Reality in Real Time

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By MIKE AUERBACH, Editor in Chief, *Pharmaceutical Processing*

Here's my proposal — force all television reality shows to be done in real time and here are my reasons why this would ultimately help the pharmaceutical industry.

Remember the television show *24*? Throughout its run, Kiefer Sutherland played a federal agent trying to save the United States from one disaster after another. The show's gimmick was that each episode was actually 60 minutes of "real" time — no shortcuts, no compressing of time, no flashbacks or flash forwards. If it didn't happen in that hour of time, it had to wait for the next episode.

Today's reality shows (not the *Real Housewives* type — the "fix it up and flip it" type) don't employ this technique. In fact, they all do exactly the opposite. They show us a project that really take weeks and months to finish being compressed and edited down to a very tidy 30- or 60-minute program.

Not only has the time been shortened — but these shows also make everything look so easy. If someone can renovate an entire house in 60 minutes, or rebuild a completely rusted out 1968 Dodge Charger in only 30 minutes, is it that far-fetched that people begin to look at the pharmaceutical industry, asking why it takes so long to develop a new drug and why it is so expensive when it finally comes to market?

So here's my solution: Let's have a pharmaceutical industry reality show — in real time — to show everyone exactly what it really takes to bring a drug to market.

Just imagine the daily drama! Starting with the eureka moment at the discovery of a new therapeutic molecule, followed by the arduous clinical trials, the nail-biting FDA review process, then the fits and starts with developing an efficient manufacturing strategy through various scale-up scenarios, then finally success — full-scale manufacturing begins.

Of course, only to be followed by the looming specter of generic competition — throw in a recall or two, and you would have a bona fide hit on your hands!

You would need to commit about 10 to 15 years to truly watch the drama unfold —

but with today's DVRs, you could record the whole thing and watch it whenever you wanted and skip through the commercials.

But then again, that wouldn't be "real" time anymore — would it?

Think I'm onto the next big hit? Or just on something. Let me know what you think by commenting below or emailing mike.auerbach@advantagemedia.com [1].

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