



Practice Tools: Testimonials & Success Stories

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Think of testimonials and customer success stories as having the halo effect of PR, but the clout of advertising. Testimonials can help convert visitors to your website into patients. Visitors are looking to feel good about your products and services. They are looking to see that someone similar to themselves has had a positive experience.

Review sites such as [Yelp](#) and [Angie's List](#) ask consumers to rate providers. Don't forget to consider more medically oriented ones including [ZocDoc](#), [Healthgrades](#) and

[Wellness.com](#). Your patients can provide great reviews for your practice. Use these reviews as testimonials on your website. Your best advocates are satisfied patients. Highlight their excellent results to attract new patients.

Blogs, local and hyperlocal websites are great sources for positive words about your practice. Bloggers are always looking to write about topics of interest. Some bloggers will go the extra mile and link to your website. And local residents are always looking for and giving recommendations for services such as contractors and health care providers.



Keys to Maximizing Testimonial Impact

1. *Use the person's full name:* A testimonial from a well-known and respected local resident carries prestige and credibility.

2. *No anonymous testimonials:* If you cannot identify the person at least by initials, then do not use the testimonial. There is limited credibility in "no-name" praise.

3. *Highlight recent testimonials only.* Older (5-plus years) testimonials speak to the past, not the present.

4. *Feature at least three testimonials:* Like

the old Sally Field speech at the Academy Awards, "I can't deny the fact that you like me, right now, you like me!" Whether the testimonials rotate on your website or are in a static box on your homepage, you want to project variety and that many people value your practice.

5. *Quality over quantity:* I just talked about quantity, but if you have to trade off, favor quality. A series of bland testimonials is not as effective as a few glowing ones.

6. *Use audio or video:* Written testimonials

OPERATE YOUR PRACTICE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 37

are two-dimensional. Video and audio are three dimensional. The viewer or listener can pick up on tone changes, emphasis on certain words, etc.

7 Great Ways to Use Customer Success Stories

Testimonials in the form of customer success stories should be proof of success. The fact that you have satisfied needs and exceeded expectations makes you feel good. Testimonials are powerful tools. Maximize their effectiveness by making them recent, powerful and personal.

All businesses have happy customers. Finding new customers and keeping current customers is vital to the ongoing vitality of every business. Your practice is in the business of improving patient health. You can leverage customer

success stories in a variety of settings.

1. Feature one or two in a blog post: Many people like the positive attention of being quoted or featured in a story. Ask their permission, quote them (using full name) and publicize the blog posting. You should end up with extra viewers of your blog when the featured person shares it with others through social media.

2. Post several of the stories on your website: Create a “Case Studies” or “Success Stories” button on your website. Potential patients often “kick the tires” on your site before they talk to you or visit your office. Let them see how you have solved challenges similar to their challenges. And remember, a story attributed to a well-known or well-respected person speaks volumes.

3. Highlight a few of the successes in your newsletter: Re-purpose or repackage some of the case studies in a newsletter to your distribution list. The newsletter stories will reinforce the positive feelings current patients have about the practice. Additionally, potential patients will continue on the path of gaining comfort with your practice approach and philosophy.

4. Create case-study booklets: Combine the different success stories used in blog posts, your website and newsletter into a hand-out. Draft short case studies of your practice in action. State the problem, your actions and the positive results. Using numbers helps drive home the point of the results.

5. Utilize as a new-employee orientation tool: Educate new employees about the practice’s value to its patients.

6. Incorporate it in your on-hold messaging: Compose a message that will appeal to most callers. Invite them to partake in a special offer or to speak to a specific person about the featured success story.

7. Put it in your direct marketing: Highlight a patient’s success in a mailer to patients and potential patients.

Utilize Customer Success Stories With the Media

Don’t keep all those good stories to yourself. Share, share, share with the media. In turn, they will share with others.

Pitching stories to the media: A well-written e-mail or scripted phone call to media contacts with a compelling customer success story can get the creative juices flowing. Writers and reporters need to fill



pages and airtime each day. Make their jobs easier by providing compelling content.

Advertising: Feature the success story in an advertisement run in a local newspaper or online publication.

Press releases: Both writers and editors like to tell a story in their articles. Live examples with local companies

grab the attention of readers. Making a connection is what the writer is seeking to do and featuring local personalities helps.

Contributed or bylined article: Targeting a story to a publication plays to the relevancy angle. The result usually is fantastic publicity and a reprint opportunity.

The Success Effect

Your customer success stories are little treasures. Don't bury them; instead, share them with anyone and everyone who can help your organization. The old saying that nothing breeds success like success is still true. Prospective patients want to know you can solve their problem or

challenge. Show them how you've helped others and they'll flock to your door. ■

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