

Acorda TV streaming ad for Parkinson's drug resonates with viewers

by Beth Snyder Bulik on May 17th, 2023



Acorda Therapeutics executives were thinking about doing a broadcast TV commercial for its Parkinson's drug Inbrija last year. However, as its VP of digital strategies Mike Russo pointed out, it was “very very expensive to do that.” So they looked around at other media options — and found a similar, but more cost effective strategy in streaming TV.

Acorda shot a 90-second [commercial](#) and debuted it across 50 streaming services including Disney, Hulu and Paramount in late March. It specifically targeted self-described households that were affected by Parkinson's disease. In conjunction with the wide streaming ads, Acorda also launched complementary digital and social media ads to bolster its message.

The cost of the campaign? About one-tenth of what it would have cost to do broadcast TV, Russo said. Meanwhile, the results have been quite positive. The commercial was viewed more than 2.5 million times in the six weeks since launch and seems to be driving website traffic, which has increased since it began. Acorda is still gathering data about exact lift, but it does know that about 40% of its target physicians have also seen the streaming ad.



Mike Russo

“With streaming, you’re showing the commercial only to folks that meet the targeting criteria. You could think of it like a banner ad, but it’s a TV commercial,” Russo said.

The commercial features two patients (actors) initially in darkened rooms with words such as “I can’t” and “I won’t be able to” appearing on their heads. But then as two walls fall away, the patients step outside into golfing and gardening activities. The actors’ clothing and surrounding scenery reinforce Inbrija’s purple and yellow brand colors.

Inbrija is inhaled levodopa for patients already taking carbidopa/levodopa to use in between regular doses as a rescue med to treat “off” episodes. It was approved in late 2018 and rolled out in March 2019. More options have since come to market — including oral rescue treatment Kyowa Kirin’s Nourianz in 2019 — but even with competitors, Acorda sees opportunity to grow.

“Physicians who’ve been able to figure it out are fairly excited about having options available,” said chief commercial officer Kerry Clem. “But there’s still a significant opportunity for this product to be used. Only a small percentage of patients who could get some benefit from a product like ours have been prescribed and are on treatment — less than 3%.”

Acorda reported Inbrija sales of \$5.6 million in the most recent Q1 earnings and is projecting sales of \$38-\$42 million for the full year.

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