

A web page should be accurate, interesting, and up-to-date, but how can this be done?



Who is looking for boring websites? Can they express the experience of science? Science is challenge and adventure also in the future.

# Bring life to life-science websites

by Francis de Andrade published in the biovalley magazine



BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

## E-information systems for the life sciences

Nowadays the Internet is a company's global showroom. It reflects developments in corporate activity and corporate culture and is ultimately an instrument of public relations. It's a fascinating new technology but should be used to present information in a user-friendly way, not just to pile up data. The life sciences rely on accuracy and this also applies to life science web sites - but it's not easy to maintain accuracy in a medium like the Internet, which is constantly changing. Information can be presented more quickly than with any print media but the price of speed is often a web page that is a patchwork of individual contributions.

## Life science companies need a visually powerful presence on the Internet:

Complex scientific material in particular needs to be well illustrated in order to be understood and appreciated. The Internet is more like television than like print media. This means that people are not going to be willing to read extensive texts, but they will look at charts, pictures, and illustrations. Animation and interaction can be very useful. They make processes understandable and they are fun. With "Flash" technology, animation is no longer a problem on the Internet, but only a few people have thus far mastered the use of this technology. For example, an animated presentation of cell division can be transmitted as quickly as a still picture, and is far more effective than a long-winded explanation.

## Consistent visual identity of the site = trustworthy life science company

In the eyes of the public it's to measure the good website. Ask for clear definitions when the content shall be texted. The processes and systems must be explained not for experts only. Don't hide the companies culture and philosophy (e.g. values and vision). The internet is a visual media, so main evidence is on the graphic design and layout confidence building appearance of the site.

Scientific data in and of themselves are very dry and will be left unread by most people.

Therefore, it is essential to draw up a good plan and present the data in an appealing way.

Once a web page has been designed, companies must have the means of updating it whenever necessary. This is called "content management" and it requires intelligent process design.



To make a better communication in-between doctor and patient:



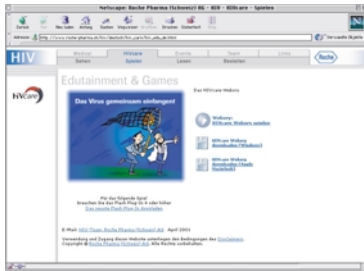
A website can be entertaining without sacrificing scientific accuracy. An example is Roche's HIV Care site which presents a complex subject as a cartoon (<http://www.roche-pharma.ch/hiv>).



## E-commerce solutions for life science companies

Nowadays, the Internet is a major vehicle for advertising and an important source of information. But the Internet is inundated with websites, so you have to do what it takes to make your site stand out!

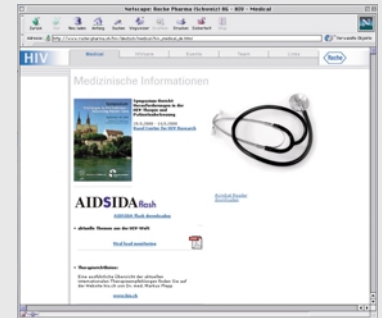
In the business to business area, different ordering systems have proven effective. An "e-shop" can only work well if it provides a good search engine, scientific product information, and all necessary data on delivery and availability of products. Customers should be able to place their orders at least as easily as by phone. The ordering system put in place for the "e-shop" must be completely coordinated with the general ordering system at the company. If it is, this will contribute to the success of the company and to the loyalty of its customers.



## Structure, layout, navigation

You can attract new customers if you have a clear web strategy. Lots of Internet surfers leave a website right away not only because it takes too long to download the pictures, but also because they can figure out how the website works and they find it just too hard to navigate from one point to another.

Good Webmasters like MdA Business Communications offer you clear and easily navigable web pages with just the right graphic design, and with eye-catching flash animation.



Quality depends on the contributions of an interdisciplinary team.

The best partner for a company interested in setting up a website is a consulting firm with experience in public-client relations which can call upon the services of a team of experts. Internet projects are always team projects.

## Pharmaceutical information and sales on the Internet

The OTC market has brought with it an expansion of the business to consumer sector. Life science companies have reacted to this trend by establishing patient-orientated product information websites. An example of this is <http://www.consumer-health.novartis.com>.

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Here, too, the company bears responsibility for the correctness, accuracy and patient-friendliness of the language of the information in question.

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Thank you for friendly support and permission to this presentation:  
Roche Pharma Switzerland Ltd., Novabiochem Ltd. (Merck D),  
Universitätsklinikum Basel, Novartis Pharma International, and  
<http://www.Businessgames.ch>

## Business to Business life science solutions

Some examples for B-to-B solutions are  
<http://www.novabiochem.com>  
Resolved in a team with MdA Business Communications  
And others like  
<http://www.sigma.com> and  
<http://www.fluka.com>.

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