



What Doctors Want

Charlene Prounis

MDs are disenchanted with standard sales calls, but reps can change that.

An online survey points the way.

having a detrimental effect on sales and, even more important, on the power of the sales call—pharma’s primary marketing tool.

Together, US pharma companies’ field forces have swelled to more than 80,000 reps—a 31 per cent jump in the last two years alone—yet doctors’ available time is fixed or shrinking. As a result, Scott-Levin reports, the average length of a sales rep visit has fallen from four minutes in 1998 to a paltry 90 seconds today, and even 30-second “hallway visits” are commonplace. In fact, 43 percent of sales reps’ visits end at the receptionist’s desk.

Every relationship has its ups and downs, and the bond between pharma sales reps and the doctors they detail is no exception.

The field force “arms race” of the last decade has created a rift between physicians and reps that is

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