Battle Of The Brands: More Than Just A Label?

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Branded versus stores' own label?

This debate spans industries, not just the over the counter drug market.

Not surprisingly, opinions are divided. Overall, 42% of respondents do not perceive stores' own label over the counter products to be as effective as branded products (Spain at 71%, UK and US both 65%).

Conversely, nearly a third of people globally (27%) do consider stores' own labels to be just as effective (UAE with 52%, Chile 49%, Singapore 45%).

The UK had the lowest percentage (6%) of respondents agreeing with this view, something Bob Douglas, Global Head of Synovate Healthcare, attributes to perceptions of quality.

"UK consumers may well perceive the brand as a badge which represents quality. The perception of quality is reinforced by both the premium price over generics and the fact that generics sometimes do not have UK packaging or instructions, thereby suggesting 'cheaper' and inferior imported goods."

Perhaps it is not surprising then that 44% of respondents prefer to use / give their families recognised brands.

Again, the UAE leads the pack at 86%, followed by Chile at 79% (62% strongly agreed), and Singapore (71%).

"This is due to the mix of nationalities in the UAE - people look for brands they are using back home," says Karlsson. "International brands are more trusted than local brands. People in the UAE take healthcare very seriously and they prefer to go for recognised brands which they trust."

However, a small number of markets disagree that they would prefer to use / give their families recognised brands (28% overall), in particular 70% in Hungary disagree, followed by the USA and France, 49% and 48% respectively.

But what about the pharmacists' view when it comes to branded products?

Contrary to the consumer view in France, pharmacists consider brands to play an important role, says Marc Papanicola, Managing Director of Synovate France.

"Pharmacists feel that it is easier to recommend a well known drug than an unknown one. Patients like to buy medication they have heard of through an advertising campaign or because people around them have already used it. This reassures them about the efficacy. Therefore, the awareness of a brand among patients is really important for pharmacists. Last but not least, pharmacists, of course, look at their margin: they don't have the same margin with all brands. They will therefore recommend brands which are financially favourable for them, depending on what has originally been negotiated with the pharmaceutical company."Â Â

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