



## Private Practice Marketing & Branding **Part One**

# A Guide to Identifying Your Practice's Marketing Advantage.

Identifying your marketing advantage can be challenging. This guide, developed by the American Medical Association, focuses on helping private practice physicians and their care teams understand the marketing concepts of differentiation and positioning.

Often, a practice's best and most distinct advantage lies in the interests, personality, and style of its practitioners and office operations. For example, a practice that prides itself on listening carefully to patients and giving them more time has already inherently identified its unique marketing proposition. Additionally, a practice that focuses on wellness and preventive care has done the same.

This guide complements the Primer One webinar and is a stand-alone resource. It provides a guide to help physicians identify their unique marketing advantage. Unlike physicians who are part of large hospitals or health systems, private practice doctors can create their own "brand" of medicine and patient care.

Using this assessment as a starting point, physicians and their care teams can discuss their practice, the needs of their patients and community, and the competitive environment—all designed to uncover the unique brand story most relevant to the people they need to reach.

**A practice that prides itself on listening carefully to patients and giving them more time has already inherently identified its unique marketing proposition.**



# Private Practice Marketing & Branding **Part One**

## STEP I: Identifying Your Strengths and Unique Attributes

### Your Personal Assessment

Each team member should complete this individually as a thought starter to help determine the core strengths of your practice.

Why did you become a physician/provider?

What do you like to do most?

What inspires you every day?

### Your Practice and Expertise

Conduct this portion of the exercise as well as Steps II through VI with all members of the practice.

What special areas of interest or expertise do team members offer?

What do you do best?

Do you specialize in providing any of these services?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preventive and wellness advice/visits | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Routine physicals                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Geriatrics                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sports-related care                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Pediatrics and/or family medicine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____                 |  |

Would you like to focus more on any of the above areas or other specializations?

What do you believe sets you apart from other providers in the area?

What makes you a better choice? Do you offer any of these unique programs/services?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual appointments         | <input type="checkbox"/> Lab tests in office |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special diagnostic equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> Shorter wait times  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____        |  |

# Private Practice Marketing & Branding **Part One**

## STEP II: Understanding Your Patients and Community

Describe the demographics of your current patient population. Consider: Age, gender, lifestyle, employment, special health needs or conditions unique to your area or population, retirees, new movers.

Are there patient populations you would like to reach or add to your practice?

- Which groups?
- Are they going elsewhere for care?
- How can you address their issues and attract these groups?

Are there other community-related factors that may affect health?

- Jobs or industries in the area:
- Hobbies, activities unique to region:

## STEP III: Assessing Your Business/Operations

### Hours of operation

Do you offer extended or weekend hours?

### Appointment capacity

Do you offer same-day or next-day appointments, or is there a long wait time for appointments?

### Online presence

Ensure your practice is easy to find on the web and offers practical information to patients and referral sources.

Does your online presence offer:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Location(s) and Hours | <input type="checkbox"/> Online Appointment Scheduling                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access Numbers        | <input type="checkbox"/> Photos and Bios of Your Physicians and Providers |

Is your practice listed on any review or third-party sites such as Google Business and/or directories such as Zocdoc, Healthgrades and WebMD? (Note: These review sites as well as social media will be discussed in greater detail in the Advanced Curriculum.)

# Private Practice Marketing & Branding **Part One**

## Ability to respond to patient appointment requests and/or inquiries quickly

Does your practice include:

- Nurses, NPs, or PAs                       An answering service  
 Medical Office Assistants                 The effective use of a patient app (i.e., MyChart or other similar option)

## Office environment

How do the following factors affect your patients?

- Location?
- Ease of access and parking?
- Ambience?

## STEP IV: The Competition

Who are your primary competitors?

Do these competitors offer something different or better than you do?

Do they advertise or otherwise engage with the community? If so, what are their primary messages?

## STEP V: Your Vision, Mission and Values & Internal Engagement

Does your practice have a vision, mission and values statement?

If no, what words or phrases have begun to emerge through this discussion that could be built into a vision, mission and values statement?

# Private Practice Marketing & Branding **Part One**

## Vision

Seeing the possibilities (broad)

## Mission

Carrying out the work (focused)

## Values

The context for your work and decision-making

## STEP VI: **Putting It All Together and Prioritizing to Create Your Brand Story—Your Marketing Advantage**

Using the information gathered through this marketing assessment, do any ideas rise to the top? Are there any common themes the team has uncovered during the exercise? What elements have been identified that make your practice unique? Begin honing in on those answers to start formulating actionable next steps, who is responsible, and timelines to complete.

The information and guidance provided in this document are believed to be current and accurate at the time of posting. This information is not intended to be and should not be construed or relied upon as legal, financial or consulting advice. Consider consulting with an attorney and/or other advisor to obtain guidance relating to your specific situation. References and links to third parties do not constitute an endorsement, sponsorship or warranty by the AMA, and the AMA hereby disclaims all express and implied warranties of any kind.