Creating Innovative Collaborative Relationships Between Industry and Academia

Larson Hicks
Clinical Account Executive
About Me

• New Saint Andrew’s College - Liberal Arts & Culture

• Product Manager - Economic Modeling Specialists International

• 2014 – hired as Clinical Site Product Manager at CBio
  – Clinical Account Executive

• 5 children (+ 1 on the way!)
Conversant Bio - Overview

- Huntsville, AL based company started in 2006
  - ~70 employees
- Partner with hospitals and clinics (~60 sites)
  - 12 academic hospitals
  - 500+ participating physicians
  - Embedded study coordinators at many sites
Conversant Bio - Overview

• Core competency in custom, complex projects to match exact researcher needs
  – 60% prospective / 40% inventory
  – 200+ active projects (5,000+ completed)

• 98%+ of customers are biopharma companies
  – 26 of top 30 biopharmas are repeat clients

• Vision: Because patients are waiting

• Mission: Improve human health by connecting patients, medical professionals and the research community to catalyze breakthrough research and novel therapeutic solutions
# Helping Researchers Succeed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Benefit to Researchers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer Success Program</td>
<td>Coordinate fulfillment of project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRB Approval</td>
<td>We handle regulatory details</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site Coordinators</td>
<td>Recruit patients/ensure sample integrity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to Patient Records</td>
<td>Deep clinical data</td>
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<tr>
<td>High Quality Samples</td>
<td>Low return rate, ISO Certified</td>
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Sales/Marketing - YTD 2017

Outreach - 34,746

Meetings - 827
- 703 F2F Visits
- 124 Phone Meetings

Project Quotes - 1,263

Projects - 868
Case Study #1 - Aurora

Situation

Very high-throughput biobank set up for longitudinal GWAS

• Large collection: 120,000 consents (75,000 cases)

Problems

• **Budget**
  >$2MM in set-up costs
  ~$200K/year operating costs
  – Maintenance contracts

• **Utilization**

• **Identity Crisis**
  – Concern about biobank value/ROI and public perception
  – Biorepository mission?
Case Study #1 - Aurora

Solutions

Identity Crisis

- **Strategic planning**
  - Biobank business plan

- Investigators

- Patient Survey

Utilization and Budget

- Legal and Tissue Access Committee
- Tissue+Blood Project (1yr +)
Case Study #2 - Southern US University

Situation

Longitudinal AML BMMC collection
> 20 years

Problems

Utilization

Unknown Quality
• Random QC every ~2 years
• QC Metrics: pre-freeze cell counts & viability
• Several different collection and processing SOPs

Budget Cut (25%)
Case Study #2 - Southern US University

Solutions

Quality
• QC/Validation Study
  1 vial per case + 3 vials from 3 cases
  – cell count
  – post-thaw viability
  – consistency (collection & case)
• Debrief re: SOPs and lessons learned

Utilization and Budget
• Legal - first commercial partnership
• University kept 5 aliquots with annotation
• CBio purchased >200 aliquots
• Prospective AML project
Case Study #3 - Eastern US Institute

Situation

• Community hospital transitioning to research hospital
• Wanted to create biobank of fresh frozen tissue and plasma
  – Lacked resources and expertise

Solutions

• CBio helped build biorepository
  – Obtained IRB approval for collection study
  – Hired, trained, funded, and managed coordinator
  – Supported patient ID/targeting
• CBio and institute split the tissue
Other Collaborative Projects

- FFPE / TMA project
- State biobank workflow project
- Gene panel annotation
Highlights/Benefits of Partnership

- Utilization of biobank resources
- Improvement via “Perfect Practice” (Yo-Yo Ma)
- Lower internal service charge rates
- Show Mission ROI – advance research!!

Because Patients are Waiting
Questions

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