

CASE STUDY

How to Accelerate Global Market Growth With Agile Product Sample Pouching Programs



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Background

With today's consumer focus on self-care and creating a healthy lifestyle, demand for nutraceutical products has been growing rapidly in recent years. In fact, the global market for vitamins and dietary supplements is estimated to grow from \$55.2 billion in 2017 to \$98.5 billion in 2025¹.

This surge is driven worldwide by an established and expanding middle class with income to dedicate to nutritional products¹, while the current COVID-19 pandemic has also led to a significant increase in sales for immune-related health products. For example, US sales for Vitamin D and Vitamin C in 2020 grew 49.5% and 69.9%, respectively, compared to 2019².

With this in mind, a market-leading consumer health products division of a Multi-National Pharmaceutical Company sought to grow their brand with an innovative, new vitamin product.

As a top doctor and pharmacist-recommended provider of vitamin supplements in the US backed by a 40-year history developing science-based health and wellness products, the company needed a packaging partner to support a fast-tracked product launch for a new flavored chewable form of vitamin supplement. This launch would involve complimentary sample pouches that could be distributed across a range of channels to reach as many consumers as possible.

Enter Jones Healthcare Group.

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Requirements and Challenges

The initial project required 1.2 million samples of a single flavor vitamin product in pouches for distribution in the US only. After the project launched however, a positive market response with a surge in demand led the pharmaceutical company to expand project scope and introduce three additional flavors with distribution to seven other countries.

As the new flavors and target countries were introduced, the company had to work with Jones to quickly design, approve and implement updated and customized pouch artwork with different product logos, messaging and language tailored to each unique cultural location, without impacting deliveries, to maintain the momentum of the positive market response.

Results

The client remains a top doctor and pharmacist-recommended provider of vitamin supplements in the US and globally, while their brand is among the strongest in the nutritional supplement industry.

Jones packaged and distributed over 25 million vitamin sample pouches, comprising four different flavors across eight countries – each with unique logos, artwork and messaging – in less than a year-and-a-half. This supported a significant brand awareness campaign in the client's most important global markets, while reinforcing their reputation for producing science-backed nutritional supplements for consumer health and well-being.

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Three Critical Components of Success

Project and Sample Program Capabilities

Sampling programs can quickly escalate from simple and straightforward to extremely complex, as new requirements are introduced during project execution with market feedback. It is important to have a partner with a strong history in project planning and technical transfers that is also customer-centered, communicates openly and proactively plans for change ³. This includes an understanding that samples must be produced with the same quality as commercial packaging batches, while providing the necessary agility to accommodate multiple branded images and messages targeted to specific geographies to drive results for the client's product.

During this complex project, Jones provided the required agility by quickly and continuously adjusting production capacity to meet the evolving need of the client's sampling program. Open communication between project team members ensured all stakeholders understood and correctly executed each new variable introduced to the program.

Partner Suppliers Accelerating Artwork Approvals

All health-related packaging requires a high attention to detail, and this is especially important for new product samples. New product logos and messaging are a critical component for achieving the right outcome in a market, and this new product was no different.

From the project start, the team quickly established open and timely communication with the client's remote artwork design team. Through strong partnership, Jones and the client developed and implemented a method to review and approve artwork virtually, facilitating adherence to tight, market-driven timelines. Working with our established and diverse supplier base, Jones concurrently proofed, approved, produced and supplied new artwork designs on time.



Agile Capacity

It is known pharmaceutical product forecasting is often inaccurate, particularly for new product launches – as was the case for this project. From start to finish, sample volumes grew 20 times larger than originally forecasted, which is a potential challenge for any operation. As a contract packager, it is important to embrace an anticipatory mindset, while expecting changes in forecast models in order to quickly and easily adapt to these changes ⁴.

Our established processes were well-suited to respond and react to the client's escalating and evolving demands as a result of strong market feedback. Jones continuously monitored line capacity and adjusted accordingly to meet all new requirements based on new batch quantities, flavor, intended distribution and artwork. Working in partnership with our client, our agile supply chain system swiftly reacted to the continued variable demand swings, allowing all orders to be completed in full and on time.

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Summary

A market-leading, consumer health products division of a multi-national pharmaceutical company contacted Jones Healthcare Group for assistance launching a new vitamin product using sample-sized pouches.

The consumer health products market, specifically nutritional supplements, has been growing significantly for the past 25 years with no signs of slowing. The client sought to substantially grow market share by introducing a new flavored, chewable form of their market-leading vitamins. Their plan was to quickly distribute complimentary samples in pouches to reach as many consumers as possible – first within the US, and then across multiple countries.

Jones achieved success through robust project and packaging launch program capabilities, using an established base of partner suppliers to expedite new artwork approvals, as well as a reactive and agile supply chain to drive the client's global growth objectives.

About the Author Marta Moniz

Marta Moniz is a business development manager for Jones Healthcare Group's Packaging Services business unit. She has been a key member of the team for nearly 30 years. In her role, Marta develops strong consultative partnerships with customers to clearly identify, understand and communicate their needs internally. Working with the cross-functional project team, Marta recommends and proposes project solutions, including defining the project scope, pricing the work and facilitating project launches.

1. Nutraceuticals Market Assessment, 2019, The Association for Packaging and Processing Technologies (PMMI)
2. Nutraceutical Manufacturing: Meeting the Challenges of Today, Planning for Tomorrow, Sean Moloughney, Contract Pharma, Nutraceutical Manufacturing: Meeting The Challenges Of Today, Planning For Tomorrow - Contract Pharma, March 2021
3. A Commercial Packaging Launch is More Like Rocket Science than you Might Think. Peter Walton, Jones Healthcare Group, 2021
4. 5 Key Features of Agile Pharmaceutical Packaging Supply Chains that Drive Results, John Zanin, Jones Healthcare Group, 2021

