

## Focusing on the Pent-Up Demand for Chiropractic

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As I write this column, our nation's economy is just (finally) beginning to show signs of recovery. The stock market is climbing, real-estate prices are beginning to increase (at least in some states) and new automobile sales are projected to gain for the first time in years. The indication is that this bit of good news is likely the force freeing up consumer spending and that "pent-up demand" for some products [will continue to push up sales in the coming months.](#)<sup>1</sup>

People are beginning to buy those goods and services that they really need, but didn't have the money for (or didn't feel comfortable spending money on) in the recent past. For everyone, that should include regular chiropractic care. Unfortunately, not everyone has health as one of their priorities - particularly men. Many men delay care until it reaches a near-crisis level. (As long as we can walk and work, a little pain is OK.)

My guess is that you have a list of more than a few patients you haven't seen for as long as two years. These are people who know they still need chiropractic, but their personal financial situations may have forced them to choose between wellness and other more pressing needs. This may be a good time to reach out to them.

If you don't have a regular re-activation program, now would be a good time to start one. A personalized e-mail from you would go a long way toward reminding them of how important chiropractic care is to their health and function. They may need to be reminded about how well they felt when they were coming to you on a regular basis. It could be that they may feel awkward about missing their last appointment or discontinuing their treatment plan. By reaching out, you eliminate any uncertainty. You also let them know how much you care about them.

A phone call can also work well, as long as it is well-scripted. The focus needs to be essentially on one thing and one thing only: the patient and how you can address their health and wellness needs.

Recessions are hard on everyone. Unlike most of the past recessions, this one looks like its impact will extend well into next year. As our economy strengthens, you will see more advertising and marketing from companies that are hoping to capitalize on the pent-up demand for their products.

As families in your community begin to see brighter days, they will likely begin to think about those things they have had to go without of late. Their health should be toward the top of that list, but for many people, it won't be. In addition to contacting your former patients, you will want to take steps to make people in your area aware of the important role chiropractic care should be playing in their lives and their need to see you, particularly if it has been more than a year since they have seen a doctor of chiropractic.

Recovery can be a time of prosperity or it can be a little better than mediocre. How you interact with your patients and your community will make the difference for your practice.

## Reference

1. "Pent-Up Demand Explodes for Retailers in March." *Los Angeles Times*, April 8, 2010.
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