



MARKETING

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNICATIONS

The New Year
**Checklist and
Work Plan**

Low Dose CT and Quality
Certification Programs
Can **Enhance the
Way You Market Your
Diagnostic Imaging Facility**

**Documentation
Diligence** is the
Key to Radiology
Practice Reimbursement

▶ Top Picks for 2016

BY KIM KELLEY, FRBMA

Just what you need—a fresh start. A new year is a time to kick off best-laid plans, try a few new things, and discover what works best in marketing. This is your year, you can feel it. Taking into consideration you have, at the time you may be reading this article, approximately 11 months to pull it off, you need to get moving.

Assembled with the help of some of the best and brightest in the industry, here are the **Top Picks for 2016** to build into your marketing efforts. If you do nothing else in the current year, do this:

Be present

There are some marketing strategies that will never go out of style. Relationship marketing and peer-to-peer marketing are two of those. But you can up your game by learning even more about the pain points and obstacles that keep your referrers from sending studies and, better yet, what could impede the flow of referrals in the future. How do you do that? Ask questions, listen, and observe. What you learn about a person outside of business may lead you to a striking opportunity to be a resource, help solve a problem, or remove obstacles from the referral path.

Possible scenarios might include inviting a targeted referrer to experience your new technology in person, introducing a timesaving resource for a physician who struggles with time management or work/life balance, or the integration and usability of patient and/or provider portals to help manage scheduling, results, and price transparency.

Mix it up

I am a firm believer in the power of content marketing. There is evidence of this in the many articles I've written for the *RBMA Bulletin* on this very topic. Content marketing presents itself to consumers as educational, informational, entertaining, useful, and more, as opposed to traditional advertising that blatantly sells a product or service. Content marketing is largely unbranded, meaning the brand is rarely interwoven into the content, and works to establish your organization as a trusted authority in your marketplace. It utilizes social proof, the concept that the quality of your products or services is tried and true, and your customers become willing advocates within their own network. It takes the form of blogs, social media posts, website content, testimonials, how-to videos, and more. Add in branded content, which is a more direct-hit intertwining the brand with content, and you're on your way to a more rounded marketing mix. Branded content, oftentimes referred alongside native advertising, and not loved by all because it can blur the lines between advertising and editorial content, takes the form of sponsored content or promoted social media posts and advertorials. What it does do is deepen a customer's

knowledge of a brand and strengthens the consumer's relationship with the brand.

Hold on tight


Certain services are designed for year-over-year maintenance of a strong customer base. Let these patients slip through the cracks and you will be consistently chasing what should otherwise be retained volume. Utilizing your database of patient and referral intelligence, create retention campaigns and provider loyalty programs. These could take the form of reminder postcards or calls, targeted social media advertising, or concierge-type services.

Seeking feedback and actively addressing concerns through process improvement may also gain certain success. Provider offices that witness firsthand your willingness to resolve issues will result in an increase in provider loyalty and a decrease in retention issues.

Make a big noise

It's a cluttered marketplace out there. The sheer number of traditional and non-traditional advertising and marketing messages that your consumers are subjected to each day is staggering. When important industry-altering issues arise, such as revised guidelines by the ACS and USPSTF, what will you do to be sure your customers hear your message above all others?

It's commonplace, on a singular level, to add to website content, or distribute a blog or write a letter to physicians explaining your organization's thoughts on a touchy subject, but what if you used all of those mediums, and more, and stayed with it until you were certain to be heard? Modify or add to your website's design or content, write a press release, distribute a blog, utilize social media to tap into your audience, design campaign graphics for social media and advertising mediums for greater reach, utilize content marketing, and build search engine rankings.

How will you stand out in 2016? The key is breaking the mold. Escape traditional marketing and uncover what you can do in your marketplace that will be different from others. I would love to hear about some of the ways you put these Top Picks into motion. Send me an email at kim@aliidesign.com to share your success. 



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