

news

CLUE

May/June 2001

Cultural & Linguistic Understanding of Ethnicity®

Marketing Medical Products in the EU

Europe represents the **largest export market** for US medical product companies, accounting for 44% of all US medical device exports. With over 376 million consumers, the European Union accounts for 24% of all global medical device consumption.

In addition to its sheer size and sales potential, American medical companies find Europe attractive because they usually can get regulatory approval for their product faster, and bring their product to the market years before they can sell it in the U.S.

Yet, in their marketing approach, U.S. companies often don't take into consideration critical **communications and cultural issues** that can become roadblocks to their success.

Brand Identity

It may take years to establish a U.S. brand in the European market, and many medical manufacturers work with distributors until they have gained enough market share to justify direct distribution. Building and maintaining a strong identity for your corporate or product brand is critical during that time, so you don't have to start at ground zero in building brand awareness and preference when you eventually decide to go direct. One way of accomplishing this is to maintain control of your product advertising and marketing communications.

Product Naming

Medical products are often named by the product developers rather than the marketing team, and too often they are named with an American rather than an international audience in mind.

Names intended to be clever plays on words in the English language may work great in the US and perhaps in England, but lose their intended meaning in other languages where the name is no longer as clever or meaningful.

Creative Preferences

Whether you are marketing to professional or consumer audiences, you will find that

Europeans have different creative and design preferences, from the imagery selected to the way a brochure is laid out.

If your budget does not allow for creative testing before rolling out a pan-European campaign, make sure your design agency possesses a **multicultural design vocabulary and expertise**.

Content of Communications

What information your European audiences expect to receive may also differ from what you provide to your U.S. audiences. There are specific European regulations that govern what kind of information that has to be included in the packaging of a medical product. Yet, the differences in content may also be determined by differences in healthcare practices, medical procedures or hospital protocols, attitudes towards a medical treatment, and by other cultural sensitivities or taboos.

Working closely with your European representatives, your agency should be able to identify the right content and express it in a way that is appropriate for the market and culture.

Languages

The EU has **15 official languages** which can turn the production of any communication piece into a nightmare if handled by an agency inexperienced in multicultural communications.

Packaging and labeling information and other advertising materials intended for the consumer have to be provided in the market languages. For advertising and communication materials for professional medical audiences, the languages required are determined by the medium or by the respective national regulatory bodies.

Finally, no matter how many languages your brand has to speak, it is important to **maintain consistency** in the message while providing **culturally relevant and market appropriate information**.

CREO

International can help you successfully market your products in Europe.

We offer technical expertise and knowledge of all European languages, cultures, and customer preferences.



INTERNATIONAL

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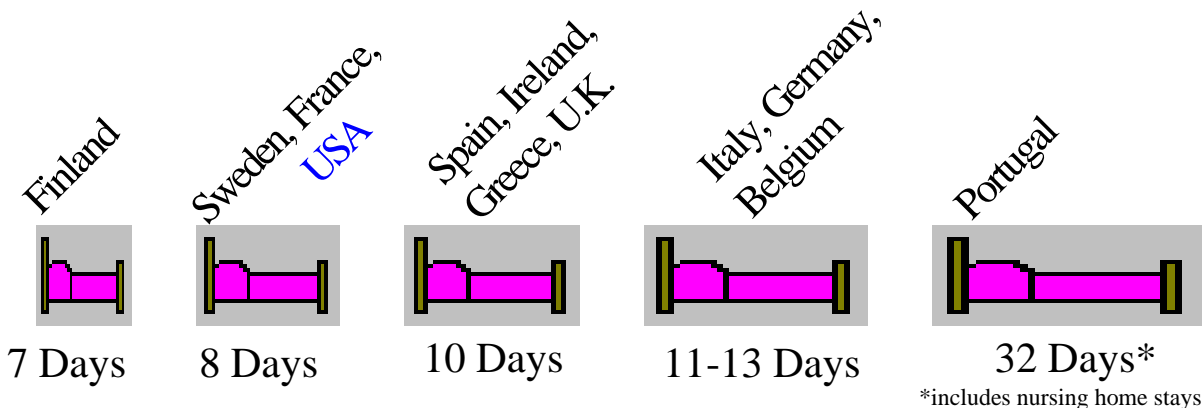
Marketing



Did you know that spas are considered medical treatment in Europe? European doctors often prescribe water, mud and other spa treatments to their patients.

Statistics

**Average Length of Hospital Stay in Days (rounded)
in selected European Countries vs. the United States.**



Upcoming Conferences

**15th Annual Biomedical Focus
Conference**

July 16-17, 2001

**Touchstone Energy Place
at RiverCentre, St Paul, MN**

For more information call (651) 779-1824
or visit www.mnasq.org

MEDICA 2001

November 21-24, 2001

Düsseldorf, Germany

For more information visit
www.messe-dusseldorf.de/medica2001/

European Holidays

May-June

May 1st - Labor Day
(All European Countries)

May 8th - Fête de la Victoire 1945
(Victory Day, France)

May 24th - Christi Himmelfahrt
(Ascension Day, Germany)

June 2nd - Republic Day (Italy)

June 6th - National Day (Sweden)

In our next issue of CLUE: *Census 2000 Findings: update on ethnic markets.*

CLUE Newsletter

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Sources: <http://www.ita.doc.gov/td/mdequip/mrabrochure.html>; Market: Europe™