

Product Evaluation Groups

Introduction

Positive Impact (PI) has seen an opportunity for getting manufacturers and eyecare practitioners (ECP) together with the mutually beneficial goal of evaluating and discussing new products and services those companies are planning to launch. These meetings, known as Product Evaluation Groups (PEG) are held at numerous venues around the country on a rotational schedule throughout the year.

Objectives

These meetings have 2 principle objectives:

1. For the company to get feedback on their new product or service
2. For the ECP to get the heads-up on these new products and give input into how they might or might not fit into their practice

PEG Format

These meetings are chaired by an independent facilitator who details the product as previously briefed by the client. Following this detail the facilitator encourages the ECP to discuss various points about the product, again from the brief provided in advance by the client.

The meetings are held in a relaxed meeting room environment within a hotel (or similar venue). The meeting will be recorded and notes kept by PI. The client hears the feedback for themselves via an unedited digital audio recording with a full written transcript available if required (PI is also evaluating live remote web access to the discussions).

The format of the meeting can be seen below:

Frequency of meetings	3 – 4 per year
Size of groups	8 – 10 ECP per meeting
No of products	4 per meeting
Time dedicated to each product	30 minutes – 10 minutes presentation – 20 minutes discussion
Venues	Manchester, Greater London, Birmingham, Glasgow, Southampton, Newcastle
Cost	Written transcript: £900 per product per PEG Digital recording: £750 per product per PEG

The Eyecare Practitioners (ECP)

PI has a database of proactive independent ECP who are invited to participate in the PEG. Unlike many KOL/focus groups these meetings look at the commercial opportunity rather than focus on the clinical/technical benefits. Clearly the clinical or technical benefits impact on the commercial decision but, importantly this will not be the focus of the PEG.

Each ECP will attend due to their own interest in seeing the latest product offerings ahead of the competition and having the opportunity to give their opinion of them. A token honorarium is made to the ECP to ensure we have truly proactive and motivated people who are genuinely interested in participating in full. PI will reimburse any travel expenses incurred in getting to the meeting venue.

Conclusion

Product Evaluation Groups provide the optical industry with a convenient and cost effective way of researching ECP opinion into new products and specifically their marketing and launch plans. This will help ensure a successful launch and, whilst not the main objective of participation, likely provide potentially valuable initial sales from early adopters.