



Three Strategies for Taking Your Practice Marketing to THE NEXT LEVEL



Robin Ntoh has more than 20 years of experience working with healthcare providers. She began her career working in a facial plastic surgery practice and continued on with Mirror Image, managing client services and training. Robin started her own business consulting with cosmetic practices in various capacities, including the overall optimization of the office. She has seen success with both her personal business venture, guiding clients as a Nextech implementation trainer and now leading the professional services consulting team for Nextech Products. Write her at r.ntoh@nextech.com.

By Robin Ntoh, Senior Professional Services Consultant at Nextech

There are many benefits to effectively marketing a specialty physician practice. A solid communications program can cultivate relationships, drive referrals, establish a practice's expertise and cement the organization's reputation in the community. Yet even when providers appreciate the value of a marketing program, they sometimes struggle with where to begin in creating one. Here are three straightforward tactics that deliver a strong return on investment for any practice's marketing initiatives.

Allocate the necessary resources. Dermatology practices don't have to hire a specific individual to lead the marketing efforts, however, they should tap someone or a group of people in the practice to take ownership of the efforts. Those tasked with marketing should have an interest in communications and relationship building. To support these individuals, it can be beneficial to include marketing and communications technology in the onboarding process. These tools can pull data about the practice – like common treatments, appointment times, cancellation trends and more – which can pinpoint areas of opportunity. For example, easy-to-create reports can reveal the biggest referral sources, the most frequently requested procedures and whether patients are continuing to come to the practice year after year. Based on this information, the marketing team can develop an overall communications strategy.

Target referral relationships. For a specialty practice like dermatology, the best source of new patients is often other physicians. By using integrated marketing technology, staff can identify which physicians are recommending the practice to their patients and reach out to further solidify those relationships. This may involve written or verbal communications in which the practice checks that the referring physician has all the information he or she needs to continue recommending patients. Marketers can supply referral cards that list the practice's contact information, direct phone numbers for dedicated schedulers, leave-behind pieces about specific procedures and so on. The ultimate goal of these communications is to promote a partnership with the referring provider, communicating that the practice stands ready to seamlessly transition the patient to his or her next care step and will continue the high-level of care the patient and referring provider expect.





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Before seeing a specialty physician or having a complex procedure, patients often do some research, which could entail checking a practice's website or other online resources. When a practice has easily accessible blogs, podcasts or newsletters, patients can quickly obtain the information they seek. If an organization's physicians, nurses and other professional staff generate this content, it can underscore the practice's reputation as a group of experts. Even if a provider only crafts one or two pieces, the practice's marketer can reuse the information to further spread the word. For instance, a blog post can be turned into an infographic, presentation, video or podcast. These different media types can then be shared on various platforms or through automated email communications to expand reach.

Laying the groundwork for success. Increasing patient volume, fostering loyalty and maintaining a positive reputation are critical to a specialty practice's long-term health. By allocating resources, leveraging technology and relying on content expertise, an organization can build relationships with patients, providers and the community, establishing a well-regarded presence for years to come. ■

