



A complimentary publication of LetterPressMD Editorial Services

Drug Company Review Committees: Running the Gauntlet

It's crunch time with your biggest client. The internal review team pores over your copy submission. And things aren't going very well.

"This is off-label promotion. We can't go there."

"I spotted three typos."

"You can't make revisions to boilerplate information."

"Reference 12 is not from an authoritative source."

Ill-prepared copy submissions can wreak havoc on client-agency relationships.

Poorly worded copy with inaccurate annotations and typographic errors can rattle an internal review team's confidence in an agency. Moreover, the drug company

may then have to expend extra resources to whip the submission into shape.

There are many reasons why the quality of copy submissions has declined in recent years.

Ever-tightening deadlines encourage direct-to-layout submissions and reduced editorial oversight. A proliferation of understaffed startup agencies has played a contributing role. Increased workloads can tax staff editorial resources.

But perhaps the biggest culprit has been the melding of the three traditionally separate tasks of editorial review—content editing/fact-checking, copyediting and proofreading—into one "do it all" function.

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That's the Fact, Jack: Annotating to Impress

There's nothing more frustrating to a drug company review team than poorly annotated copy.

Secondary and unauthoritative sources, as well as stylistically inconsistent annotations, can spoil what otherwise might have been a smooth internal review.

Here are some tips to avoid the pitfalls of botched annotations:

1) Use *primary* references. In other words, do not use sources that cite other sources for their data. If a reference credits the National Cancer Institute for the information you're using, note or find the National Cancer Institute citation and obtain that reference as your source.

2) Use *authoritative* sources. If you're citing data from a phase III trial of your client's drug, use the original article that presented the trial's results as your source. Do not rely on review articles or other sources that mention the trial in passing.

3) Be cautious when citing online sources. With all of the clutter and misinformation on the Internet, make sure that any Web-based citations you use are both primary and authoritative. Check to see that the Web site represents a professional organization with expertise in the area you're researching.

4) Be consistent in your annotative style. Example: [Smith et al, 1989, p 387, col 1, ¶ 4].



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Running the Gauntlet

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Originally intended to control costs and streamline operations, the all-in-one editor concept has compromised quality control in the copy review process by reducing or eliminating oversight.

It has also largely eliminated the mentoring required to properly train editors new to health care communications.

In an industry where subpar copy submissions are becoming the norm, agencies that effectively address this problem will stand out in the eyes of their clients—and their clients' review teams.

The agency that "starts off on the right foot" by ensuring that its copy is clear and accurate at every stage of review will enjoy both fundamentally sound client relationships and frequent repeat business.

Superior Copy, Content Clients

With both agency and drug company experience, LetterPressMD principals Joe Orsini and Julianne Augusta are well aware of the hurdles agencies daily face with their clients.

"Our belief is that, key to the agency-drug company relationship, is the

commitment to accuracy, clarity and integrity in communications," says Joe. "And that's what we're all about."

From expert assistance with client copy submissions to help with managing workloads, LetterPressMD has the solutions to your editorial problems.

About LetterPressMD Editorial Services

LetterPressMD is the health care communications field's first professionally managed satellite editorial department.

LPMD provides the full range of quality-controlled services for print, audio and

digital communications, serving clients on an as-needed basis.

Let us show you what we can do for you. Call Joe Orsini, President and Editorial Director, at 212.422.2087 for a complimentary consultation today.

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