

## MARKETING AND OUTREACH

### Survey Illuminates Marketing Strategies



Earlier this year, Toshiba America Medical Systems, Inc., surveyed its customers who use the vendor's Image Maker marketing toolkit to understand the role of marketing in this challenging economic time. The survey results showed that marketing and outreach are more important than ever in tough economic climates. While the vast majority of respondents (from both imaging center and hospital environments) said that marketing was more important to their organizations in a difficult fiscal environment, 30 percent of imaging centers and 18 percent of hospitals represented don't even have marketing budgets.

"If you speak to marketing professionals, they'll always tell you marketing is more important in difficult times," Jim Burch, director of communications at TAMS, Tustin, Calif., explains. "Most companies' actions tend to be the opposite, however. What this survey indicates to me is that healthcare professionals understand the importance of being competitive, and in a downturn, they understand the importance of getting visibility for the type of services they offer, compared with the competition."

The Image Maker survey reveals the ways hospitals and imaging centers market their new technology to referring physicians and patients, in spite of limited

budgets. "If healthcare organizations have no marketing budget, they're reliant on their partners to provide them with any marketing materials," Burch says. "With the Image Maker program, we offer co-marketing underwriting, which dramatically increases the budget dollars available to them. We also provide assets like professional photography and design for promotional materials."

Image Maker materials range from clinical images to templates for brochures and mailers, all customizable according to a facility's individual branding and distribution requirements. In addition to providing pre-made marketing templates, Toshiba offers customers live consultation and assists customers with the design and copywriting for special projects upon request. "Our customers are front and center in the ads we help produce," Burch says. "It's not a Toshiba ad with their logo on it. It's their advertisement, and we're supporting them. The relationship is consultative."

Burch notes that clinical images are a particular boon to facilities attempting to promote new equipment. "We supply images and information about the capabilities of the product," Burch says. "If I'm in a facility with a new product, I may not have any images to show yet. That's where Image Maker comes in; being able to show what the product can do is an important component of any marketing campaign."

The survey indicates presentations and meetings are, by far, the number-one strategy employed for referring-physician marketing. "If you don't have your referring-clinician population behind you, you can do all the direct-to-consumer marketing you want, but you'll never be as successful as you need to be," Burch notes. "Sharing best practices and showing what you can do for patients that's different from the competition, or from what you could do in the past, adds another level of trust and confidence in your facility's expertise."

When it comes to targeting the patient population—an increasingly critical factor as health care becomes more consumer-driven than ever before—hospitals and imaging centers favor direct mail and print ads. “In the professional community, an event will probably resonate for a longer period,” Burch says. “The consumer world needs constant reminding and refreshing. More frequent communications through print ads and direct mail help make that happen.”

The survey also highlights marketing opportunities that the majority of organizations are neglecting in favor of more tried-and-true methods. For instance, few facilities are using Web-based outreach in either referring-physician or direct-to-consumer marketing. “I don’t hear a lot of people talking about electronic outreach,” Burch says. “This survey leads me to believe that the people marketing imaging services are tied more to traditional methods and need to explore other options. Those who do will probably have that field to themselves for a while, which gives them a competitive advantage.”

Burch was encouraged to see 30 percent of survey respondents reported that C-level executives were engaged in marketing and outreach. “That tells me it’s important to the mission of the organization,” he says, “and that’s what a marketer always likes to hear.”

## Leveraging Image Maker for Innovative Marketing

When Harrisburg, Pa.-based PinnacleHealth System acquired an Aquilion® ONE CT scanner from Toshiba, Lisa Henry, director of marketing, was eager to promote the new technology. “We were one of a handful of facilities in the country to install that technology first,” she recalls. Henry began by marketing to referring physicians prior to implementation. “We reached out to our referrers first because they don’t like their patients to come in talking about something they aren’t aware of,” she says.

Pinnacle invited its community of referring clinicians to a presentation highlighting the Aquilion ONE’s features and capabilities; from the start, Henry knew the invitation had to be as unique as the technology itself. “We wanted the invitation to be catchy and to attract attention in a busy office,” she says.

“The best way for referrers to understand the difference between the Aquilion ONE and a 64-detector row CT was to see the 3D images in color.” Because Pinnacle had yet to install the scanner, Henry’s team pulled clinical images from the Image Maker kit provided by Toshiba and loaded them onto cartridges for custom-made slide viewers based on the View-Master® model. “We mailed the slide viewers in a clear plastic tube so they would be noticed immediately,” Henry says. “It was a huge success. We had a great turnout at our open house.”



Becky Dagher Wardzala, public relations manager for Hendricks Regional Health, Danville, Ind., also felt that referring-physician outreach was crucial to marketing Hendricks’ new Vantage Titan™ MRI system. “When we get something new that’s better for patients, we like to give physicians some clinical information so they can understand the benefits,” she says. Hendricks conveyed this information using a letter from its radiology director, combined with print materials based on Image Maker templates.

“We inserted a customized photo of our machine, and we dropped in a paragraph about how we’re looking for the best-quality images for proper diagnosis,” Wardzala recalls, “There was already a nice list of bulleted points outlining the benefits for physicians and patients in the Image Maker materials, so we included that as well. The letter from our radiology director recapped those benefits.”

Anne Kolwe, marketing director for Cardiovascular Institute of the South (CIS), Houma, La, focused more on patient marketing following the institute’s acquisition of an Aquilion ONE CT system. “The referring physicians already knew what the technology was, but to reach our patients, we needed to use a lot of different media outlets, including newspapers

and television,” she says. “We wanted to humanize the campaign and give patients a better understanding of how the technology relates to them.”

Though CIS developed its own print materials and television spots in accordance with its established branding, Kolwe used the camera-ready images provided by the Image Maker kit in the campaign. “The scanner is an example of how we offer the latest and greatest technology,” she notes, “so the commercials featured high-tech images. We wanted to give the feel that we are using the most advanced technology.”

## Marketing as Education to Generate Awareness

In July 2008, Glendale Memorial Hospital in California implemented two new imaging technologies from Toshiba: a Vantage MRI system and an Aquilion 32-detector row CT scanner. Amy Stricker, manager of marketing and communications, knew that educating Glendale’s referring clinicians on the capabilities of the new technology would be crucial to the hospital’s marketing efforts.

“When you get new technology, it’s important to educate physicians on what makes it different,” Stricker says. “Technologies like this are a big investment, and they are huge assets to the community. Physicians and their patients will benefit from the new features, but they need to know what they are.”



Stricker developed print materials for Glendale’s referring community that highlighted the clinical benefits of the new technologies. “It was a matter of finding out what made our technology better and conveying that in a simple way,” she says. “With the CT, we talked about how you could get high-resolu-

tion images for any part of the body in seconds. For the MRI, we emphasized the superior image quality and the availability of non-contrast MR angiography, which is particularly important to patients with renal complications because of the Nephrogenic Systemic Fibrosis risk.”

The materials also focused on aspects of the new technologies that made them more patient friendly, including the MRI system’s proprietary Pianissimo™ noise reduction feature (which reduces noise by 90 percent during scanning) and the CT unit’s rapid speed of scanning, which results in shorter waiting times. “Referring physicians want to make sure their patients have the best experience possible,” Stricker notes.

Jim Burch, director of communications for TAMS, says, “As an imaging-services provider, your currency is information. You’re taking images, but what you’re really doing is providing information about the patient to the referring physician, so the best way to market to that physician is through diagnostic clinical information. You’re speaking the same language.”

Stricker used the TAMS Image Maker kit as a resource for both clinical images and information. “We have our own campaign branding and images we use for most of our materials,” she notes, “but the sample ads and pieces provided with Image Maker were helpful in giving us ideas and showing what the key messages in our promotions should be.”

While Stricker chose to focus primarily on referring-physician marketing, Burch notes the same principle can be applied to patient outreach. “Consumers can get their information from a wide variety of locations, not all of which are trusted. I think the savvy hospitals and imaging centers are working to provide valuable, in-depth information and resources for patients. A print ad doesn’t help them take control; it only provides them with enough information to be curious. The additional educational materials are what consumers are looking for,” he says.

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