

# Why Your Medical Practice Advertising Is a Waste of Money

by Marc Aronson

There is not much sense in advertising if no one notices your ads. Unfortunately, over 95 percent of all medical and dental ads ever written do a poor job of capturing the attention of non-patients. Why? The most important component of an ad, the part that attracts attention, is the headline. An ad with a poorly written headline, or no headline at all, goes unnoticed. On the other hand, a well-written headline, one that contains emotional hot buttons, seizes attention. Headlines presenting emotional hot buttons open the door to building a case for your services through your ad copy...a case that can separate what you offer from your competitors and drive in new patients.

## **Are Your Ads Getting Noticed?**

Most doctors and dentists tell me their ads do attract attention. When I ask them how many patients they get from their ads, they usually respond, "Well, we rarely get any directly, but I know people see the ads and they make people more aware of my practice." When I ask them why they believe this is true, they typically point out that their patients frequently tell them they see their ads. Well, of course they do! The reason? Their name is familiar to their patients and a familiar name always generates ad recall. But, how about non-patients? If there is no emotional hot button or familiar name to grab attention, the ad will make no conscious impression whatsoever.

## **What Will It Take to Create Ads That Drive in New Patients?**

If you wish to continue to run ads that make no impression on non-patients, the only logical

reason to continue running them is because you want your current and past patients to see them. Perhaps, this is valuable enough for you. If it is not, stop wasting your money! On the other hand, if you want your ads to produce new patients, learn how to write effective headlines and ad copy that will get noticed by non-patients and cause them to take action.

## **Yellow pages versus websites**

The yellow pages is certainly a dying breed and the Internet has fast become a better alternative for marketing a practice, in most cases. However, the same rule that holds true for websites is valid for yellow page ads. A poorly written home page title won't drive new patients to your website. When a non-patient does happen to stumble upon your website, an ineffective headline, or lack of one, will drive them off your site fast.

Still today, enough people continue to use the yellow pages to search for a doctor or dentist. If you have a great ad, one that will clobber your competitor's, a yellow page advertising investment can still be of great value.

## **Are You Guilty of Ad-Killer Disease?**

There is a deadly ad-killer disease that virtually everyone, including marketing people, have when writing headlines. I call it "platitudes disorder". A platitude is defined as, "A remark or statement that has been used too often to be interesting or thoughtful, or the quality of being dull, ordinary, or trite."<sup>1</sup> When reviewing our local yellow page listings under "dentists", I found that nearly every headline was infested

with platitudes that make no impression and won't attract attention. Only one headline in the entire section contained a hot button. Even that one, however, missed the mark how to generate emotional impact. Here's a sampling our local platitudes disorder:

“Trusted, caring dental excellence”

“Lasting impressions begin with dazzling smiles”

“Quality, personal and professional care for the whole family”

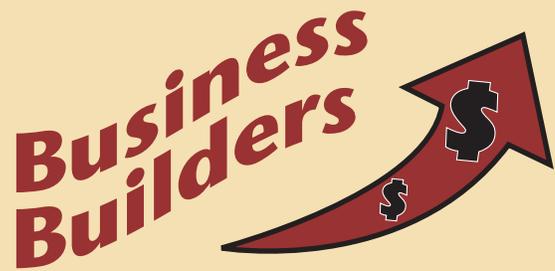
“Complete family dentistry”

“We do everything possible to make you feel at home”

“Art joining science for beautiful smiles”

If you want to learn how to create ad headlines and copy that will generate new patients, send time on our website.

There is much to know about developing your message and choosing the right tactics to ensure your program's success. You will also need to know how to correctly test market and budget for your campaign. To learn more, visit our website at [www.marketingstrategy.com](http://www.marketingstrategy.com).



Article written by Marc Aronson. Copyright © 2017, Business Builders. All rights reserved. No portion of this article may be reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means (including email or fax), without written permission from Business Builders.  
Email: [info@marketingstrategy.com](mailto:info@marketingstrategy.com)