

RBMA

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2023

bulletin

RADIOLOGY BUSINESS MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION ■ VOLUME 58 ■ ISSUE 5



Will House Speaker Drama Crowd Out
HEALTH CARE PRIORITIES?

No Comment?
THINK AGAIN

Advocacy in the Workplace: A Young
PROFESSIONAL'S PERSPECTIVE

In Memoriam:
SUSAN GREGG



Marketing for OBLs has been making waves recently, and I've been fielding many questions. So, let's dive into radiology's newest hidden gem - the office-based laboratory (OBL). They come with their own unique set of challenges, and marketing is right at the top of the list.

Building an OBL involves financial considerations, location, branding, staffing, and many more details. But once you're up and running, a pressing question remains: "How do we get patients through the door?" These essential marketing strategies will answer that question and empower interventional radiologists to thrive in this competitive landscape.

Elevating Your OBL's Online Presence

First impressions count. Your OBL's website needs to be more than just another page. It should welcome visitors, provide helpful information, and reassure them that they've come to the right place. Descriptions of the procedures you offer, forms for easy online patient registration, a how-to for provider referrals, and patient testimonials must be included. Whether building it yourself or using an agency, remember your website should scale with your business as it grows, so make sure the solution is fully vetted.

On-page and off-page SEO is an influential contributor to making your website visible to people looking for your business. When patients search phrases like "vascular and interventional radiology," "uterine fibroid treatment,"



or “local vein specialist,” your website should be among the top results. Add depth to your website with relevant, descriptive content, earn reputable backlinks, and ensure the user journey is intuitive to earn top-of-page positions.

While SEO is a marathon, SEM is a sprint. Platforms like Google AdWords put your site at the top of paid search results for a modest budget, targeting the people looking for your services with intent. You can establish goals for your ads and geotarget your audience to only pay for clicks on keywords you want to be known for. It’s like turning on a spotlight in the digital darkness - but unlike SEO, there are no organic gains. The light immediately goes off as soon as you stop paying.

Your Google Business Profile can pull in a steady stream of web traffic and leads when set up right. Complete the business profile with every detail about the practice, including contact information, operating hours, photos, procedure information, and links to your website and blog posts. Remember, Google likes to keep things fresh, so visit your profile periodically to ensure accurate details.

Patients are looking for proof of your credibility and trustworthiness online. They’ll read the reviews before making a decision. Providing exceptional service will increase positive reviews on platforms like Healthgrades, Google Business Profile, and Vitals. A stellar online reputation isn’t just a pat on the back; it’s the next level for attracting patients.

Unlocking Success for Your OBL

Networking and forming relationships through peer-to-peer marketing can be incredibly effective. Building bridges with local referring providers can turn these professionals into your go-to referral sources and help establish your OBL as the authority for IR services in your town.


When it comes to differentiating factors, OBLs have a superpower—convenience. Patients traditionally prefer non-hospital outpatient services where their care is more personalized. Use your marketing collateral to point out convenience as a primary benefit to patients and show how you make their healthcare journey easier. Whether in print or on your website, don’t be shy about your credentials. Use these platforms to tout why you are the best choice for these services. And don’t forget the cost advantage. With high deductibles and rising living costs, everyone is watching their wallet. Lower treatment costs are another powerful differentiator for your patients who need top-notch IR services without breaking the bank, and you’re here to deliver.

Solid Marketing Foundations

While marketing an OBL has its challenges, it shares some common ground in marketing across our industry and others.

Your brand should be distinctive and memorable. Identify your practice’s unique selling proposition, establish a brand promise, and, most importantly, deliver on it. Maintaining the highest level of customer service is a golden rule. Respond promptly to patient questions, offer quick turnaround times, and proactively check-in to ensure your patients have had a positive experience. A happy patient is a loyal one and a source of positive word-of-mouth referrals.

Establish a strong local presence by actively participating in or supporting community events. These engagements allow you to forge connections with potential patients and referral sources. Consider forming partnerships with local businesses to boost your visibility. Additionally, leverage the influence of social media platforms to cultivate a dedicated following, ultimately driving a continuous stream of leads your way.

Marketing an office-based laboratory shouldn’t present challenges out of your reach. Whether you’re just starting or aiming to take your OBL to the next level, a well-crafted marketing strategy is a foundation for standing out and attracting patients in search of exceptional care. 



▲ A Fellow of the RBMA, **KIM KELLEY** has over 25 years of marketing and advertising experience with a specialty focus in radiology. She has served on the RBMA Board of Directors, is a regular contributor to the RBMA Bulletin, and has been a speaker at ACR, RBMA, and AHRA educational conferences.