

Practitioners and the Dietary Supplement Market in 2014



Most industries take basic Web capabilities, such as offering essential information about the business and some basic communication capability, for granted — but the medical industry can't. Physicians and other health professionals have been late to the party and now have some catching up to do. When Forrester Research asked consumers about medical Web capabilities such as a site with basic practice information, only 30% said their primary doctor's office offers these solutions. Worse, only a small fraction of consumers whose doctor does offer them has taken advantage of the online capabilities.

To boost patient adoption and satisfaction, Healthcare Professionals need to focus on the basics: core user-centered design principles and active promotion of site capabilities to meet user goals.

PureRXO was created to address consumers reporting low utilization and only moderate satisfaction with healthcare practitioner web sites.

PureRXO is the only comprehensive, full-service website solution specifically designed for integrative healthcare professionals.

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Executive Summary

The retail market for dietary supplements is large and mature, but Internet and Practitioner supplement sales are growing at record double-digit rates.

Supplement sales on the Internet totaled an estimated \$2B in 2013 and are growing at 15%-20% annually. Practitioner direct supplement sales totaled \$2.9 billion in 2013 and are growing 10%-15% annually.

It is little wonder the sales of these products are expanding. The use of more integrated, Complementary-alternative medicine (CAM) therapies, including dietary supplements, presents a win/win scenario for both patients and healthcare practitioners (HCPs), who see more preventative and natural options as a last resort to address the proliferating chronic health issues in the aging U.S. population.

Now HCPs of all kinds, especially growing numbers of classically trained physicians, see that integrated protocols and nutritionally based supplements are effective, safe and affordable. What's more, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) will be providing new incentives and opportunities for HCPs who jump on this bandwagon.

For the roughly 50,000 healthcare practitioners (HCPs) already selling dietary supplements in the United States, and the many others who are considering it, there is a viable opportunity to sell dietary supplements, more efficiently and profitably to their patients via online dispensaries.

Executive Summary

The reasons are elegantly simple:

1. Practitioners don't have to buy, manage or sell inventory out of their offices
2. Online dispensaries increase patient compliance and positive health outcomes
3. Built-in communication tools deepen the practitioner/patient relationship
4. By fulfilling patient supplements online, practitioners increase repeat purchases

HCPs see they have little choice but to consider supplement sales, yet they still harbor concerns about supplement product quality and consistency, as well as staying current in the latest developments in product innovation, ingredient science and treatment protocols. Essentially, they need a business partner who can help them manage all the new aspects of an integrated practice, from customer services to assessing manufacturers and products, and monitoring industry developments and regulatory concerns. Online supplement fulfillment centers can offer these services.

PureRXO.com, for example, is a leading online dispensary that allows HCPs to quickly and easily create custom online supplement stores for their practices, so they don't have to buy, manage or sell inventory out of their offices. PureRXO.com sites also include practice management, digital marketing and patient communication tools that enable HCPs to increase the lifetime value of their supplement-buying patients.

Thank you to PureRXO.com for sponsoring this whitepaper on Dietary Supplements and the Healthcare Practitioner.

Dietary Supplements & Healthcare Practitioners

Approximately 50,000 HCPs actively sell dietary supplements to their patients to the tune of \$2.9 billion in 2013 annual U.S. consumer sales, according to *Nutrition Business Journal*. Approximately 225-250 companies manufacture and market supplements through HCPs in the U.S.

Two primary national distributors, Natural Partners and Emerson Ecologics, broker 15%-20% of the channel sales between manufacturers/marketers and HCPs. The rest is sold direct from manufacturer to practitioner.



More than 80% of HCPs sell supplements out of their offices and 19% do not. Why? It's a hassle. The research shows practitioners want to focus on their patients and not the business of ordering, inventorying and selling supplements. However, there is a lot of incremental income to be made in selling supplements. In fact, 26% of chiropractors make between \$30,000 and \$50,000 annually from direct sales to their patients.

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