



# ESCAPING the Sea of Sa

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et's start with an honest question. When was the last time someone on your team looked at the practice's website or marketing materials and felt genuinely proud of what made it different?

If the answer requires some thought, that's worth noting. And the stakes just got higher.

AI didn't just change how patients find information. It changed what happens to brands that sound like everyone else. The old game was getting found. The new game is getting selected. If a practice can't clearly answer why a patient, referring provider, or prospective recruit should choose them over the next option on the list, AI will answer that question with its best recommendation.



# ameness

By Kim Kelley FRBMA

## Why Radiology Brands Must Stand Out in the Age of AI

### The Middle Is Getting Flattened

AI made average content free and fast. Any practice can now generate blogs, social posts, service descriptions, and email campaigns in minutes. That's genuinely useful. But that ease comes with a catch.

When everyone has access to the same tools producing the same output, the middle of the market doesn't just get crowded. It gets automated and flat. More output does not create more distinction. If the underlying point of view is generic, AI simply makes it generic faster.

Patients are noticing. Research shows that 31% of consumers trust brands less when they identify AI-generated marketing,

and 52% disengage entirely after spotting it. Only 13% say they completely trust AI-generated content. In healthcare, where trust is the foundation of every patient relationship, sameness isn't just a branding problem. It's a growth problem.

### Does This Sound Familiar?

Take a look at these phrases. Compassionate care. Advanced technology. Expert physicians. Patient-centered service. Fast results. Trusted by doctors.

These are radiology's most commonly used marketing claims. They appear on nearly every practice website, in nearly every brochure, and in nearly every digital ad. As Aaron Brown, digital strategist and AI search expert, points



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out: these claims are often true. They are also unownable.

When every practice in your market says the same things, none of them mean anything. Patients can’t choose between them. Referring providers can’t differentiate them. Radiologists weighing their next career move can’t find a compelling reason to pick one group over another. AI systems, which are increasingly making the first cut in discovery across all of these audiences, have nothing specific to verify, cite, or recommend. Consider the fictional but entirely realistic case of Mountain Valley Radiology. Strong practice. Excellent physicians. Solid operations. Genuine community trust. Their marketing described them as offering “advanced imaging, compassionate care, expert physicians, and fast results.” The problem wasn’t that any of it was false. It was that none of it was distinguishable from every competitor in their region. Mountain Valley was strong. Its language was not.

## The New Discovery Question

AI search has fundamentally changed what patients and providers are actually asking. The old question was: which page ranks highest? The new question is: which organization is trusted enough to recommend?

That shift matters enormously for radiology marketers. Classic search ranked pages. AI search synthesizes answers and selects brands based on what it can verify. A practice whose expertise is buried in vague prose, inconsistent profiles, or generic claims is harder for AI systems to retrieve, trust, and recommend. A practice with clear, specific, and provable positioning becomes the easier choice for humans and algorithms alike.

Brown describes it this way: AI rewards brands it can verify. Specifically, brands that are **Clear**, with a consistent name, services, and locations. **Credible**, with named experts, reviews, and documented outcomes. **Consistent**, telling the same story everywhere across the web. And **Cited**, appearing in credible mentions, associations, and structured data signals.

Weak brands create ambiguity. Strong brands reduce it. In the AI era, ambiguity is invisible.

## What Should the Practice Become Famous For?

This is the strategic question every radiology practice must answer before asking what to create, where to advertise, or how to rank. Not what does the practice offer. Every practice offers imaging. The real question is: what do people and AI systems learn to associate with its name?

The most effective brand positions in radiology right now are specific, operationally grounded, and impossible for a competitor to copy without doing the same work. Compare these two descriptions of the same fictional practice:

- **Generic:** Full-service radiology with caring experts.
- **Distinctive:** The region’s fastest path from complex case to clear answer.

The second version names a specific audience, makes an operational claim, and gives the practice something to build proof around. It gives patients a reason to choose, referring providers a reason to refer, recruits a reason to join, and AI something specific enough to repeat.

The second version names a specific audience, makes an operational claim, and gives the practice something to build proof around. It gives humans something to remember and AI something to repeat.

## Proof Is the New Differentiator

Brand clarity alone isn’t enough. The promise must be provable, and that proof must be visible everywhere AI systems look.

For radiology practices, that means attaching expertise to names. Physician bios with credentials, subspecialty training, and authored or reviewed content give AI systems verifiable entities to map to your brand. A practice that refers to “our radiologists” as a faceless group is harder to trust than one where Dr. Jane Smith, fellowship-trained breast imager, has a complete profile, has reviewed patient education content, and is cited in community health articles.

It also means ensuring your service and location pages answer the questions AI is actually being asked. Who does this service



- **Escape Sameness**
- **Be Specific**
- **Prove Your Promise**
- **Tell Better Stories**
- **Become Unforgettable**

help? Why does it matter here? What proof supports the claim? FAQ structure, schema markup, and consistent contact data across all directories and platforms are no longer just SEO best practices. They are the infrastructure of AI visibility.

Perhaps most importantly, it means recognizing that in healthcare, marketing cannot outpace operations. The referral experience must prove the brand claim. If Mountain Valley says it offers the fastest path from referral to clear answer, then the ordering process, scheduling speed, result clarity, and physician communication all become part of the brand. Execution excellence becomes the brand, and it must be operationally provable.

## Stories Are the Memory Layer

Facts get summarized. Stories get remembered. In an environment where your content may be paraphrased, compressed, or cited without a click, the stories attached to your practice are among the most powerful tools you have.

### Consider the difference between these:

*"We provide minimally invasive image-guided procedures."*

### Versus:

*"She avoided a hysterectomy." "The radiologist caught what everyone else missed." "The referral moved from order to answers without friction."*

The second version is specific enough to remember and human enough to trust. It gives patients a reason to choose and referring providers a reason to recommend. It gives prospective radiologists a sense of what the group stands for. And it gives vendors and partners a clearer picture of who they're working with and why it matters.

## Your Honest Audit

Before planning the next campaign, every radiology practice should sit with these questions.

What generic language is your practice relying on today? Write down the claims currently in use, then circle every one a competitor could copy without changing a word.

What should your practice become famous for? Choose one or two associations that are genuinely true, operationally supportable, and specific enough to be memorable.

Where must that proof appear? A practice's website, physician profiles, Google Business Profile, schema markup, patient reviews, referral materials, and local citations all need to tell the same story.

## The Truth About AI in Marketing

The real risk of AI for radiology marketing isn't that it will replace your job. It's that it will accelerate the consequences of having nothing distinctive to say.

AI didn't create the Sea of Sameness in radiology marketing. We did, with decades of "compassionate care" and "advanced technology" claims that no one owns and everyone repeats. AI simply makes the sameness faster, cheaper, and more visible.

The practices that thrive in this environment won't be the ones with the biggest budgets or the most content. They'll be the ones that do the harder, earlier work. Deciding what they stand for. Proving it operationally. And making it readable everywhere systems and humans look.

The future belongs to brands that are easy to remember and hard to confuse. Specific. Trusted. Operationally excellent. And clear enough that both patients and AI know exactly why they should choose you.

That's not a technology problem. It's a strategic opportunity. And strategy has always been where great marketing begins. ■



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