

Ancillary Products and Services, Emphasizing

Chair and Speaker:

Nancy Collins

Greenbranch Publishing
Phoenix, Maryland

Speaker:

Richard F Tischler Jr

RF Tischler Jr & Associates Inc
Mt Airy, Maryland

Reporter:

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Ancillary products can expand a journal's business, tie its customers to it more closely, help in testing new products, and increase a journal's profits, according to Nancy Collins of Greenbranch Publishing.

Once a journal has invested in editorial content and marketing, creating ancillary products that use those resources allows the investments to "collect interest", Collins said.

Examples of ancillary products are special reports or white papers, packaged reprints, directories, conferences, value-added Web sites, book series, and commercial sponsorship. In one kind of commercial sponsorship, pharmaceutical com-

panies or medical-equipment companies send your journal to physicians in training, Collins explained. This could attract new customers for both your journal and your other ancillary products. If you plan to create packages of information on particular topics to sell as ancillary products, a searchable database of your journal's text is essential, she said.

To get started, Collins said, "ask subscribers what they want and give it to them." She suggested using surveys and focus groups, making random calls to subscribers, and asking customers to fax ideas to the editorial office. She also suggested surveying authors and editorial-board members and talking with customer-service representatives; they are on the front lines, dealing with subscriber requests and complaints every day.

To prepare for product development, you should explore the possibility of partnering with other organizations, Collins said; this will "fill in the gaps in your proprietary material." And be sure to point out this added value to your customers.

Airline flight delays prevented the second speaker for this session, Richard Tischler, from attending. His presentation on continuing medical education (CME), titled "To CME Or Not To

CME", was delivered by Collins.

Why add CME to your journal? It can add "an extra level of credibility" and transform your company's image from publisher to educator.

In 1998 there were 632 nationally accredited sponsors of CME. Of these, 15 were publishing companies—up from just two a few years ago. Survey results published in *Medical Meetings* (26, (1), Jan/Feb 1999) indicated that 19% of people seeking CME obtain it by reading journals.

It is important to play by the rules of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (www.accme.org) when you decide to add CME to your publication. You can obtain a document from ACCME that outlines the processes needed. In addition, the Alliance for Continuing Medical Education (www.acme-assn.org) has an annual meeting and produces a newsletter on CME.

Other sources of information and help in the realm of CME are

- state medical societies
- American Medical Association (www.ama-assn.org)
- American Academy of Family Physicians (www.aafp.org)
- Food and Drug Administration (www.fda.gov) 

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