

How To Build An Income Generating Health Practice Which ONLY Attracts The High Paying Customers You Want And Need



Simple Strategies to Help Grow ANY Private Health Practice

By

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Introduction

Most private health practices run an open door policy, whereby any and every patient is treated. But, as a private health practice, you can only make your practice truly profitable if you attract and keep high-paying customers on a large scale.

No practitioner wants to be a slave to the clock, working longer and harder than they need to. Nor does any self-respecting health practitioner accept any and every type of patient. The less desirable patients are the ones who:

- Try and lower you on your prices
- Try and get more from your time than needed
- Refuse to follow treatment plans and tailored pain management techniques
- Waste your time by cancelling appointments last minute or not attending appointments
- Look for ways to 'get more for less'
- Are difficult to handle and fuss over money
- Are generally difficult in their manners and demeanour

These patients are simply those patients who are the worst of the worst, and yet seem to rule your practice and appear to make all the demands. These are the patients who will define where your health practice ends up and who your practice is aimed at.

By removing difficult and less desirable patients, you are in effect creating the following from your practice:

- Reduced working time so you have more time to concentrate on the things you love
- Have loyal, lifetime members who value you and your services
- Have high paying customers who will be happy to bring in their high paying family and friends
- Create a more calmer working environment
- Establish yourself as a high-calibre health practice
- See a dramatic reduction in time wastage and missed appointments
- Create a more dynamic and customer-focused health practice where customers feel as if they are being spoilt and valued
- Establish yourself as the 'go to' health practice of choice for professionals and high calibre patients

This report focuses on how to achieve a profitable, high-end private health practice which will enable you to manage and run the kind of practice you want and need.

Background

Traditionally, private health practices were once seen as exclusive and whose services were only made available to those that could afford it. However, in the last decade, there has been an unprecedented boom in the industry and private health practices are now cropping up in every town and city.

It's no surprise then that many providers look for ways in which to expand their profits by allowing their practice to take any and every type of patient possible.

Rather than market themselves and adjust their strategy to focus more on the *quality* of patients, private health practices are suffering in the *quality* of care delivered to patients because they choose to take ***quantity over the quality of the customers they attract into their practices.***

The problem is evident in almost 70% of health practices in the UK alone. More than 90% of these practices complain about the strain on their resources, the quality that they can give to patients, and the increasingly diminishing returns they get from the lifetime value of the patients they choose to treat.

The bottom line is this: if you are a private health practice whose profits and image is suffering because of the lack of good quality customers your establishment is choosing to treat, you need to start focusing on strategies which can not only multiply profitability, but will only bring in the type of clientele that YOU are happy to treat and who YOU have a say over.

Problem

This report can help you identify and resolve your problems if you own any of the following:

- Private GP
- Alternative health

- Chiropractors and osteopaths
- Physiotherapists
- Dentists
- Other private medicals

What are your main problems? What is it that worries you most about your practice? A survey taken of more than 40,000 health practices found that most private health practices:

- Do not know how to market their services correctly
- Do not market themselves at all
- Feel over-worked and under-valued
- Are just about making ends meet
- Worry about their image
- Worry about sustaining a viable business, especially when the economy is down
- Stress over the fact that their patients seem to rule them, rather than the other way around
- Waste precious time and money chasing up cancelled appointments and no shows
- Are unable to keep customers returning to them
- Do not have a strategic marketing plan in place which keeps working to bring in high paying customers
- Do not understand the lifetime value of a customer or the impact this has on their business
- Struggle to maintain an exclusive image
- Have customers they do not want or need

As you can see, this is hardly the ideal scenario for any serious and thriving practice to want to emulate.

Despite wanting to change the status quo, the simple fact remains that health practitioners in general seem to suffer from some sort of malaise when it comes to marketing. They are either doing too little, too much of the wrong type of marketing or worse still, not at all. Perhaps one of the worst problems is the lack of accountability for the amount of money being spent on poor marketing.

Practitioners aren't really seeing a return on investment and even when done satisfactorily, most health practices do not keep a close eye on the lifetime value of a customer.

Do You Actually Know How Much Each Customer Is Worth To You?

This is not a trick question! When asked how much each customer was worth to each practice, very few practitioners could place an actual figure on this. This explains why most health practices are not seeing larger profits.

If there is no way of tracking or managing figures associated with how much is being spent on marketing and advertising compared with how much business is being brought in, no wonder many private practices are crying out for a change.

But, there is a problem here, and it's actually many-fold, as you are about to find out. First though, you need to understand that there are several ways of increasing your profits:

1. Cut your costs
2. Bring in new customers
3. Boost profits on each product or service
4. Help existing customers buy more often
5. Increase the average sale
6. Increase the average lifetime of a customer's worth

Most health practitioners will cut costs and bring in more customers by...lowering their prices! Everything else is largely ignored or not given much of a chance.

Doing so is counter-productive, since all you are really doing is attracting low paying customers through your door and creating more problems for yourself, rather than actually becoming more profitable. There is a saying that like attracts like. This is especially true of your customers.

Lowering your treatment costs is one of the most ineffective ways to bring in more money. What you are doing is this: you are attracting low paying customers who will take advantage of your reduced costs...and then they will

disappear into the night like a ghostly shadow as soon as they have had their cheap treatment and you raise your prices.

These types of patients are opportunists. They see the opportunity to get a freebie or a reduced price and grab it while they can. Then they are gone. The likelihood of them ever returning is about a million to one.

How exactly does this type of strategy improve your bottom line? The plain and simple answer is that it doesn't. What it does instead is that it infects your practice with additional problems that could end up being the reason why you might end up disliking your practice.

Not convinced? Take this scenario...

'Mr Green opens up his own chiropractic practice on the outer edges of the town where he lives. He decides to get the word out and does a leaflet drop to everyone in the city centre. What he does is pitch himself as the cheapest chiropractor in town by offering his services at a meagre £10 for 30 minutes of his time.

He eagerly awaits the onslaught of customers...and gets more than he bargained for. He has customers coming in who are:

- Loud and difficult to deal with
- looking for a longer treatment time for the same price
- haggling him on price for an hour's session
- cancelling and rebooking several times, or worse still, just not showing up
- refusing to follow treatment plans and demanding refunds
- ruling his practice and calling the shots
- being generally disruptive

After just a few short weeks, Mr Green is starting to hate his work. He hates his patients. His patients are telling him what to do and he is finding that motivation to continue working is wearing thin. The patients are literally walking all over him and Mr Green is no more profitable than when he started out. In fact, he is just about breaking even and covering his costs.

His cheapskate patients are bringing in even more cheapskate patients and inflaming the situation further. Mr Green is working longer hours to try and make ends meet. It's a viscous circle.

His practice is full of patients who drive him around the bend and he is no richer for it. In fact, Mr Green is close to having a nervous breakdown. His dreams of having a high calibre practice full of wealthy professionals are now totally going down the drain.

The few affluent people he did manage to get refused to stick around in a busy waiting room full of loud, brash patients wanting a cheap fix. Mr Green has literally ruined his own reputation by encouraging a practice of cheapskates. He is now seen as the chiropractor dealing with everyone who's anyone. `

The above scenario isn't far from the truth for a lot of private practices. As the saying goes, when you are everything to everyone, you end up being nothing to no one. And the same is true of Mr Green.

In fact, the problem is endemic. And if Mr Green's marketing tactics are anything to go by, it certainly won't get any better.

What Health Practices *Should* Be Doing To Attract High Paying Customers

So what exactly should a health practise do to encourage and attract higher paying and more desirable customers? If you are a struggling practice and recognize the fact that you simply cannot sustain your business the way it currently is, then fear not, help is at hand.

There are several things you can do ***right now*** to improve the conditions in your workplace. Some of these things will seem counter-intuitive to you at first, but as you will see in a moment, when the penny finally drops, it will be the best 'aha' moment you have had in a long time.

Raise Your Prices NOW:

The idea of raising prices is more than likely to raise a few eyebrows instead. BUT, you must remember that like attracts like. If you raise your prices, it sends cheaper customers straight out of the door and hopefully keeps them

out. This is the simplest and easiest to implement of all the strategies, which is why this is mentioned first.

Raising your prices helps you raise the bar. It allows you to pare down your workload instead of pounding you into the ground to the point of despair. It also helps to weed out the bad customers, the ones who haggle, whinge and moan.

The other side effect of raising your prices is a clear signal that you are offering a valuable service. And you are. This is not a discount store, it is a private practice, and with a little determination, it's going to be a very profitable and formidable service.

Stop Your Expensive Glossy Advertising:

What is meant by stopping your expensive advertising is that you need to AVOID spending money on glossy adverts in magazines, newspapers and other media. Until you know exactly what each advert is bringing in revenue wise, you must stop throwing money down the drain.

A glossy advert in the local magazine is not going to make you richer. It will in effect become a drain on your precious resources and affect your bottom line. From now on, you are not going to do any such thing until you can safely measure the return on investment with actual numbers of customers coming through your door. There are far better and effective ways of advertising.

Fancy ads in a good magazine is certainly not one of them. The truth is that 90% of small businesses get their advertising completely wrong. It is all about the company and never about the customer. If your writing skills are not great, and your persuasive skills are even worse, you should avoid sending out ANY advertising and marketing literature that has been written by yourself.

I know of one small business on limited funds that paid nearly £2000 in advertising costs for a magazine advertorial. Expecting to have her phone ringing off the hook, she was horrified to find that even after running the advertorial for six months, she did not receive a single phone call. This is perhaps the most demoralising and profit draining way of getting your target audience to notice you.

Advertising space is like real estate – very expensive and can end up being a costly mistake. It isn't customer specific, since a magazine is viewed by hundreds of different types of people – none of whom may be your target market.

Drop Patients Who Don't Follow Their Treatment Plans:

Although controversial to say the least, it makes perfect business sense. Perhaps you love being harassed by patients complaining that they don't feel any better and that they have wasted their money on sessions, when the truth is, they simply haven't made any attempt to follow through with their treatment plan.

If you like treating patients that grumble and complain and demand refunds and longer treatment times for less, then this is a personal decision, not a business one. It makes no business sense whatsoever to keep patients who do this because it drains your time and lowers the value of the service you provide.

Quite simply, you need to drop patients from your books who refuse to follow an allotted treatment plan. This means monitoring each and every patient's progress and following up with a review of their condition. If you are not satisfied that they are following instructions, you should politely show them the door.

There is no need to be rude or brash about it. Strike the patient off your books and draw a line underneath it. Better still, have it in writing when you draw up the treatment plan in the first place. You do not want or need patients who waste your time and their own.

Target High Profile Businesses and Corporate Houses:

Perhaps the best way to get your business back on track is by targeting businesses, professionals and corporate houses where people have the money to spend on your services. There are so many ways in which you can do this. However you choose to do it is your choice, but examples include:

- partnering with complementary practices
- partnering with high profile restaurants

- using direct mail to target specific demographics
- offering special promotions to companies as part of their healthcare provider plans
- targeting business professionals at high profile trade shows and business networking events
- working in conjunction with local health spa's and exclusive workout lounges and gyms to help promote your services

At least some of these suggestions will include the use of direct mail. Done correctly, direct mail can seriously expand your profits like nothing else out there. The key is to write a sales letter selling your best service or offer and sell the benefits your service has to offer. You will to ensure that your letter can be tracked and processed and that you can mail this out to a list of leads easily.

What is suggested at this point is to bring in a professional copywriter to write your letter for you and to help and assist in writing up all of your promotional material. You may think you have great writing skills, but more often than not, adverts and letters which receive a poor response do so not because the product or service is bad, but because the way in which the pieces have been written have not communicated the message properly.

The return on investment you can get from hiring a copywriter can be profound and this is why they should be used to write all of your written material. Copywriting is salesmanship in print, and no one does this better than a copywriter.

Create Individualized Plans For Your Target Market:

One tactic which certainly helps bring in quality customers is creating a tailored plan to each and every customer and persuading them to subscribe to it. It is exceptionally difficult to do this unless your prospect knows and understands what to expect and how this will impact them.

You need to focus on getting your ideal customers through the door and then giving them the best treatment of their life. You should make their stay at your practice (however brief) an extremely pleasant and pleasurable one and then once their treatment is over, discuss the plan with them.

Give them a package to take home – this should consist of your sales letter, details of the plan itself and how to contact and book the plan (your call to action).

Again, for this strategy to work successfully, you should consider enlisting the help of a good copywriter.

Referral Marketing:

Referral marketing is a fantastic way to grow your business long term, and can drastically reduce the amount of money you spend on additional advertising. It is essential that you put a proper referral process in place so that no opportunity is ever missed to gain a referral.

This increases the lifetime value of a customer and if each customer brings in just one other customer, you have doubled your turnover from your initial client in the first place. Incentivising the referral process is even better – since customers are rewarded for bringing in additional customers to you.

Don't Follow The Competition:

Many a business model has failed when businesses follow their rivals in their marketing efforts. DON'T DO THIS! It's a case of the blind leading the blind, and a very stupid thing to do. You have no idea about your rival's budget, how much they make, how big their customer list is etc etc. There are far too many variables in play with your competitor, and to follow their advertising and marketing efforts could be financial suicide for you.

Instead, focus on getting your own marketing in line with your budget and your needs. You should find your unique selling point and work on that instead. Customers will love your credibility more than your fancy advertising attempts.

In the end, it is about delivering value to a customer by proving to them that they are important and so is their custom.

Consider An Online Presence:

If you are not already online, you should be doing everything possible to make that happen. Customers are extremely savvy these days and more and more professionals turn to the Internet as a means to find what they need quickly and easily.

The same is true for iPhones which allow you to connect to the Internet anywhere. Make your business one of those that can easily be found online. It's essential to have some sort of lead generation practice in place to help you gain new customers and keep in touch with existing ones.

There are several ways you can have an online presence. First and foremost, consider a lead generation website. A lead generation website is a simple website which tells customers all about you and your services. It also has a means of capturing their data by way of name and email address.

The main advantage of a lead generation website is that once people subscribe to it, you can easily keep in touch with them and email regular offers, discounts, news and informative articles by way of a newsletter to them.

Keeping in touch with your customer is vitally important, and with email and websites, this is no longer an exclusive right of the very rich.

Other options for those who are on a tight budget include Facebook fanpages which have a method to capture email and names and Google places listings. Facebook is huge and everyone seems to be using it to advertise and get the word out. By having a fanpage, you can get people to 'like' and recommend your service as well as capturing their personal data.

It's far cheaper than a website and easy to maintain, as there are no hosting costs. You can pass your link to all your friends or to local groups who may also be on Facebook.

Google places listings basically list your business in the top searches for your industry category in your local business listings. So for example, if someone types in 'Chiropractor in Huddersfield', your business should ideally be listed in the top searches, not buried underneath several pages which no one will check. It has been found that users rarely scroll past page 2, so if your business is not listed in the first two pages, you are losing out to your competitors. There is only one catch though. Google places listings are

created by using keywords relevant to your service and area, and need to be done monthly to maintain the top position in the local directories. Many companies choose to take a yearly plan and pay in advance to have listings re-done and maintained for a year.

Conclusion and After Thoughts

Hopefully, the suggestions on these last few pages should have by now introduced you to some useful and very practical ideas which you can put in place and start implementing immediately. As with anything, it takes time to build the perfect practice, but once you start putting in the effort and make regular attempts to market yourself, you can easily start to build a better and more profitable practice which only treats the patients you want.

Those practices which have placed these ideas at the top of their marketing agenda have seen a huge jump in their profit margins and have seen an increase in the lifetime value of a customer. Having a dedicated and consistent approach to marketing and putting a permanent referral system in place has a huge knock-on effect in the overall lifespan of a customer's profitability, and creates unlimited streams of additional revenue for you.

You can with consistent effort, double, triple or even quadruple your profits easily within a year, as well as shift your clientele from everyone who is anyone to a select few you have target- marketed to and cherry picked as the cream of the crop for your practice.

And the best part? You will have a thriving and highly profitable practice which you love to work with, some great clients for whom you have more time and energy for, and a pleasant working environment which exudes the hallmarks of a high-calibre private practice.

When this happens, you have more money to add the extra special touches to your practice which will set new standards in private care, set you head and shoulders above the rest and keep your customers coming back for a lifetime.

About The Author

Arfa Saira Iqbal is the founder of Freelance Writing Services which specializes in helping local businesses build a meaningful online and offline presence.

Arfa is a professionally trained direct response copywriter and commercial freelance writer. She writes for local businesses and has clients all over the world.

She works in conjunction with:

- A graphic designer and printer to offer complete solutions from initial copy to final print version
- A proofreader
- A web developer to create lead generation websites for local businesses
- An SEO consultant to improve Google rankings and online presence

Arfa consults with businesses on how to develop and market their business to improve customer retention and increase their leads and sales. She writes high-impact marketing materials such as corporate brochures, newsletters, promotional material, sales letters and just about anything that requires the use of a skilled writer.

Arfa specializes in sales letters, autoresponders (email campaigns) and other forms of copy to increase sales and conversions.

When not marketing a local business, she enjoys spending time with her family and cooking delicious food!

You can contact her via email at info@arfawrites.com or visit her website at www.arfawrites.com for more information.