

## 5. Chiropractic Marketing 101

There's nothing—and I mean *nothing*—that will change your practice and your life like getting good at getting new patients. When new patient stats are up, so is your mood and the energy in the clinic. The practice is a wonderful place to be, and the day flies by. Services are up, collections are better, and bills get paid on time. Life's a ball.

When new patients are down, everything is a struggle, and nothing's any fun. For many practices, this is the way things are all the time. **The average chiropractor sees 4.3 new patients a week, sees fewer than one hundred visits a week, and struggles with attracting new patients throughout their entire time in practice.**

Yet it doesn't have to be that way.

With so many DCs struggling with new patients, why in the world doesn't every single one of us become a student of chiropractic marketing? Why don't we all do whatever's necessary to become experts at internal and external new patient chiropractic promotions?

The way many chiropractors market chiropractic, themselves, and their practice would be laughable if it weren't so painful to watch, and if there wasn't so much at stake.

Every year DCs put an offer for a free exam on the back of grocery store register tape, right next to the "\$5 off your next large pizza" offer, hoping to get new patients. Why? Because they're desperate and don't know Chiropractic Marketing 101. I even know a DC who paid to place his free consultation and exam offer on the inside of restroom stall doors. I guess he wanted new patients to read all about chiropractic at their leisure.

I repeat: it doesn't have to be this way.

Why do nice, sane people make crazy decisions like that? They're grasping at straws because they don't know what else to do.

The awful truth is that it isn't enough to be a great, compassionate person who knows how to set an atlas perfectly or adjust a lumbar with great skill in order to succeed in practice.

I know wonderful chiropractors who now do other work because they never got the new patient thing right.

So I'm going to share with you a brief set of concepts, principles, and strategies that will allow you to pick the programs that really produce new patients. Use them effectively until they actually work, and you'll continue to produce new patients.

A full ninety percent of non-healthcare businesses would fail if they adopted the most common DC marketing strategies. That's because many DCs view marketing as a type of punishment for being a bad doctor. That's not true. There are always chiropractors who think marketing is beneath them. They say, "I don't do sales; I'm a doctor."

Doctors, everyone is a salesperson.

Think of it this way: Parents are "selling" kids on getting good grades and keeping good company. Kids are "selling" parents on staying up later and needing a new cell phone. Pastors, coaches, and teachers are selling congregations, teams, and students. Anyone who has an idea that he or she wants others to embrace is a salesperson. The only question is, are you any good at sales?

Get good at sales and your practice will be great. Look down your nose at sales, and you'll struggle in practice. It's that simple.

You must do something.

Most DCs answer "none" when asked how many hours they spend each week on marketing outside their practice. Usually that's because they don't know what to do. However, successful practitioners of Chiropractic Marketing 101 know that they should spend three to seven hours of internal and external marketing weekly. These hours are scheduled in the appointment book and have specific activities or events associated with them.

They increase their skills over time and diversify their new patient programs through a “Chiropractic Marketing Six-Pack,” which we’ll explore in a later chapter. They always do the tried and true, *and* they always try the brand new thing. They become a student of marketing principles and concepts.

Imagine the time you would put into a hobby that paid you an extra \$250,000 a year.

They also embrace a new set of attitudes. They’re never quitters, believing “if so-and-so can do it, so can I.” They decide on the results they want, master the skills, then pass on the skills to others.

I’ve seen hundreds of practices changed as a result of learning Chiropractic Marketing 101, including a woman who added 175 visits a week to her practice and trained a marketing assistant who still produces twelve to twenty new patients a week. Then there’s the man who added 180 visits a week to his practice, and another woman who now has a six-to-eight-week waiting list for new patients in her practice.

So dust off what worked best in the past and commit to doing it again for two hours a week. Then let’s look at new patient concepts, strategies, and programs!