

Traditional Marketing Techniques That Work

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Much of the recent buzz in marketing circles focuses on using social media to help grow your business. I addressed that topic in my last article [["The Digital Landscape: E-Marketing and Social Media"](#)]. Traditional marketing techniques also play a key role in any successful marketing program. What's more, many of these tactics are easy to do yourself and are scalable to fit diverse budgets.

Here are a few traditional marketing ideas to help spread the word about your practice and the products and services you provide. I suggest an approach that uses a combination of media, materials, events and in-person marketing to reach your patients and prospective patients.

Networking and Speaking Opportunities

As much as your time allows, get out and about in your local and professional community. Join local business organizations like the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, or local health care professional association. These organizations, as well as schools, churches and groups like the local YMCA, also may provide opportunities for speaking engagements. You usually can't directly promote your practice, but you can speak generally about wellness issues, nutrition or other health topics related to your practice.

Consider holding an open house at your office. Promote it in local publications and online. Offer refreshments and the opportunity to learn about a health topic of interest. Recycle your presentation and write it up as an opinion piece for the local newspaper or as a guest blog on a professional or local Web site.

Media Exposure

Remember to send out a brief press release announcing new hires, speaking engagements, and open-house events. Follow current news items, and if appropriate, offer yourself as an expert to the media to comment on a topic in your professional field. Doing so puts your name out there and establishes you as a community authority on chiropractic and health care.

The Basic Brochure

In addition to your Web site, you need to have an all-purpose brochure that briefly highlights the solutions you provide to people and the health issues your services and products address, along with a list of your services, testimonials (see below), contact information and location. It's important to make the brochure versatile: use a tri-fold format, for example, that fits in a #10 envelope, can be distributed at community events and speaking engagements, and fits in display holders in other professionals' offices.

Print and E-Mail Newsletters

Produce simple printed and online communication pieces to keep you top-of-mind with patients and build awareness of your practice within your community. Newsletters with helpful information about related health issues, services and products add value while promoting your practice. There are many e-mail marketing providers that offer templates and easy-to-use programs for creating and distributing newsletters and promotions. Just a few include Constant Contact, iContact, Vertical Response, Benchmark, Campaigner and StreamSend. For print versions, simple desktop publishing software abounds, from Microsoft Publisher to Adobe InDesign.

Patient Testimonials

Ask patients to comment on their experiences with you and if you can quote them (anonymously or with just initials, if needed) in your marketing materials. Have a "Tell Us What You Think" box in your office or include a vehicle for comments through your Web site or e-mails you send out. Patients who have had a good experience thanks to successful treatment or good customer service can become "evangelists" for your practice, spreading word to their friends and families and through social networking sites. People listen to recommendations by others, particularly people they know and trust.

Free Product Samples

If appropriate, offer free samples of the products you sell in your practice, such as nutritional supplements, weight-loss products or topical creams. Offer products that people want to share; products that make them feel good or taste good, for example. Have your staff ask people making purchases in your office if they want some free samples to give others. Remind people in your communications that the products are available only through your office. Spread the word on your Web site, in newsletters and direct-mail pieces. Have available literature about the products from the company that makes them.

Direct-Mail Campaigns

I believe postcards work best for most health care professionals. Postcards usually are offered in three common sizes, 4" x 6", 6" x 9" and 6" x 11" or variations that are close. Key components that drive a higher response rate in a direct-mail campaign include: the Offer - it must be compelling to your target list; Creative - interesting graphics/pictures and text; List - does it match your targeted demographics and is it up to date; and Timing - the year, month, week and day it arrives in the mailbox have an impact. Never mail near a big holiday, for example. There are various companies that provide a targeted list using a radius from your office location.

This is part 4 in an ongoing series on marketing and your practice. [Part 1](#) appeared in the June 17 issue; [part 2](#) ran in the July 29 issue; and [part 3](#) appeared in the Sept. 9 issue.

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