

A National PR and Marketing Campaign for Chiropractic

Christopher Malter

Since early May, I and hundreds of doctors, state associations, schools and companies have been involved in identifying a national partner, such as the ICA and/or the ACA, to develop and deploy a national public relations and marketing campaign on behalf of the chiropractic industry. To expedite this process, we developed the Friends For Chiropractic (FFC), and decided to do it ourselves. It will be unlike any other PR and marketing program deployed in the chiropractic profession, and will feature the following eight elements/objectives:

1. Redefine key message points.
2. Develop a PR and marketing infrastructure for chiropractic, similar to that in conventional medicine, whereby every chiropractor in the U.S. can utilize and integrate it into his or her own individual PR and marketing efforts.
3. Develop and integrate a comprehensive PR and marketing curriculum for every chiropractic college. Doctors taught in chiropractic schools are not taught to write, and writers are communicators. Since PR and marketing are forms of communication, every school should defer to outside experts in this area.
4. Every chiropractic college should be responsible for preparing its students to effectively market chiropractic, using results-driven strategies and tactics that positively position DCs as primary sources of health care treatment.
5. Develop a national proactive media relations plan that integrates doctors of chiropractic into the print and broadcast mainstream media outlets on local, regional and national levels. This will include establishing networks of spokespersons for the industry.
6. Develop and deploy a series of intricate marketing communications programs that targets key audience groups, such as political leaders; businesspersons; the insurance industry; conventional medicine; and the media, that will substantiate the chiropractic industry's worth.
7. Develop and deploy a national, regional and local advertising campaign that targets key audience groups. The campaign's messages will be simple, and it will be left up to each individual doctor to convey his or her philosophical approach or discipline. People do not care about industry-wide issues; they care about chiropractic, and how it helps them.
8. The final element of this plan is what distinguishes it from past campaigns deployed in the profession:
9. Results: Obtaining new and retaining existing patients. PR plans in the past focused solely on the industry itself. The FFC plan will encompass national, regional and local elements to accomplish key objectives. Its approach will be similar to a trickle-down formula that will influence every member directly.

Of course, this plan requires funds; it is unrealistic to think otherwise. If you are sincerely interested in committing to this plan, contact me for more information. I ask that we all agree on making a one-year commitment to this plan, with the understanding that changing an industry may take decades. Here's what the campaign will look like:

The FCC Campaign in Four Phases

- I Internal Marketing Communications Plan National.
- II Internal Marketing Communications Plan Regional/Local.
- III External Marketing Communications Plan National
- IV External Marketing Communications Plan Regional/Local

We will bring chiropractic out of its shell and into the thoughts and minds of key audiences. Internally, we will seek to redefine the manner in which we teach our doctors to communicate to these groups. Why? Because right now, we focus all of our efforts on placing value on chiropractic. We need to evolve in such a way that we transform the public's perception of chiropractic. It is not a commodity, but a priceless intangible: life!

The next step is in your hands. This campaign requires leaders who want to be a part of history - changing chiropractic while directly benefiting their own practices. This plan also requires leaders to be national, regional and local spokespersons. The first 2,000 DCs who register will be involved directly as first-phase spokespersons - nationally, regionally and locally.

This campaign will propel you into an entirely new medium. It will require the creation of new message points; ongoing coaching and media training; profiling success stories; and collateral materials that speak with one voice.

Now is the time for leaders! Let's change chiropractic in the minds and hearts of the world.

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