



Thriving in a changed economy

What we've learned about marketing over the past 10 years.

BY PAUL S. INSELMAN, DC

CONGRATULATIONS TO *CHIROPRACTIC ECONOMICS* ON 60 great years of educating and helping the profession navigate through good times and bad. Thank you for always being there.

What do the largest chiropractic practices have in common? They understand strategic marketing versus tactical marketing. A strategist will slaughter a tactician every time.

But the chiropractic profession has been weaned on tactical marketing techniques passed down through the ages since the days of the Palmers. Marketing ideas like healthcare classes, patient appreciation dinners, coat drives, and screenings are all good marketing efforts that, when deployed

from a strategic standpoint, perform as if they were on steroids.

Much has changed in marketing over the last 10 years. We have gone from print ads and the Yellow Pages to all of the riches of the Internet, like Facebook, Twitter, and other social media, along with texting, Google, and YouTube videos. In short, marketing today is vastly different than it was just 10 short years ago. It is also less expensive and more effective.

If you plan to succeed in marketing in today's economy, here are some easy-to-follow steps you can readily implement in your efforts to reach your community:

▶ Master the buying funnel, in which you locate prospects and then market

to them, drawing your business to your practice.

- ▶ Create a unique value proposition, separating yourself from the competition.
- ▶ Envision your ideal new patient, and tailor your efforts to reach this person.
- ▶ Establish your marketing budget (allocate about 10 percent of your gross collections).
- ▶ Create a minimum of five strategic marketing campaigns that cross-refer to one other in a fiscally responsible, budget-conscious way.

For example: Your strategic marketing could embrace a range of the following:

MARKETING

a. Print-based advertising

b. Internet advertising

- ▶ Facebook
- ▶ Yelp
- ▶ YouTube
- ▶ LinkedIn
- ▶ Google AdWords

c. Credibility-based advertising

- ▶ Write columns or articles in well-established media
- ▶ Radio
- ▶ Television
- ▶ e-Books
- ▶ Hardcover books

d. Branding-based marketing

- ▶ Logo
- ▶ Billboard
- ▶ Tag-line development

e. Education-based marketing

- ▶ Condition-based
- ▶ Email
- ▶ Texting

The technology advances of the last 10 years have made it easier for a mom-and-pop business to compete on a larger and more effective scale. Building a practice is easier now in many ways. Think of yourself as a politician. You get elected by delivering your message to more people than your rival does.

If you are unable to execute a strategic plan by yourself, then ask a friend, colleague, or professional to help you. If you hire a professional, make sure he or she has a personal and intimate knowledge of chiropractic because marketing this type of

healthcare poses unique challenges. Every day you need to spread the word about your practice. Those doctors who don't market should ask themselves how Wal-Mart became a behemoth.

And if a company with global branding such as Wal-Mart needs to market itself, then your practice certainly does, too. ☺



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