

The Key to Uncovering the Right Emotional Hot Buttons

by Marc Aronson

The first step to capturing your target market's attention is to ensure you know what your target markets need, want and demand. You do so, you must recognize exactly what your target markets' emotional hot buttons are. Then adapt what you do so you provide exactly what your publics want and do it better and more thoroughly than anyone else. As a result, you will not only attain exceptional patient satisfaction, but gain repeat business and lots of referrals. This will also allow you to establish a marketing campaign and brand image that will clobber your competitors. The key, of course, is your ability to deliver a superior service in as many regards as possible (quality of care, customer service, convenience, consistency and/or price).

Surveys Make the Difference

The solution involves conducting surveys on your target markets that uncover emotional hot buttons and determine exactly what people (referral sources, potential patients, etc.) need and want. When worded correctly, these surveys will not only reveal your publics' emotional hot button hierarchies, but enable you to determine the attitudes of your target markets so you can remove emotional barriers that would otherwise keep potential patients away from your door. Correct working entails making sure your opened-ended questions contain emotional words or phrases. This form of survey does not require a large sample., usually 75 surveys is suffice So, it is fast, rather inexpensive and the result are always invaluable.

Examining Demographics

What may be true and work in one community

may not work in another. Thus, studying and analyzing demographics is also essential. Here are two of several actual examples I have witnessed that demonstrate what can happen if you make strategic decisions without surveying and examining demographics first.

Two Actual Examples

Several years a go, a chiropractic practice in a Southern California community, called "Night and Weekend Chiropractic", was having problems despite a thriving local economy. They opened their doors at 5 pm and closed around 10 or 11, and offered daytime hours on both weekend days. They had gotten this idea from a practice that successfully operated a virtually identical concept in another part of the country. After about two years in practice, they had just about given up when they contacted us for help.

Our first action was to survey the community. Guess what we discovered? Only a tiny percentage of their target market was interested in weekend or evening hours! To say the least, they had to make some huge operational changes in order to save their practice, including changing the practice's name, which they did.

Several years ago, an ENT in Southern California began his private practice soon after completing his residency. He hired a large marketing consulting firm that did not bother to survey the community in which he opened his office. Rather, they presented him with a "boiler plate" strategy, that apparently had worked elsewhere, positioning him as the "high-tech" ENT. The consultants had him run large ads in the yellow pages and on the radio, and advertise in the local newspaper. Not only did his ads

attain any results, the medical community, which was quite conservative, did not take too kindly to this physician's aggressive marketing campaign. As a result of this campaign, two established local ENT practices, noticing some primary care physicians expressed offense to this young ENT's campaign, took advantage of their distaste to magnify and attack the young ENT's "outlandish campaign" to local primary care physicians. "He doesn't care about his patients and is only in it for the money", both practices exclaimed. The result, the young ENT had difficulty drawing new patients from his advertising and generating any physician referrals. The consequence was he had to relocate his practice and start over.

This next time he went about it the right way... surveying both the medical and general communities to make sure he knew exactly what was needed and wanted. He then mirrored what he had learned to effectively structure his practice from an operations and service delivery perspective. He also promoted himself in a

way both the medical and general communities deemed tasteful. Finally, he was able to build a thriving practice.

I imagine that to you marketers these stories are nothing special. However, most medical providers, not being marketers, have not had the training and experience in conducting surveys and studying demographics to shape their marketing strategies.



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