

Participation in the Supplement OWL Critical for Responsible Industry

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Much has changed in the dietary supplement industry over the past five years. We've witnessed steady growth in supplement usage, spikes in supplement sales, innovative product development and have seen hot trends and ingredients come, go or stay. Over the last year we've confronted and continue to face challenges brought on by the pandemic. Amid the changes and challenges, at least one industry need has remained the same, the need for increased transparency in the dietary supplement marketplace.

More than four years ago, CRN and responsible industry explicitly recognized the need to provide a clearer picture of the dietary supplement marketplace. Having experienced challenges in 2015, industry paused and explored ways to improve and strengthen the market.

Responsible industry saw then, and continues to see now, that regulators should know what dietary supplement products and ingredients are in the marketplace and who sells them. Companies who manufacture and market dietary supplements have a responsibility to share this basic information with regulators to give them a better understanding of the industry.

In 2017, CRN answered this need and launched the Supplement OWL (Online Wellness Library), the dietary supplement industry's self-regulatory product registry. Serving as an industry-wide self-regulatory initiative, the Supplement OWL continues to be a vital program to provide a clearer picture of the dietary supplement marketplace for regulators, legislators, retailers, industry and consumers. The registry provides an image of the product label along with separate fields of information on ingredients, dosage form, serving size, allergen statements, product claims, contact details and other information.

Today, the Supplement OWL is more robust, more streamlined and features additional support options for businesses to upload dietary supplement product information. In 2020, the registry underwent a series of upgrades to ease entry of product information, improve overall user experience and put control into the hands of the user.

Introduced last year, the self-service portal allows business users to upload, publish and unpublish their own product



information to the registry. And as we recognize a company's product range may change, we've added new tools within the registry to add, edit and remove products more easily. Business users, regulators, and consumers can also bookmark and tag products to find them easily in the future.

Other upgrades include a bulk upload feature to help users add groups of products more conveniently and a "clone" feature to help business users add new products even more efficiently. We've also enhanced security with a multifactor authentication system for individuals using the registry.

Additionally, CRN has added a multi-version component to help companies efficiently enter product information on updated versions of a product already in market and a supplier feature for brand owners to designate their contract manufacturers as business users, allowing administrative capabilities on their behalf.

The next phase of the Supplement OWL will be the launch of a new website with an updated, modern image and clear pathways for consumers, regulators and business users to get to the information they need. Expect to see this by end of March 2021.

All of these upgrades make it easier for the whole industry to participate in this critical self-regulatory initiative. CRN encourages industry-wide participation in the registry, and we are calling on all dietary supplement companies to upload their dietary supplement products into the Supplement OWL.

Participation now is especially critical, as we recognize that this industry-administered registry serves as a template for a potential mandatory product listing

concept that has been proposed by FDA (U.S. Food and Drug Administration) and supported by CRN. Before there is an official government registry, the Supplement OWL serves as an important way to help foster trust with industry stakeholders and demonstrate industry responsibility and willingness to self-regulate.

So, while the dietary supplement industry will continue to expand and innovate in the coming years, a common need remains the same—to build a safer, stronger supplement marketplace. If you haven't heard of the Supplement OWL or have in the past and are interested in learning more, we encourage you to visit www.SupplementOWL.org to discover new details and become a part of this vital industry initiative.



Dr. Luke Huber focuses on CRN's scientific affairs and nutrition policy activities that support the appropriate role for dietary supplements and functional

food in health promotion and disease prevention. He has 20 years of experience in the dietary supplement industry leading product development, scientific and technical affairs, clinical research, and regulatory affairs. In his prior roles, he has been a leader in product innovation and scientific initiatives. Most recently, Huber held the position of global R&D director, VMS with RB (Reckitt Benckiser). Prior to RB, he held senior scientific & technical leadership roles at prominent companies within the dietary supplement industry.