

GENERAL MARKETING TIPS

There are some marketing tips that apply to ALL medical and dental practices. Some of these are as follows:

1. *See patients on time.* All the marketing efforts in the world will not help if you keep your patients waiting too long. Track the wait time periodically. If there is a consistent problem or if you are receiving complaints, check your scheduling template to see if it needs adjustment. Remember, today's generation is less patient than those of the past.
2. *Set office hours that are convenient for your patients.* Marketing efforts can make your phone ring, but will do little good if the patient cannot find a time to come in. If you have more than one practitioner, stagger some hours so that some day's office hours can be earlier or later. Keep a flexible schedule in order to work in new patients.
3. *Be sure each patient leaves with a piece of paper with your name on it, every visit.* A business card that your patient can pass along, a brochure, a newsletter –these are things that will keep you in the minds of your patients and will help you cross market your services. Be sure your patients know all of the services you provide.
4. *Meet new referral sources on a regular basis.* Call on other practitioners who can send patients to you. Have a staff member visit their offices and deliver goodies occasionally. Doctors, like most people, refer first to people they know and trust.
5. *Have professional CV's in your waiting room, or move your diplomas out to your waiting room.* The CV's are important for your patients to see, and they also can be mailed to your professional referral sources.

GENERAL MARKETING TIPS (cont.)

6. *Put a sign in your waiting room welcoming referrals.* This lets your patients know that you are accepting new patients and that you really appreciate the referrals.

7. *Create a new marketing plan each year, and evaluate it every six months.* Nothing stays the same and one year is long enough to commit to one plan. Each six months the plan should be evaluated to see how effective it is, and if it is achieving the objectives for which it was designed.

8. *Most practices should allocate 1 to 2 percent of revenue or 3 to 5 percent of targeted collections for a marketing budget.* Marketing can be an expense or an investment, depending on how it is planned and executed.

9. *Get involved in community events.* Sponsor a team, speak at school functions, join the Chamber of Commerce or attend health fairs. All of these are services that will help your community and give you valuable public relations exposure.

10. *Be sure your staff is trained to represent your practice in a professional manner.* Many surveys have told us that patients oftentimes judge your practice by the attitudes and overall appearance and demeanor of your staff.