

HiberCell's Early Business Development Strategy for Long-Term Pipeline Development

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On April 28, 2022, HiberCell announced its latest milestone in its plethora of ongoing clinical trials with key industry leaders. The first patients were dosed in Phase 2 combination clinical trials for HiberCell's Odetiglucan and Merck's Keytruda in patients with metastatic breast cancer.

The recent announcement results from HiberCell's strong business development and U.S. market expansion efforts following its 2019 launch. In the few years since, amidst a global pandemic, HiberCell has proven its business to be a formidable player in the international biotechnology market.

A series of strategic collaboration activities have enabled HiberCell to build a multi-tiered portfolio with several avenues for continuous growth.

Geographic Selection Places HiberCell in the Center of NYC's LifeSci Growth

Just 14 days after launching, HiberCell kicked off its business expansion. The startup signed a lease with Taconic Investment Partners and Silverstein Properties and secured new space at the New York-based research hub, [The Hudson Research Center](#).

Rather than starting from scratch with their laboratories, HiberCell collaborated with The Hudson Research Center to build what they needed. Partnering with third-party laboratories can often be less costly and more efficient for startups that require additional support. Hubs often have pre-existing industry associations, enabling you to leverage their network for further connection building.

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In addition, at the time, New York City (NYC) was still an up-and-coming biotechnology hub. Mayor Bill de Blasio announced the LifeSci NYC initiative in 2016 to accelerate the NYC life sciences industry. The \$500M initiative was announced on top of Governor Andrew Cuomo's \$650M plan for life science development throughout New York, totaling a potential pool of \$1,150M for emerging developers.

Selecting NYC as their primary destination for research development was highly strategic, placing HiberCell at the center of the state's innovation.

Jumpstarting Industry Demand Through Strategic Thought Leadership Content

At the end of 2019, HiberCell made headlines not for a published research paper but for thought leadership content.

Former HiberCell CEO Alan Rigby and Co-Founder and Chief Business Officer Ari Nowacek teamed up to write a contributed article for Nature.com, the world's leading multidisciplinary science journal. Entitled "Pioneering the Discovery and Development of Novel Therapeutics to Prevent Metastasis," the sponsored article sought to examine new therapeutic opportunities within cancer treatment better. By investigating and outlining the current failures of cancer treatment trials, HiberCell's thought leaders showcase the significant unmet gaps for patients who are "cured" by these methods: cancer relapsed for the majority.

After examining the problem, HiberCell positioned its technology as the solution to these therapeutic gaps. Through the article, HiberCell communicated its ultimate value for patients and life science developers with this therapeutic issue.

Did this positioning work?

If you Google "HiberCell story," the article is the number one SERP result, signaling its popularity today.

The developer also announced the first in a series of companion diagnostic trials with other life science developers just one month after the article was published.

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Expanding Companion Diagnostic Partners, Collaborators, and Acquisitions

On January 13, 2020, HiberCell and Biodesix, a leading diagnostic company focused on lung disease, initiated a collaboration to test HiberCell's immunotherapy for companion diagnostics in multiple Biodesix Imprime PGG oncology programs.

HiberCell further accelerated within this sphere by announcing the acquisition of a different developer, Biothera's Imprime PGG Program, in July 2020. Acquiring the program placed this designation under HiberCell's title. To lead the indication, HiberCell brought on Biothera President Jeremy R. Graff as the Chief Development Officer of HiberCell.

From there, HiberCell's acquisitions, collaborations, and partnerships exploded.

A month before receiving FDA approval in 2021, HiberCell massively expanded its oncology toolkit by acquiring Genuity Science. The deal strengthened HiberCell's company positioning ahead of approval, accelerating clinical programs, expanding their preclinical pipeline, integrating artificial intelligence and machine learning strategies, and improving their balance sheet.

The acquisition ultimately placed HiberCell in the best possible pre-approval position.

After receiving the Fast Track Designation from the FDA in August, HiberCell landed on Merck's radar, fully prepared to do so.

On December 14, 2021, HiberCell announced their collaboration with Merck on combination trials of Odetiglucan with Keytruda.

Ultimately, HiberCell's strong initial business development foundation and expansion efforts since 2019 have contributed to its success today.

Developers seeking to ride a similar wave must monitor market trends, determine vital geographical areas for penetration, and create content that communicates their ultimate value to potential partners.

- Content by the BDMT Global Team

If you are interested in potential partnerships and long-term relationships with the companies mentioned in this article or others in the U.S. and/or S. Korea, contact Suzy at sim@bdmtglobal.com.

Suzy Im



As the head of BDMT Global in Boston, Im focuses on accelerating the innovative transformation of global companies. She is a Professor of Marketing and a member of the Advisory Board at Emerson College. Im is also co-founder of Sponsors of the Future, a non-profit organization that leads corporate social responsibility, promoting neurodiversity and inclusion. As a well-known business developer and marketing strategist in the global field for over 20 years, Im merged the two critical global business functions of Business Development (BD) and Marketing Transformation (MT) for the first time. She was recognized for her innovative business model and contribution and received five consecutive awards in the U.S. including the North American Business Awards and TITAN Business Award 2022 in Biotechnology.

