

## Podiatry Management

### Run, Don't Walk With Direct Mail Marketing

*Here are some new ideas for a successful podiatry marketing plan.*

While the majority of podiatric physicians are in solo practice, there has been a movement toward larger group practices as well as the use of podiatrists in multi-specialty groups. These practices often include specialized orthopedic groups, sometimes treating diabetes or in multi-specialty orthopedic surgical offices. Whether you are solo or not without a successful advertising plan, many future podiatry appointments may go unscheduled.

It is time to build your practice, while building a new base of patients with direct mail marketing. With that in mind, it's important to start off on the right foot with a successful direct mail marketing plan! Even though newspaper, radio, TV, billboard, Yellow Pages and magazines are viable options for you to advertise your podiatric practice, direct mail marketing remains one of the most successful options in today's extremely competitive marketplace. In fact, 99 percent of American homes use direct mail coupons. Many live daily with health problems that go unadvised, but with the help of direct mail future clients can receive the information and help they need through your facility. Successfully marketing your business is the most valuable investment you can make and with a strategic direct mail marketing plan, your business will potentially improve 100 percent. With an annualized direct mail program, you can keep your future business growing.

Steve Zuckerman, president of Clipper Magazine shares some of his expertise and knowledge as he proposes the following key strategies to ensure that your future direct mail marketing plan is a success.

#### Walking Through New Direct Mail Options

Today, there are many direct mail marketing devices and options available to you. For example, you can create solo direct mail letters, fliers, newsletters, free-standing inserts, detached address label cards, postcards and brochures. You can even do it all on your own if you are able to work with programs to create the artwork and compile the targeted mailing lists. Creating direct mail on your own isn't out of the question, but it is a lot more work and tends to be the most expensive route to take. In that regard, you may want to hire a local direct mail resource; you will be able to write, design and print your newsletters and brochures while they facilitate a direct mail housing plan. This option will potentially cost you at least 40 cents to one dollar per targeted home.

You could also hire a local, regional or national direct mail resource that's highly regarded and nationally respected. Always avoid lesser quality resources, when it comes to marketing you want the best image. Don't hesitate to ask for samples of work and statistics from their direct mail housing plan. Many local direct mail houses will help you create, print, mail and facilitate the entire piece, while charging you for all of these comprehensive services. If you give them your mailing list or tell them the zip codes or neighborhoods you want to target surrounding your practice, then they can easily facilitate solo direct mail campaigns for you.

There are also a number of nationally respected direct mail companies with local offices and sales representatives. A few of the best known professional direct mail resources that you could work with include Clipper Magazine, Savvy Shopper and Mint Magazine. They vary, yet are all remarkable colorful direct mail magazine resources who also offer a complete array of direct mail service options. Each direct mail company would be happy to discuss your marketing strategies, create the artwork, print and mail to targeted clients surrounding your practice, while putting your advertisements in a magazine format with other service and retail businesses which often help make the entire direct mail piece more valuable. They are business' that offer the entire package, from complimentary marketing consultations to the creation and mailing of each piece.

The direct mail magazines mail to 50,000 home target mailing areas, so you can select the best audiences that will work for your podiatry practice. This high quality, colorful direct mail magazine option will potentially cost around 4 cents per home, which is much more affordable than most other options. With a magazine format, many home owners will save each issue because of the so many valuable offers inside each issue.



### **Support Your Ads with Photographs, Logos & Colorful Illustrations**

For added effectiveness, it is important to keep your direct mail advertising consistent. With each passing advertisement and direct mail device, make sure you are using strong headlines that include a call to action, great offers, brand name logos and colorful photographs. If you do not have any professional photographs, that's fine. Just ask your direct mail resources for some choices. Also it's important to keep up with the competition, so try to avoid using black and white direct mail advertising and marketing options. You want full color advertisements for multiple reasons. Full color helps to build professionalism, attracting clients and ensuring the best possible deliverance while building a reputable name for your podiatric practice. Using color advertising can also increase redemption rates by 30% to 60%.

### **Create Annual Direct Mail Advertising Campaigns**

Invest in your success by using direct mail advertising consistently throughout the entire year. Ask to review the advantages of annual agreements as well as the cost savings when you mail to multiple or larger targeted areas. This will make your advertising campaigns more effective, while it may also reduce the costs of your overall advertising budget.

### **Professional Podiatry Promotions**

- **List Your Special Podiatric Medicine and Surgery Services:** Briefly share a bullet point list of your special podiatric services, while illustrating a few of the most important points with photographs. With Crocs and stilettos being popular, many are doing more damage to their feet than they know. "I'll get people with strained arches because they've been running around in Crocs for five days," notes Arnold Ravick, a doctor of podiatric medicine in Washington, D.C. and a spokesman for the American Podiatric Medical Associations. "When it comes to shoes, people mistake comfort for support." Catch the eyes of Croc or stiletto wearers by creating informational, eye catching ads in a direct mail resource.
- **Promote Strong Offers:** Whether you are promoting sports medicine and biomechanics, podiatric medicine and orthopedics or any other special podiatry service, there may be something special you can offer to lure new first time clients and current clients to work with your podiatric practice.
- **Disclaimers:** You will need to clearly and simply state your disclaimers, while keeping them to a minimum. Give your clients some incentive to come in within a certain time period by offering your specials for a limited time frame from 60 to 90 days.

### **Get What You Need For Your Money**

Just like any other form of marketing and advertising, it usually takes a long term investment to see the results you want. Sit down with your direct mail consultant and set goals. Tell them exactly what you are looking for. Some direct mail magazine resources like Clipper Magazine offer complimentary marketing consultations, artwork and the use of professional photographs. They can facilitate targeted local mailing lists, while handling the printing, postage and mailings for you. For example, Clipper Magazine, Mint and Savvy Shopper have local sales representatives prepared to help you plan the most effective direct mail marketing campaigns with customized advertising solutions for your marketplace. Direct Mail Works. It's time to promote your podiatric practice with a valuable advertising investment that really works.

The logo for Clipper Magazine, featuring the words "Clipper Magazine" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The "C" is significantly larger than the other letters, and there is a registered trademark symbol (®) at the end of the word "Magazine".