



MARKETING / OFFICE / STAFF

The Power of Positioning

Drew Stevens, PhD

During the evening, I like to relax while either reading a book or watching television. One of my shows, NCIS, has the main character always drinking coffee. Everyone knows it is a Venti from Starbucks because of its distinctive color and style. As I was watching a recent episode and thinking about this, I was also reminded many years ago of when I was working in Manhattan and I would regularly see new computer boxes in offices with the distinctive look of a cow. Can you name the company? of course, it's Gateway!

When marketers package products, they are doing so for a very clear reason – branding. Brand is that logo, symbol, look and feel that provides consumers and those that aren't yet consumers, brand recognition and value. Packaging is a vital component of the marketing process simply because consumers acquire for brand's sake.

I am reminded of the time while selling to many Japanese banks in the early 1980's who loved to visit Tiffany. It was not the gift they desired in as much as getting the blue box. And think about all the people who line up to get the latest Apple products. It's the same concept that packaging matters.

With that in mind, what are you doing to create a package that creates allure and attraction? To create visibility, you must engage with others and ensure they are aware of your value.

This is where many of the business issues stem. Many will introduce themselves, offering nothing in terms of differentiation, but rather a comparison to others. Potential patients are then left to consider why they should choose one acupuncturist over another.



It is the practitioner's responsibility to illustrate who they are and what they do. Perhaps the best method in today's market is to create a message that illustrates to the patient not only a competitive advantage, but also a clear understanding of the potential patient's issue. Becoming more consultative might draw more people to you.

The best example I can provide is when I was just about to speak at a very large event. Just prior to being introduced, the organization was announcing its newest members. Incredibly, there were 35. Each proceeded to the front of the room and stated their name, their company and what the company did. There were nine doctors, seven financial advisors, four florists and the list went on from there. But in all the individuals, there was never an indication of what one did better than another.

Patient's today are seeking experts that they can confide in and trust to create long-term healing relationships. Stereotypes do not allow for this. In fact, they lend themselves more to your commoditization than anything else. The answer then is to create a tool so that you can attract people to you like nails to a magnet.

The Answer to Your Issues

The best method of attracting new patients to you and your practice is to create a voice of value. This is not meant to be an elevator speech or some other tiresome tool. The voice of value is meant to be a resource that helps to frame your competitive advantage with your specific target market. It will help to explain why you do what you do better than anyone else in your market.

The voice of value creates a positioning statement so you can create the value and differentiation necessary for clients to say, "I want to work with you." As you can imagine, this will immediately assist you with manifesting your brand.

Step One

The very first step with creating the voice of value is with your target market. As with any product or service, or even brand, you must create a market niche. Many fail to do this because they do not think of themselves as needing a target market. However, every successful brand utilizes target market segmentation so they can pinpoint the best clients. Therefore, it is vital that you consider by age, income, education, profession, region, marital status etc., who is the proper demographic for your services.

Some of the best resources available to you to help find this important content or from the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, your local real estate association or even web resources which can be found on either Google or a very specific service known as the zipskinny.com. These content warehouses provide you with the proper demographic and psychographic information necessary so you can zero in on your proper demographic.

Step Two

Now that you have your niche, you need to establish your competitive frame. In this particular scenario, you'll want to briefly state what it is that you do that separates you from your competition. Do you deal with a particular patient population such as the elderly, children, athletes or those with chronic pain? It is important that you spend some time here considering what you do that's different from others in the local area. I would suggest not simply talking about techniques or protocols, as these are tactical methods. You want to position your strategic competitive advantage versus others in the area.

Putting It All Together

Once you have completed both steps, you can then begin placing this into a conversational message. You will find that creating a voice of value helps position your brand, your services and your value. This particular positioning tool will help you stand above the crowd, especially if there is tremendous competition in your area. However, this is an exercise that does take time and patience. Do not rush this, but then again do not wait to use it. And finally, test it repeatedly to ensure that your prospective patients understand what it is that you do and how you do it.

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