



MARKETING / OFFICE / STAFF

The Fall of "Invasive" Marketing

WHY CONTENT MARKETING IS MORE EFFECTIVE

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Are you looking for new and fresh ways to promote your acupuncture practice? Content marketing may be the way to go. According to the 2017 B2C Content Marketing Trends Report, a survey of over 2,500 marketing professionals from around the world, 97 percent of participating businesses either currently use content marketing as a part of their promotional strategy, or plan to do so within the next year.¹

A decade ago, the term "content marketing" wasn't widely used, nor was the concept widely known. But marketers soon began to realize that to promote goods and services, businesses needed to do more than air commercials and distribute coupons.

A More Effective Tool

Changes in consumer preferences, technology, and competition are all eroding the impact of traditional marketing channels. Now, nearly every business uses some form of content marketing to reach its target market. Costing less and with better conversions than traditional marketing — it's no wonder most businesses have made the switch. What is content marketing? It is the purpose and style of content marketing that differentiates it from traditional, or outbound advertising. Content marketing at its essence is communicating without selling. Your content includes the graphics, videos, podcasts, articles, and other materials that you create to communicate with consumers. Through content marketing you use these materials to show and tell the world about your business.

For example, your blog sharing helpful tips and ideas for using your product is a form of inbound content marketing. The memes you create and share to encourage or entertain your social media followers are content, too. Because content marketing encompasses so many different forms and formats, it can sometimes be hard even for experts to agree on a single definition. However, most agree that content marketing is designed to engage consumers and enhance their lives.



The goal whenever creating content for a content marketing campaign is to provide potential patients with something that informs, entertains, or assists. To accomplish that goal, content marketing can be informational, entertaining, or ideally both! Content can be delivered online or off. A quiz or poll on your social media account that engages with your followers and conveys important tips is a form of content marketing.

So is distributing printed refrigerator magnets with important community phone numbers and a reference to your practice. Posting a video of a recent community activity you and your staff took part in is content marketing, too. Infographics are a popular form of easily shareable content that allows you to share facts with a creative twist.

Giving consumers something of value in exchange for their time is what contributes to the formation of a relationship between buyer and seller. Using content marketing, you can build relationships with your patients that last beyond a single transaction.

Asking Permission

James McQuivey, co-author of the marketing research report, *The End of Advertising as We Know It*, writing about the findings of that study says: "interruptions are coming to an end."

What does he mean by interruptions? Traditional marketing is media, such as paid commercials, banner ads, and other invasive promotions that enter your life with or without your consent. These types of ads are designed to force consumers to give them attention. Increasingly, consumers are tuning out or blocking these marketing communications.

In contrast, when you use content marketing, the consumer is permitting your marketing materials to take some of their time. Your message isn't blocked because your potential patient has sought it

out. Your audience isn't tuning out your message because they've chosen to receive it. An informative blog can draw readers who were looking for information using a search engine to visit your site. Or they could be enticed by a headline or link shared via social media. Viewers of your video content are watching because they are interested in seeing what you've created.

How to Create Content Messages

When preparing content for your acupuncture practice, ask yourself a couple of questions — what would your patients like to know about you or your practice? What would make them choose to give you some of their time? Choose to share your knowledge in a way that is engaging and entertaining. Also, experiment with more than one format and delivery method. You can often use the same content for more than one venue.

Create a video and a blog article sharing similar information. Then, share the links to both via social media! Don't forget to let your practice's personality shine. Use content marketing to let people get to know you and your acupuncture practice better. So, should you be using content marketing? Yes! How? The answer to that question is up to you.

Reference

1. Pulizzi J, Handley A. "2017 B2C Content Marketing Trends Report." Content Marketing Institute, 2017.

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