10 THINGS ORTHOPAEDICS HAVE TO CONSIDER FOR MARKETING IN 2015

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STRATEGIC GROWTH IN HEALTHCARE
YOU CAN NO LONGER IGNORE MOBILE

If you still have a website that is not mobile enabled, you have to seriously think about upgrading your website. 1 in 4 online searches are conducted on mobile devices. We are especially seeing this to be true with our own orthopaedic clients, with nearly 40% of search traffic conducted on a mobile device.

YOUR 2015 NEED

Make sure you have a website that is responsive. A responsive website is able to dynamically adjust its layout and design elements based on the screen size. This means your website will look good on any device, no matter the site.

If you have a separate mobile site, as opposed to a responsive design, consider redeveloping your website. Consumers have high expectations and want the same user experience on desktop, phone and tablet. Your restricted mobile site is no longer sufficient going forward.
DO:

Blog and expand content on your site continuously.

Have a campaign approach vs. a keyword centric approach.

Build brand and not just traffic.

Focus your efforts on your priorities.

Use “orthopedic” instead of “orthopaedic.” The first is searched much more heavily by consumers.

Measure and refine, measure and refine, measure and refine.

It is not by accident that your competition might show better online than you. Search Engine Optimization has become a science. Yes, you have to seriously think about SEO, but make sure you don’t just blindly sign up for the next “best SEO service.” Google continually makes significant changes to their algorithm. What worked and mattered 6 months ago is not necessarily the best element to focus on now. For orthopaedics, SEO, as well as Pay-Per-Click, provide one of the highest ROIs in marketing orthopaedic practices. Saying “I don’t need SEO” is the equivalent of not having been in the Yellow Pages in the 90’s.

YOUR 2015 NEED

Establish a clearly defined SEO strategy and plan. With the plan, implement a measuring system that allows you to measure the performance and results of your digital marketing efforts. The use of measured telephone numbers has been a common practice in many industries for many years. It is finally being used to measure mainstream marketing performance in the medical healthcare industry.
Whether a potential patient is researching physicians, or just looking for a phone number, you don’t want them to see the bad reviews from one or two patients at the top of their search results. Related to SEO is Reputation Management. 2015 is the year where Reputation Management will become a major priority for orthopaedics, because they realize it will start to affect their bottom line if they don’t start to actively manage their online reputation.

**YOUR 2015 NEED**

You need to proactively and reactively start managing your online reputation:

- **PROACTIVE REPUTATION MANAGEMENT:** Enhance a positive online image that helps to solidify a potential patient’s decision.

- **REACTIVE REPUTATION MANAGEMENT:** Counteract negative reviews and material by suppressing them to page 2 or 3 of a Google search.
Historically, Ambulatory Surgery Centers have not been actively promoted to drive business. Most ASC websites offer directions, facility pictures, forms and a few other basic pages. In 2014, we started seeing a trend that we believe will accelerate in 2015: the expansion of ASC websites and/or the creation of microsites where the most lucrative procedures are marketed under a new brand.

**EXAMPLE:**
An ASC in Northern NJ developed a website with a new brand for spine procedures. The new website was a DBA (Doing Business As ...) of an existing practice and only promoted the high paying procedures and that particular ASC. It became a revenue driver with its own marketing budget that generated a high ROI.

**YOUR 2015 NEED**
Consider if you should promote the highest paying procedures in your ASC through a microsite or an enhanced ASC website and marketing plan.
If you are thinking about producing videos for your practice next year, stop contemplating and make concrete plans to put things into action. Consumers and patients prefer video content. Video content is the fastest growing content on the web and a must do on an orthopaedic website. The most clicked content/pages on our orthopaedic clients’ websites are: Doctor Bios, Patient Testimonials and Video. A combination of either of these further increases the clicks.

**YOUR 2015 NEED**

Produce credible and relevant video content. Following are some concepts that work for medical practices and orthopaedics:

**DOCTOR BIOS:** 1-2 Min. – Instead of highlighting your educational background, focus on what makes you passionate about practicing medicine.

**SPECIALTY PROCEDURE VIDEOS:** 1.5 – 2.5 Min. Have the doctors talk about specific procedures that they perform. Have them focus on how THEY perform it and what makes them different.

**PRACTICE OVERVIEW VIDEO:** Have a senior doctor talk about what makes the practice different and a little bit about the past/history.
CATCH BASINS ARE SHRINKING FOR ORTHOPAEDICS.

Patients are typically more willing to travel farther to see a medical specialist, like an orthopaedic surgeon, as long as they feel they are getting high quality care. However, over the past few years, we have performed many Catch Basin Analyses for our clients (analyzes where patients are traveling from to come to your practice) and have found a significantly decreased catch basin for orthopaedics. This means patients are expecting convenience just as much as a high level of care.

As a result, we see an accelerated trend towards adding more locations and being present in more communities. This increases opportunities, but also cost and risk. Many practices open a new office where they think the best location is, instead of taking a strategic approach driven by data and facts.

YOUR 2015 NEED

Take a very careful look at your data when considering opening a new location. Things to consider include your current catch basin, competition, Google Analytics, and the demographics of your geographic landscape. Expanding geographically is definitely a marketing trend that is proving to be profitable for many practices, but office space availability does not mean it is the best option for your practice.

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Making things easy and convenient for patients is driving a lot of business decisions, which is why Urgent Orthopaedic Care is another wave that has started to build. Whether it’s a free standing Urgent Care clinic focused on orthopaedics, or an orthopaedic practice providing special urgent care walk-in hours, offering quick convenient access to high quality care will drive new business to your practice.

**YOUR 2015 NEED**

Consider if you should offer Urgent Orthopaedic Care services. If yes, make sure you have the proper infrastructure set-up for success. If you are considering offering urgent care walk-in hours, make sure you are committed to it longer-term. It can take time for people to become aware of a new service. A strategic marketing plan will also help ramp up the initiative faster.

**THINGS TO CONSIDER INCLUDE:**

*Market to schools, sports clubs (seasonal opportunities)*

*Market to trainers and coaches*

*Digital marketing should be an integral part of your launch campaign*

*Inform your referral base (e.g. PCPs).*
Over the last few years, practices have been so focused on implementing EMR systems and new technology that they have neglected some of the basic elements to running a successful practice, like patient satisfaction. Improving the patient experience, starting from the first point of contact all the way to patient discharge and follow-up, should be a focus in 2015. Improving and maintaining patient satisfaction will directly impact word-of-mouth marketing and the growth of your practice.

YOUR 2015 NEED

Take some time and make an honest assessment of your patient experience. Consider an independent secret shopper analysis and patient experience audit.

Based on the results, put together a work plan to improve your processes, establish communication guidelines and train your staff.
Doctors are reluctant to ask for referrals, but the fact of the matter is your practice relies on the referrals from your fellow colleagues. Opening new referral sources is just as important as maintaining current relationships. We understand that time is limited for doctors and practice managers, which is why a growing trend is to have a dedicated business developer, or as we like to call it, physician liaison, to meet with practices and community organizations.

**YOUR 2015 NEED**

Every practice should consider a business developer but it does not need to be a full-time resource. Just make sure you have the right person representing your practice. A physician liaison should understand not only your services but your overall practice philosophy. You also want to make sure they do not come across as another sales rep, but someone who is going out building relationships with medical peers.
After long and often painful EMR implementations, practices now have huge repositories of valuable information, but have only insufficient means to extract this information in a meaningful way. Many of the systems are not equipped or designed to use all the data to drive important decisions. In addition, internally generated data need to be linked and co-related with external data (e.g. demographics, insurance data or Google Analytics) in order to get meaningful reporting. Practices that want to stay ahead of the competition will start implementing processes, technologies and software that help them maximize the utilization of this data to drive important practice decisions. This is an area that is still in its infancy, but will gain steam in 2015.

YOUR 2015 NEED

At a minimum, in 2015, you should make an audit of your data and understand what types of decisions you would like to support with improved data and analysis. Understand what “pockets” of data you have and what data you are missing. Evaluate what external help or software tools you could utilize to improve your business intelligence.
FOR MORE INFORMATION

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