TRIANGLE INSIGHTS GROUP by Valeris

Levers for Launch: How Five Analog Brands Used Positioning, Advocacy, Evidence, and Access Levers for Launch and Beyond

CASE STUDY - VOL. 4 OF 5: **VYNDAMAX**

1 Entresto™ sacubitril/valsartan | 2 NUPLAZID™ (pimavanserin) tablets | 3 Repatha™ (evolocumab) | 4 Vyndamax™ (tafamidis) 61 mg capsules | 5 Kadcyla® ado-trastuzumab emtansine

OVERVIEW

This case study is the fourth volume of a five-part series that distills the essence of what to do when launching a pharmaceutical product. We curated five analog products and analyzed how they deployed four launch levers: **Positioning Strategy, Advocacy and Guideline Inclusion, Evidence Generation, and Market Access,** to create traction and sustain growth. Each case is mapped to a launch archetype: **Paradigm Shaper, First Mover, Late Challenger, Opportunist** to clarify context and actions taken.

Who should read this: Commercial, medical, market access, and analytics leaders who are preparing to launch a brand or have recently launched one.

How to use this series: Identify your product archetype → review lever playbooks from the most relevant analogs → adapt actions for your product as appropriate.

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INTRODUCTION

As referenced in the extended introduction provided in volume 1 of this case study series, this white paper series explores five examples of novel brands that shaped or reshaped their commercial trajectory through deliberate activation of key levers. Using a consistent framework, we examine each analog case through four strategic levers: **Positioning Strategy, Advocacy & Guideline Inclusion, Evidence Generation, and Market Access**.

Case Study 1 of 5 examined Entresto — a case where initial hesitation gave way to broad adoption after HCPs were convinced on the "therapy switch moment" for patients, payer friction was resolved, and guideline language updates were incorporated.

Case Study 2 of 5 examined Nuplazid — a launch where early advocacy and dynamic positioning drove clinical entrenchment and commercial success despite community hesitations on safety profile.

Case Study 3 of 5 examined Repatha — a product scenario which began as an access-constrained launch but was repositioned through outcomes validation and strategic pricing adjustments to unlock broader adoption.

FIGURE 1.

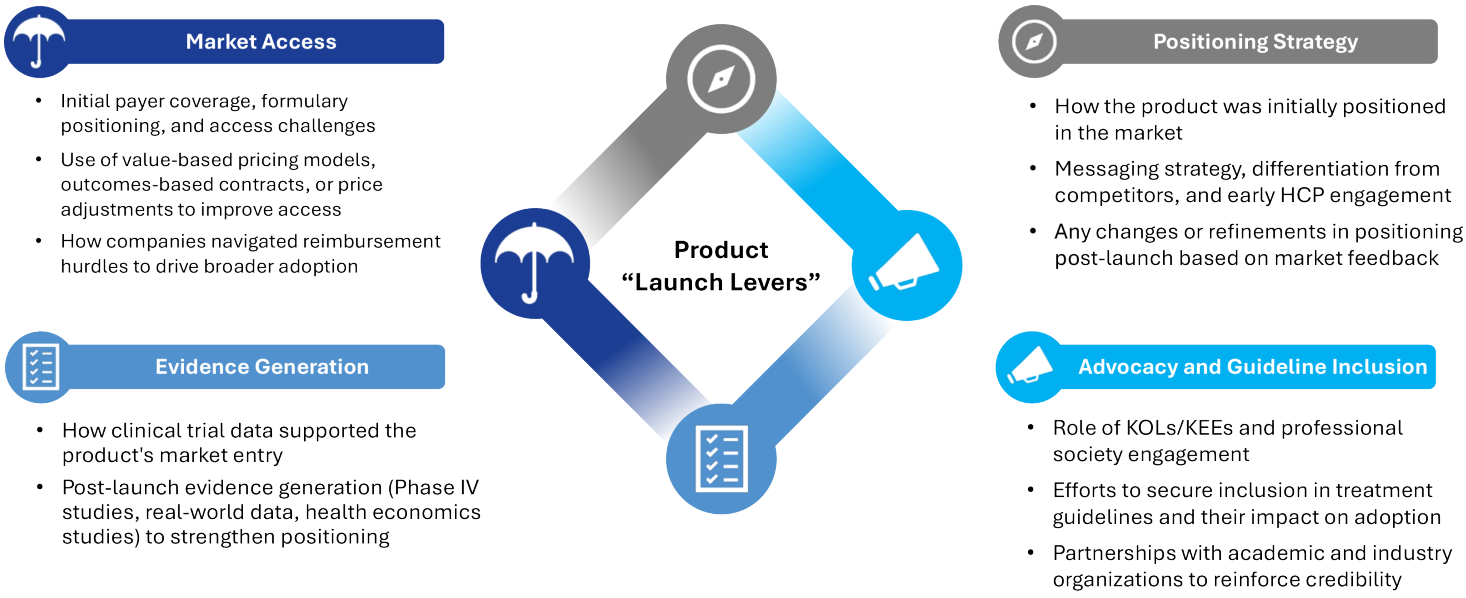


Figure 1. Overview of product "Launch Lever" categories in preparation for, at launch, and following launch.

The five analog case studies featured in this series are categorized into distinct launch archetypes based on market maturity and product differentiation, providing additional context for the strategic levers activated at each stage of commercial evolution. By first identifying where your own product sits among the four archetypes, you will have appropriate context for how each upcoming case study, based on the archetype, can be considered as an analog.

FIGURE 2.

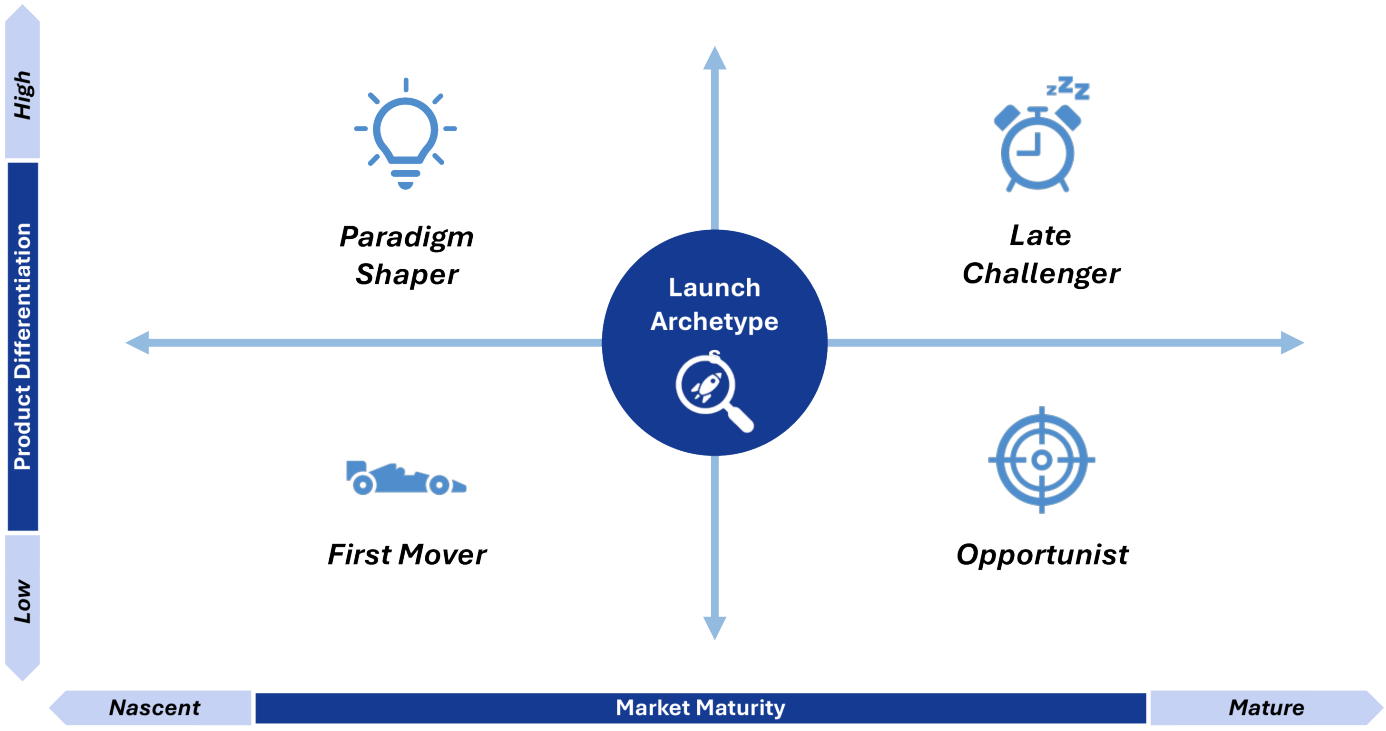


Figure 2. Illustrates four launch archetypes defined by the intersection of product differentiation and market maturity, highlighting the strategic contexts in which potential launch strategies may emerge

Note: Market maturity is defined by the degree of branded and generic competition within an indication

We selected brands that (1) faced meaningful early adoption barriers, (2) executed targeted beachhead strategies, and (3) left a visible trail of levers used (positioning, advocacy/guidelines, evidence, access) that launch teams can adapt. The set spans cardiovascular, oncology, CNS, and rare disease to ensure breadth across therapeutic areas.

FIGURE 3.

Product	Disease Area	Mechanism of Action	Launch Archetype	Product Launch Overview
Entresto™ sacubitril/valsartan	HFrEF/HFpEF	ARNI	*Paradigm Shaper*	Entresto is a product in the cardiovascular space with a dual ARNI mechanism, representing a strong acceleration of market access and clinical uptake driven by **extensive evidence generation, real-world validation, and targeted market-shaping initiatives**
NUPLAZID™ (pimavanserin) tablets	PD Psychosis	Selective 5-HT_2A inverse agonist	*First Mover*	Nuplazid is a therapy in the Parkinson's disease psychosis space with a selective 5-HT_2A inverse agonist mechanism, representing a differentiated CNS launch that overcame early resistance through **focused clinical education and advocacy-driven market engagement**
Repatha™ (evolocumab)	LDL-C	PCSK9 inhibitor mAb	*Late Challenger*	Repatha is a therapy in the cardiovascular space with a PCSK9-inhibiting mechanism, representing a clinically differentiated but **access-sensitive launch that was repositioned successfully through outcomes validation and strategic pricing realignment**
Vyndamax™ (tafamidis)	ATTR-CM	TTR Stabilizer	*Paradigm Shaper*	Vyndaqel/Vyndamax is a therapy in the rare disease cardiovascular space with a transthyretin-stabilizing mechanism, representing a market-shaping breakthrough that turned a **once-invisible disease** into a defined, treatable condition through focused **clinical education and advocacy-driven market engagement**
Kadcyla	HER2+ breast cancer	HER2+ ADC	*Late Challenger*	Kadcyla is a therapy in the breast cancer space with a HER2+ antibody-drug conjugate mechanism, representing a case of functional innovation that required **post-launch evidence and strategic repositioning to unlock its full commercial potential**

Figure 3. Provides an overview of the five analog products analyzed in this series, highlighting their therapeutic area, mechanism of action, launch archetype, and a brief launch overview

Note: The five analog products featured in the table above are categorized using launch archetypes, which help frame each asset's initial market context.

CASE STUDY 4: VYNDAMAX

FIGURE 4.

Product Overview

- Vyndaqel/Vyndamax (tafamidis), launched by Pfizer in 2011 ex-US for ATTR-PN and FDA-approved in 2019 as the first treatment for ATTR-CM
  - *It transformed a once-overlooked and underdiagnosed condition into a well-defined, treatable disease area, offering the first therapy proven to reduce mortality and CV hospitalizations in ATTR-CM patients*
- Vyndamax faced early hurdles in disease awareness, diagnostic pathways, and payer alignment that initially limited uptake
  - *By pairing evidence with physician education, Vyndamax established itself as the standard of care for ATTR-CM, driving broader adoption, shaping diagnostic algorithms, and sustaining blockbuster growth*

Market Phases: ***Vyndaqel/Vyndamax's performance in the market from launch in 2011 to present can be segmented into four phases:***

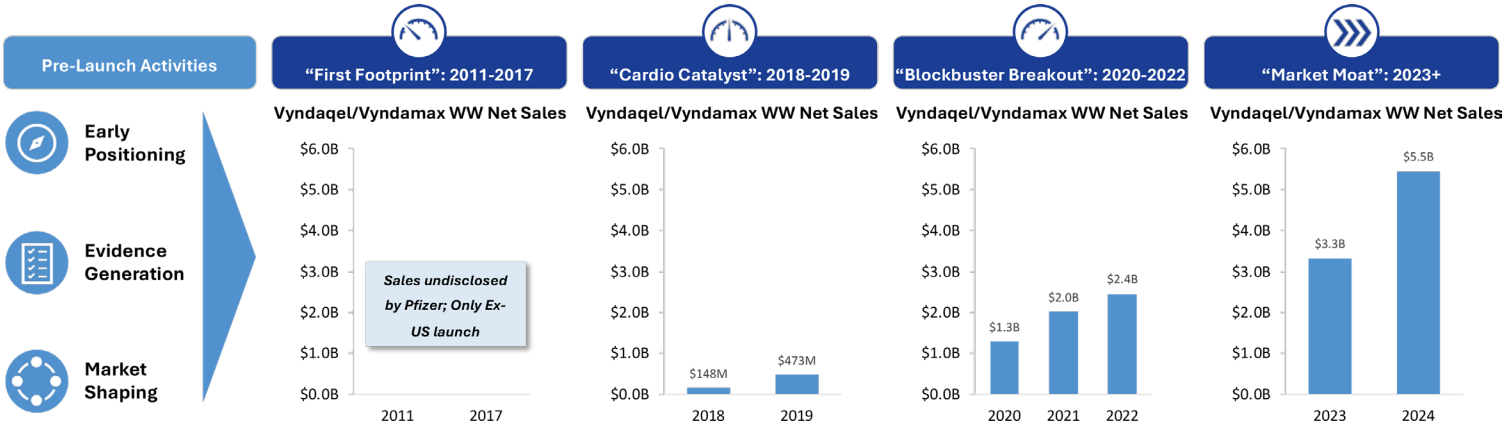


Figure 4. Overview of Vyndaqel/Vyndamax's commercial performance, segmented by revenue growth phases

FIGURE 5.

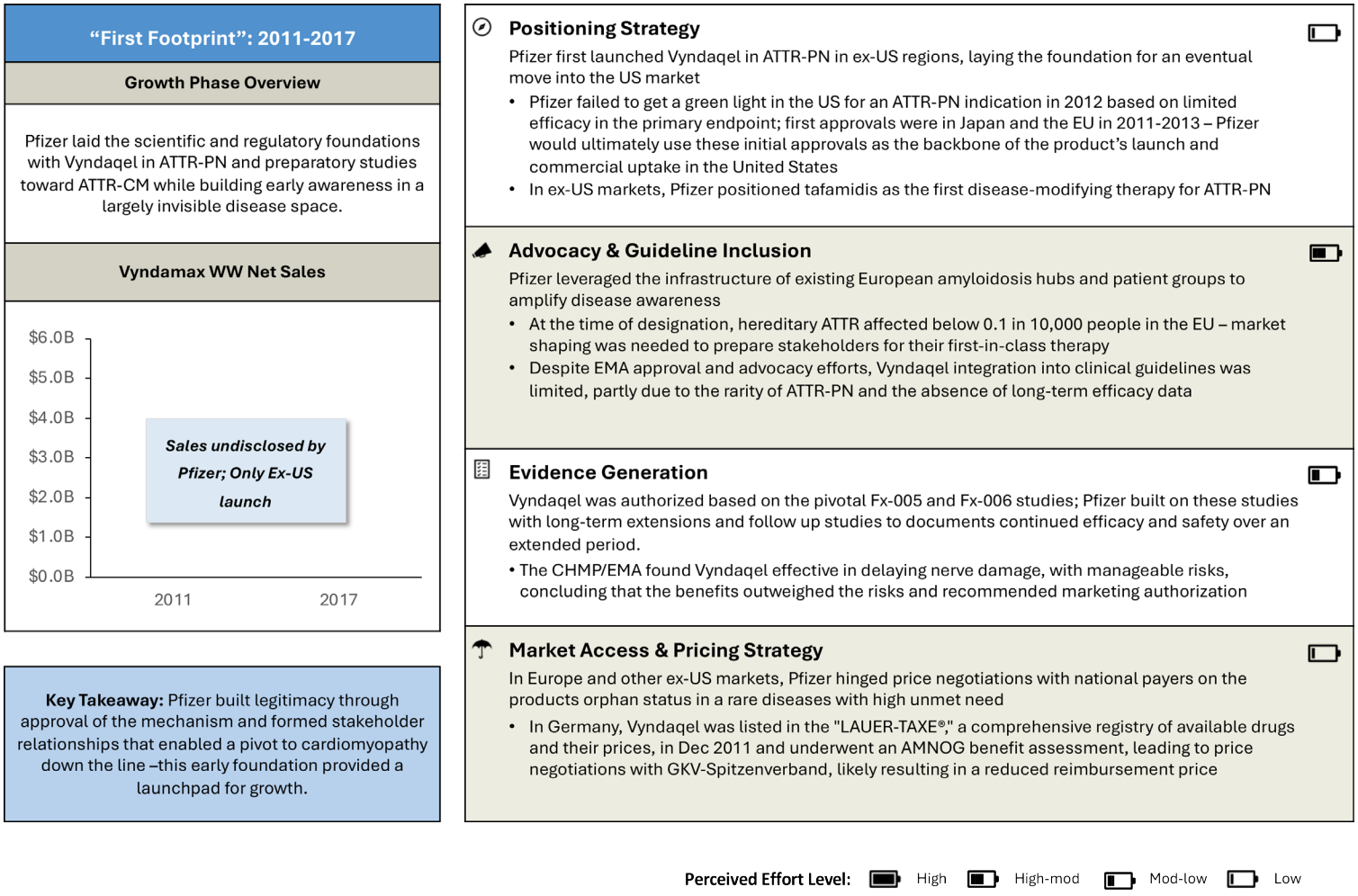
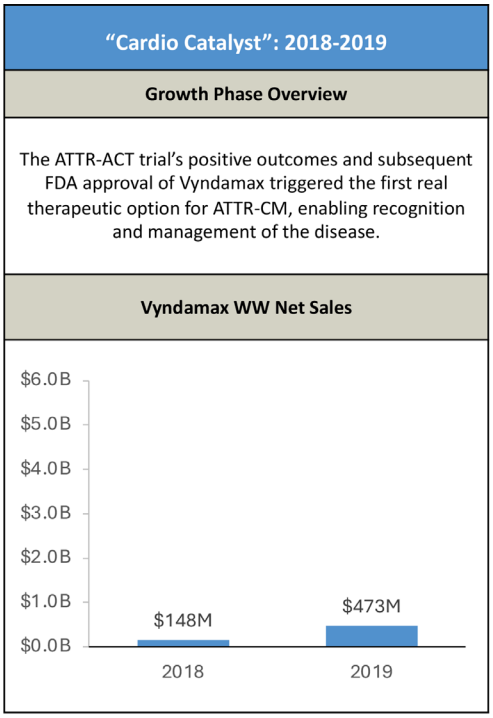


Figure 5. Overview of Vyndamax's commercial performance "First Footprint" phase

FIGURE 6.



Key Takeaway: Pfizer established tafamidis as the first meaningful therapy in ATTR-CM, creating clinical and payer interest with pivotal study data and RWE to build patient organization awareness and advocacy.

Positioning Strategy

In 2019, the FDA approved Vyndaqel for the ATTR-CM, sparking an acceleration in sales. It was a "first-in-class" transthyretin stabilizer and became the first and only FDA-approved drug for this indication

- In 2019, ATTR-CM affected a larger patient population (3.6 per 100,000 person-years) compared to ATTR-PN, but its rarity still required dedicated market shaping efforts from Pfizer
- Pfizer urged physicians to "find and treat" ATTR-CM rapidly, pairing product positioning with campaigns to teach cardiologists how to suspect and diagnose ATTR-CM using a "red flag" symptom framework

Advocacy & Guideline Inclusion

Pfizer recruited leading academic cardiologists as early adopters and product champions, who presented key data readouts and real-world experiences at conferences in the community

- Prior to formal guideline recommendations in 2022, influential experts called the cardiology community to action to diagnose ATTR-CM and highlighted tafamadis as the standard of care for confirmed ATTR-CM
- Pfizer deepened partnerships with patient advocacy groups during this phase - organizations like the Amyloidosis Research Consortium (ARC) worked alongside Pfizer to publish white papers on improving diagnosis and addressing access disparities

Evidence Generation

Pfizer leveraged robust trial data from the pivotal Phase III ATTR-ACT trial heavily in launch materials, as well as the existing body of evidence on which Vyndaqel was approved in the EU

- Vyndaqel's pivotal study (ATTR-ACT) enrolled 441 patients and showed a 30% reduction in mortality and 32% reduction in hospitalization rate over 30 months

Market Access & Pricing Strategy

Vyndamax's launch price of $225,000/year – which was cheaper than existing TTR polyneuropathy drugs (~$450k/yr) – sparked discussions about drug affordability and accessibility, as well as payer resistance

- Market scrutiny described the product as "the world's most expensive cardiovascular medication"
- Pfizer quickly opened conversations with PBMs on value-based contracts (tying rebates to real-world outcomes), leaning on their trust in the outcomes-based efficacy of their product

Perceived Effort Level: High | High-mod | Mod-low | Low

Figure 6. Overview of Vyndamax commercial performance "Cardio Catalyst" phase

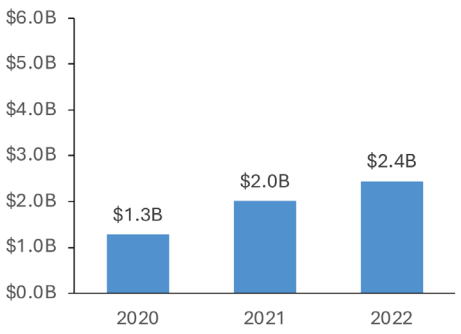
FIGURE 7.

"Blockbuster Breakout": 2020-2022

Growth Phase Overview

After ATTR-CM approval, Pfizer accelerated adoption through guideline inclusion, education, diagnostic expansion, and payer support, converting disease momentum into product revenue.

Vyndamax WW Net Sales



Key Takeaway: Pfizer turned a therapy for a previously lesser-known disease into a blockbuster by creating awareness and urgency as well as following that up with strong evidence and access mechanisms.

Positioning Strategy

Pfizer messaging evolved to uphold Vyndamax as a cardiology standard of care rather than a niche rare disease therapy

- Marketing and medical education emphasized early diagnosis and "treat now" initiation, reframing therapy as proactive
- Competitive messaging highlighted Vyndamax's proven long-term safety profile and real-world durability, differentiating it from pipeline uncertainty

Advocacy & Guideline Inclusion

Vyndaqel received a Class I recommendation in the 2022 AHA/ACC/HFSA guidelines for treating ATTR-CM, reflecting strong evidence supporting its use

- In 2020, Pfizer launched awareness campaigns, aiming to improve diagnosis rates for ATTR-CM, helping to deliver about 9,000 diagnoses with more widely endorsed imaging (nuclear PYP scans or equivalents) and genetic screening
- Through collaborations with centers of excellence and specialty networks, Pfizer streamlined referral pathways and built infrastructure for systematic patient identification

Evidence Generation

Pfizer sponsored real-world registries and observational cohorts confirming ATTR-CM prevalence and validating tafamidis outcomes beyond clinical trial settings

- Long-term survival analyses from ATTR-ACT extension studies reinforced durability and sustained mortality benefit
- Epidemiology partnerships quantified ATTR-CM disease burden, building the case for broad screening and payer support

Market Access & Pricing Strategy

Pfizer negotiated formulary inclusion and broader coverage agreements with major U.S. and EU payers as clinical and economic evidence matured

- The company worked directly with payers to streamline prior authorization processes and created toolkits for cardiologists to reduce administrative barriers
- Expansion of patient support programs, co-pay assistance, and reimbursement infrastructure accelerated uptake and addressed affordability concerns.

Perceived Effort Level: High | High-mod | Mod-low | Low

Figure 7. Overview of Vyndamax's commercial performance "Blockbuster Breakout" phase

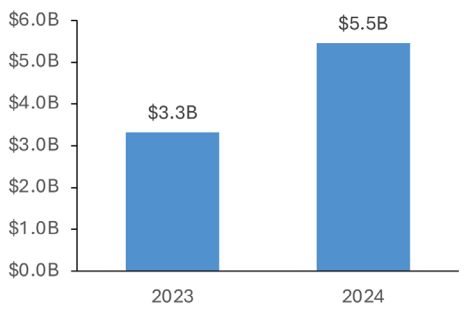
FIGURE 8.

"Market Moat": 2023-present

Growth Phase Overview

Facing emerging competitors (RNAi, next-generation stabilizers), Pfizer focused on reinforcing competitive barriers through earlier intervention evidence, differentiated messaging, and value-based contracting.

Vyndamax WW Net Sales



Key Takeaway: Pfizer defended disease leadership through data, access strategy adjustments, and strong brand positioning in a maturing landscape

Positioning Strategy

Vyndaqel has solidified its position as a leading treatment for ATTR over the past two years by shifting messaging toward real-world outcomes, earlier intervention, and trust built over years of clinical use

- New campaigns emphasized pre-symptomatic treatment opportunities, framing tafamidis as essential before irreversible cardiac damage occurs
- By leveraging deep registry data and extensive clinical experience, Pfizer created switching inertia against emerging competitors

Advocacy & Guideline Inclusion

Pfizer continued guideline stewardship, ensuring tafamidis maintained first-line placement even as RNAi and gene-editing therapies advanced in the clinic

- 2023 ACC Expert Consensus recommend Vyndamax for both hereditary and wild-type ATTR-CM patients
- Advocacy alliances co-sponsored by Pfizer elevated issues like diagnostic delays, health equity, and continuum-of-care models to sustain visibility

Evidence Generation

Pfizer launched trials in earlier-stage ATTR-CM, seeking label expansions to lock in leadership before competitors arrived

- Comparative studies and indirect treatment analyses were funded to defend tafamidis against next-generation therapies on efficacy and safety grounds
- Pfizer expanded long-term registry collaborations, publishing outcomes data across diverse global populations

Market Access & Pricing Strategy

Pfizer continued to leverage value-based and outcomes-based agreements to address payer concerns and competitor comparisons

- Pfizer engaged in proactive payer negotiations to secure formulary priority ahead of competing RNAi/gene-editing launches
- Enhanced adherence support programs and co-pay assistance reduced patient switching risk as the therapeutic landscape grew crowded

Perceived Effort Level: High | High-mod | Mod-low | Low

Figure 8. Overview of Vyndamax's commercial performance "Market Moat" phase

CLOSING

What to consider for your product based on learnings from Vyndamax:

1. Build the Disease and the Drug

Vyndamax's success hinged on transforming ATTR-CM from an invisible condition into a recognized, diagnosable disease. Future therapies should invest early in diagnostic infrastructure, physician education, and patient awareness so that the market exists when the product launches.

2. Anchor Pricing to Clinical Reality

The initial payer pushback against Vyndamax's list price highlighted the need to align launch pricing with demonstrable outcomes and cost-effectiveness data to accelerate coverage decisions and minimize early access friction.

3. Leverage Advocacy as a Force Multiplier

Pfizer's partnerships with KOLs, patient groups, and cardiology societies likely had the biggest impact of all activities in legitimizing ATTR-CM, shaping guidelines, and challenging payer restrictions thus demonstrating that advocacy engagement must be central to the launch strategy.

4. Expand Evidence to Sustain Leadership

Vyndamax defended its market position by continuously generating real-world data, earlier intervention studies, and registry evidence, ensuring clinical relevance to win over naysayers from the clinical and payer stakeholders even as competitors advanced RNAi and gene-editing therapies.

5. Evolve the Positioning and Narrative by Era

As the ATTR-CM market matured, Pfizer shifted from a "first and only" positioning to one focused on long-term outcomes, quality-of-life impact, and real-world validation therefore securing sustained leadership.

SERIES SEGUE

This wraps Case Study 4 of 5 (Vyndamax) — a market-shaping breakthrough that turned a once-invisible disease into a defined, treatable condition through focused clinical education and advocacy-driven market engagement.

Case Study 5 will examine Kadcyla, a case of functional innovation that required post-launch evidence and strategic repositioning to unlock its full commercial potential.