

Adding value to ingredients with education

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Executive Summary:

Ingredient selection and purchasing is an increasingly time-consuming, painful process for developers of finished dietary supplements and healthy foods. Imagine sprinting up the ridge of a tall mountain, past trap doors and unsteady footing, and you can imagine the life of a product developer.

Effective customer education is ‘clinically proven’ to prevent failures, ease pain, and ultimately save time and money. In the increasingly stringent business and regulatory environment of supplement ingredients, bulletproof scientific documentation makes all the difference. Listed below are six main requirements of a good customer education program:

1. It effectively communicates value.

Whether ingredients are generic, or branded and value-added, there are cost-effective ways to significantly boost the value proposition: by making sure **supporting information communicates value**.

Solutions: Develop and share technical content, data sheets, research summaries, white papers, test reports and full-blown dossiers – they reliably add credibility, transparency and value to the product and the customer’s perception of you.



Customers have a lot to choose from. Communicating the value of your product is critical to success.

2. It positions your ingredients:

Ironclad technical specs and strong scientific and safety data are huge investments, but not many consider investing in developing market positioning targeted for success.

The Positioning “Litmus Test”: **Justify the cost of your ingredient compared to the competition.**

There are thousands of ingredients that serve as potential alternatives, and cost is often the most important purchasing criteria. Yet **value** has rapidly become the more important distinction for health products. *Knowing exactly what sets ingredients apart, and powerfully illustrating those differences, work to shift your customer’s focus from cost to value.*

Key Solutions: Competitive analysis, IP review, distribution analysis and niche application evaluations can ensure that ingredients are positioned to reach their maximum sales potential.

3. It balances cost vs. substantiation:

Dosage determination is a central linchpin of product value, is the highest contributor to cost and predicts ingredient success and compliance. Striking the balance between cost and effective dose is a time-consuming and frustrating process for most product developers.

Key Solutions: Providing your customers with **thorough evidence for dosing** can make their lives easier in many ways, and is a proven win-win proposition.

4. It suggests new applications:

Staying up to speed on the research, and distinguishing your ingredients in ways different from everyone else is key to getting the right customers.

Key Solutions: Create, find and use new and existing science to tell a story, create “specialness”, and discover new markets.

5. It explains “Quality”:

Today’s consumers expect quality, so turn your quality strengths into a benefit.

Maybe your ingredient is subject to advanced testing methods, or you have a direct relationship with the manufacturing facility.

Key Solutions: Effectively communicating the quality of your ingredients (by presenting your strengths in the form of unbiased, independent scientific data) helps you gain credibility, and helps product developers quickly recognize why **you** are the expert supplier they should vouch for.

6. It’s available immediately:

Today’s product developers work on a tight schedule. How fast you respond to inquiries is critical to getting the sale.

Key Solutions: Having technical, scientific and safety dossiers prepared in advance often makes the difference between getting and losing a potential customer.

*For more information on **ingredient education programs**, contact NaturPro:
<http://naturproscientific.com/contact-us/>
or call (317) 727-9173.*