



Aerie Pharmaceuticals leveraged state-of-the-art cloud technology to optimize two flagship product launches.

CASE STUDY: REVO Analytics™

A Clear Vision of the Future

Empowering an emerging pharma company with an advanced data and analytics platform

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While launching a pharmaceutical product is never a cake walk, launching a drug within a chronic disease space presents its own unique challenges. How can emerging pharma companies target a market that's already well-established and compete against the bigger players?

For Aerie Pharmaceuticals, which focuses on addressing the unmet needs of patients suffering from glaucoma and other conditions of the eye, part of the answer was superior data and analytics supported by an advanced technology solution. By enhancing their sales strategies with better insights, Aerie hoped to make a compelling entrance into the market.

The Problem

Over a period of 18 months, Aerie was preparing to introduce its two flagship prescription eye drops. However, the chronic disease space is distinct from other markets, serving a patient population that has been living longer than ever before, compelling companies to consider larger up-front investments in their infrastructure and capabilities that allow them to better serve those patients and their doctors down the road. Aerie was determined to make the most of this early window of opportunity.

"We wanted as efficient and effective a launch as possible, so we said, 'Let's not do this in increments.' We wanted to go from zero to 60, instead of zero to 20 to 40 to 60," said Gerry McKenzie, vice president of commercial operations.

Aerie needed a reliable analytics platform to help equip the sales reps with the data and insights they needed to engage their physician customers more successfully. "In addition to buying data and making the supplier relationships, we would need a reliable platform to mine the data, process the data, QC the data, distribute the data, and do problem-solving, 'what-if' style analyses," McKenzie said. From there, Aerie started looking for the right project partner to help develop an innovative tech solution.

The Solution

Aerie was looking for a partner that had extensive experience in the pharmaceutical industry, a history of collaborating with a wide range of clients—from startups to larger firms—and broad expertise that would assist Aerie in scaling the solution across different verticals, such as incentive compensation or sales alignment. ZS fit that bill and also brought tech and analytics proficiency to the table. A significant factor in Aerie's decision to work with ZS was its industry-specific REVO Analytics™ platform, an analytics product built with cloud services from Amazon Web Services (AWS). "[With a data platform], it's what's under the hood that counts," McKenzie said. "I knew the users would appreciate that the QC process would be reliable, and the information itself would always be pressure-tested."

For the purposes of this project, ZS focused on five specific facets of what REVO could offer: home office executive reporting, field reporting, managed markets, the medical



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affairs dashboard and master data management. The team was determined to adapt REVO Analytics to serve the needs and aspirations of each Aerie stakeholder as well as the sales force. The project team recognized, for example, that a single data report delivered to all levels of the organization would be cumbersome: Some sections would be too specific for some audiences but not specific enough for others. As such, one highly valuable function of the platform would be its capacity to provide multiple reports, giving the data team greater control over delivery and quality, and allowing them to manage expectations within each group of stakeholders. The result of this close collaboration was a product that leveraged the out-of-box capabilities of REVO alongside Aerie-specific customizations to provide a robust, effective and scalable solution offering several key functions to the sales force:

- + Reps can check data immediately and look into their goals
- + Reps receive immediate calls to action
- + Reps have the capacity to look more closely at individual customers and create more successful strategies
- + Reps receive immediate feedback on their call effectiveness

“What the tool is helping Aerie accomplish is helping reps know what to look for,” said Akshay Mehta, the ZS project lead for the engagement. “If they see a change in trend, they can ask why the change is happening and consider what actions they might need to take to reverse that trend. Within that framework, the tool is helping the reps on a day-in, day-out basis.”

The Impact

The success of the REVO Analytics tool can be measured in part by how rapidly the capability was introduced to the sales force, empowering Aerie to better engage its customer base as its products hit the market. “Achieving operational excellence at the pace we did allows a small company like Aerie to effectively compete in the marketplace with much bigger players,” said Tad Heitmann, Aerie’s head of communications. “The sophistication of the robust, actionable platform that Aerie and ZS have built together is enabling our commercial organization to operate at a higher level. We’re educating the sales force to optimize the use of their resources, to be better consumers of data and to expect more from the data they are consuming.”

According to Heitmann, the platform is “a living organism” and its capabilities will continue to evolve as Aerie gains ground in the market. Although the company is currently focused on the near-term benefits of the capability, ZS and Aerie have committed to maintaining weekly conversations about how the tool is working and what else the tool might provide in the future.

“What’s most important about your partner is the quality of the people—their ability to flex to your need and speak your language,” McKenzie said. “Every meeting I’ve had with ZS, the people ask how they can help us to make our business better. I knew we could count on the support and the culture [of ZS].”

ZS is a professional services firm that works side by side with companies to help develop and deliver products that drive customer value and company results. We leverage our deep industry expertise, leading-edge analytics, technology and strategy to create solutions that work in the real world. With more than 35 years of experience and 6,000-plus ZSers in more than 20 offices worldwide, we are passionately committed to helping companies and their customers thrive. To learn more, visit www.zs.com or follow us on Twitter and LinkedIn.