



MARKETING / OFFICE / STAFF

The Ultimate Marketing Plan: Get to Know Your Patients

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Marketing is not about getting patients into your practice. Not real marketing anyway. Just getting someone into the doors of your practice is easy, just offer something and use the word "free." I'll bet chances are you'll get patients, or rather, people who want something for free and will do everything other than make the decision to take action. I don't want to confuse you by saying that a free giveaway is necessarily a bad lead generation strategy. "Free" isn't always a bad model to get your practice going or infuse it with a cash surge, but the free offer must be of extremely high value and it must do everything that it takes for someone to feel like YOU are the chiropractor for them.

Will that one strategy deliver a practice that is packed with patients and consistently booked solid? I doubt it, but it can work. But the point of this article isn't to teach you about the model you should implement, but rather the steps *prior* to choosing a model or models to grow your practice.

Creating the Ideal Patient

Every doctor I speak to says they would love the opportunity to work with their "ideal patient" all the time and only the highest quality ones. The problem and challenge that so many doctors face is simply not knowing how to attract that specific and highly targeted individual while avoiding prospective patients who walk into your practice with an attitude of, "prove it, and then we'll talk," and only will they give you a shot if you "prove" to them that you are the right doctor for them.



So, out of pure desire to not deal with lower quality patients, test me out on this idea. In the next promotion you want to create, remove the four magic letters (free) out of your offer and I'm willing to bet that you will see a drastic difference in the quality of the individuals you attract. Unfortunately, too many DCs have no other tools in their arsenal so "free" is what they offer, often seeing people come in as if something is owed to them, hesitantly working for pennies while not feeling the satisfaction of being a healer. Take me up on my challenge. I think you'll be pleasantly surprised with the results.

Now, how do you architect a situation that can deliver highly qualified action takers, individuals who become patients and appreciate the wonderful gift of true freedom in whatever method you choose to serve them with?

Step 1: Attract and Repel Simultaneously

If I asked you right now to describe in detail the traits, characteristics, and fears of your ideal patient, would you be able to give a clear answer? To build a practice that gets you excited when you wake up and go to work, requires an understanding of who you want and do not want to work with. The reason this is so important is because when you really understand your ideal patient, you are then able to craft a marketing message that speaks directly to them with crystal clarity on a continuous basis. There is more on how to do this below.

Step 2: Clarity and Preparation

The ability to understand and practically get inside the mind and life of your ideal patient so that you can empathize with the exact problems, questions, hardships, fears, dreams and hopes they are going through, gives you a massive advantage to help them like no other DC has ever been able to in the past.

You see, when you know precisely who you are aiming to serve, your message becomes formulaic

and specialized, hence the reason it resonates with those individuals. It also separates you from every "me too" chiropractor who says they can help anyone. That is the reason this cannot be an option but a mandatory process for those chiropractors that really want to achieve an elite level success in their lives.

Step 3: Tools

By now you're probably thinking, "okay, so how exactly do I achieve this goal?" How do you REALLY get inside the mind of your ideal patient while positioning yourself head and shoulders above the other chiropractors in your community? And where do you start? The answer opened my eyes and taught me a skill that has changed my life, and I want to share it with you right now. You begin this journey by using an Empathy-Map. (For an example of an empathy map go to <http://www.bigvisible.com/2012/06/what-is-an-empathy-map/>) Taking the time to answer the questions will give an understanding and an appreciation for what your patients go through in their daily lives as human beings. (Note: in the example, substitute the word "user" for patient, and you will likely want to somewhat modify the questions listed there. See below for example questions.)

Do you know who usually wins in business? I'll tell you, those that understand their audience/prospects better than anyone else. Think about that and how important that is when it comes to attracting the right patients into your practice. Think about what happens when the right patients read your ad, make the call, take action and get started with you, versus the wrong ones.

So before you write another word, regardless of whether or not you have a patient newsletter, you write ads or sales/promotional pieces, there is a formula that you must understand and follow. And when you do, your response rate will rise on a massive scale and you will begin to see what true exponential growth is.

Step 4: The Formula

1. Ask very specific questions.
2. Create an empathy map so that you can really get inside the world of your ideal patient.
3. Create a story about your ideal patient's life.

Once you go through this process, you'll have a tremendous respect for the struggle these people are going through, and just having that perspective alone will blow you past your competition. This is the first part of the formula, this is how you figure out who you WANT as your patients. Now we'll conclude with our last step which is the actual framework that gets them flocking to you.

STEP 5: The Framework

There are five questions that will ultimately connect the dots so you are ready to shine and make it painfully obvious to all of your dream patients, future strategic partners and even your competitors why you are the ULTIMATE choice for care:

1. What is the end result that your ideal patient wants to achieve?
2. What actions must be taken in order to get them to their dream destination? (What roadblocks must they overcome?)
3. What can you give them (think education) that will move them closer to that end result? (First step, then second, third, etc.)
4. What is the biggest fear they have that's preventing them from getting to the end result? (Here's a clue... Find their pain!)
5. Once you have all of your data compiled, you will create a visualized treasure map or empathy map.

Going through this process will give you a chance to really step into the shoes of your ideal patient. Finding out what THEY perceive as real or fake, good or bad, in THEIR world, feeling THEIR emotions. It also helps you learn about their behavior, concerns and aspirations. It helps you really get inside their head and provide them with solutions that will have the potential to change lives.