectiveness in managing common **anaerobic and mixed infections** in animals, and proposing ways to better promote it to **veterinary practitioners**, including tailored **packaging**, **dosage information**, and **clinical partnerships**.

References:

The final part outlines an **action plan** with clear **performance indicators**, **monitoring tools**, and **adjustment mechanisms**, ensuring that the strategy can be implemented and evaluated in real-time.

In conclusion, this work shows that **marketing in the pharmaceutical industry**, especially for **generic drugs**, is not simply about promotion, but about **strategic positioning**, **communication planning**, and **value creation**. The case of Metromycine illustrates how an existing product can benefit from structured marketing to achieve **greater visibility, market share, and therapeutic impact**, both in **human medicine** and in the **veterinary sector**.