

Selling the Category Before the Product

A first-to-market go-to-market campaign for CMS-0057 prior authorization

The Situation

CMS finalized the Interoperability and Prior Authorization rule (CMS-0057-F) in January 2024, putting every health plan in the country on a hard compliance clock. The market reacted immediately. Vendors raced to market prior authorization "solutions." Very few actually had one.

Neither did we, yet. Ours was still moving through commercialization, and in enterprise software, marketing a product before it's commercially available is a serious risk. **The challenge: own the most urgent conversation in the payer market for months, without a product we could yet sell.**

The Strategy — Lead with the Framework, Not the Product

Rather than pitch something we couldn't deliver, we launched the **TriZetto® Unify** strategy, a platform and framework designed for payer-provider collaboration. That reframed the conversation from "here is a prior authorization point solution" to "here is how you build for prior authorization and everything that comes after it."

It gave us a credible, honest story to lead with while development finished the work, and it set up a durable competitive position that outlasted the campaign.

The Execution — One Full-Funnel Motion, Run Three Times

Instead of a single campaign burst, we built a repeatable multi-channel motion across thought leadership, blogs, customer forums, LinkedIn, and webinars, and re-ran it at each stage as the capability matured.

Phase	What we could say	The play
Awareness	The framework	Lead with TriZetto Unify and the regulatory landscape, focusing on what the rule actually demands
Interest	The demo	Once we could show working capability, re-run the full motion around it
Consideration	The product	At full commercialization, sell it by name to an audience already engaged

Each cycle re-engaged the same audience with new substance, so interest compounded instead of decaying across a long commercialization window.

The Differentiation

Competitors pushed an API-light approach, the fastest path to the letter of the rule. Our counter-position was direct: that gets you compliant for this mandate, and then you rebuild from scratch for the next one.

Unify was built to address prior authorization first, then expand into gaps in care, then whatever CMS mandates next. That reframed a compliance purchase as an architecture decision, and moved the buying conversation from "who is cheapest to comply?" to "what are you building on?"

Results

- 20+ payer clients moved into pipeline ahead of general market availability
- Sustained client engagement across a multi-month commercialization window
- Established first-mover position and category leadership in AI-enabled prior authorization modernization
- Built an extensible platform narrative that carried forward into subsequent solution launches

Why It Mattered Beyond Revenue

Marketing priorities generally fall into two buckets: impact, which usually means revenue, and timing, which means compliance mandates and market events. CMS-0057 was a timing play with strategic weight.

Its value wasn't one quarter's revenue. It was establishing that we developed and positioned solutions in a fundamentally different way than everyone else chasing the same mandate. That distinction outlived the campaign.

What This Demonstrates

- Regulatory-driven go-to-market in complex payer markets
- Category and narrative creation ahead of product availability
- Full-funnel, multi-channel campaign architecture built to be re-run
- Competitive positioning that reframes the buyer's decision criteria
- Disciplined product marketing in a compliance-sensitive software environment

Scott Marko

s.marko@comcast.net · [linkedin.com/in/scottmarko](https://www.linkedin.com/in/scottmarko)