

## MARKETING AND QUALITY OF MEDICAL SERVICES IN THE TIMES OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES

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**Abstract:** It might seem that marketing and quality are two different worlds, two different management concepts, having separate research fields. However, marketing specialists believe that marketing should not be treated as a separate field of the organization's activity. Marketing approach is used in almost in all areas in organizations and it is the same in a healthcare services. Reflecting on the quality policy, preparing the offer, creating customer service procedures – the patient orientation should be in centered. Modern technologies help to fulfill and satisfy customer needs. Marketing also fulfills the tasks of integrating all areas of management in health care institutions, where the main goal (subject) of the action is the client-patient. Therefore, the use of marketing activities without appropriate quality standards is unjustified and the time and budget allocated for marketing is wasted.

**Keywords:** marketing, quality medical services, management.

### 1. Introduction

Nowadays, dramatic changes have shown, from increasing emphasis on customer value, to the globalization of markets, to advances in the information technology industry. They are creating new boundaries for marketing and quality. Combining these changes with the sophisticated marketing of medical services creates new perspective.

Definition of marketing states: 'that marketing is a process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual or organizational objectives'(Berkowitz, 1994). This definition stresses the importance of beneficial exchange both those who are customers of services, goods and providers. First, the needs and wants of prospective buyers must be discovered and than satisfied. The key to achieve these two objectives is an idea of exchange. In the case of health care services we have to take for consideration not only patients-customers but also suppliers and personnel.

## 2. Requirement for marketing and quality to occur

Marketing today affects every market or organization. All organization market. Business firms providing services market their offerings, as do colleges and universities and government agencies, health care facilities' and even nonprofit organization also engage marketing. Both individuals and organization buy and use good and services that are marketed.

Almost four factors are needed for marketing to occur:

- Individual or organization with unsatisfied needs.
- An ability and desire to satisfy those needs.
- A way for both parties to communicate.
- Something to exchange (Berkovitz, 1994).

Potential customers make up the market, they are people who want the product or service offered, and they are able to pay for it. All markets are people. They may buy and idea that results the action. Nowadays everything is marketed goods, services, ideas.

Recent decisions of a world-renowned medical facilities, for example X Clinic Foundation, illustrate the diverse marketing related activities of today's organizations. The clinic operates an expanded 1,250-bed hospitals in Y and – to respond to growing health care needs in another facility. It has programs to serve the specialized needs of kidney dialysis patient, and even operates its own hotel to serve needs of patient from distance. To try to improve quality of patient services, the clinic conducts program in marketing research, customer affairs and physician liaison.

Quality is a key element in today's concept of customer value. The quality management system, plays a very important role in creating processes that affect the effective functioning of medical facilities. However, one of the most important issues regarding the existence of a medical facility on the health care market is the maintenance and acquisition of new customers, in this case, patients. That is why, it is very important to ensure quality at the appropriate level, which is clearly noticeable at the first contact with the facility. Therefore, it is extremely important to take good care of patients, carry out their activities paying attention to them and arousing positive feelings. It caused the customer loyalty and come back to use offered medical services. At the beginning, a medical facility with the ambitions of high quality should focus on aspects that can compete with the competition and help to win the market. These aspects can be divided into tangible and intangible factors. Material elements include: registration desk, patients 'waiting rooms, doctors' offices, furniture layout, equipment, decorative elements, and wall colors. Taking into account al mentioned elements, the expectations of patients should be analyzed in advance, as it should be taken into account. Customers – patients tastes and preferences should be taken under consideration, depending on their age, sex or social status. In addition to the issue related to interior design, the issue of

transparency of information boards, schedules, brochures or leaflets are also important, especially in the case of medical facilities that have concluded contracts for the provision of medical services with the National Health Care Fund, which clearly imposes an obligation, specifies guidelines and the method of sharing information to beneficiaries in accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of Health of 6 May 2008 on general conditions of contracts for the provision of healthcare services (Dz.U. 2008, nr 81, poz. 484).

The waiting room should be large enough to accommodate patients waiting for a medical consultation. It should not overwhelm by equipment or furniture. Each patient should be adequately served, therefore the number of medical recorders should be adjusted to the approximate number of patients. In addition, patients should be allowed to relax while waiting for the appointment, including by supplying the waiting room with the current press, taking into account the type of recipient and, if possible, a drinks vending machine. It is also welcome to position the TV in a visible place, the type of channel displayed to patients is also important. One of the most important issues affecting the opinion of patients is the issue of how to run waiting queues and setting control dates. Medical institutions providing private health services may individually regulate the way queues are run, taking into account the number of patients, their age or employment status. In this case, people of retirement age, having free time, can be saved for the morning hours, so that later hours are reserved for working people. The situation in public medical facilities is unfortunately a bit worse, because they cannot set their own rules, they only have to adapt to the restrictive requirements imposed by the Ministry of Health and the National Health Fund, taking into account "stable cases" and "urgent cases", as well as relying only on medical criteria resulting from the regulation of legal provisions (Dz.U. Nr 247, poz. 1819 z późn. zm.).

A convenient alternative for patients is also the introduction of a reminding system about an appointment, by e-mail or sms, which would also play an important role in minimizing cases of late or non-appearance of an appointment, which would cause disorganization of work.

The color and lightening of rooms in a medical facility are noteworthy. Interior with warm colors and delicate lighting will be well perceived. Avoid cold colors that can cause a feeling of coolness, load or loneliness. It is recommended to use colors that give lightness, a sense of warmth, stability and peace. Every effort should be made to make the patients of the given therapeutic body feel friendly, relaxing and intimate in it.

Valuating Quality it's a difficult task in the case of health care services It is easier to evaluate the quality of consumer goods. A detergent that leaves spots on clothes is most likely of poor quality, while a detergent that gets clothes clean is a better quality product. The ability to make this distinction allows consumers to punish poor-quality products and reward high-quality products by altering their consumption behavior. 'By contrast, health care services are credence goods, an economic term referring to a type of good whose quality is more difficult for a consumer to The American Journal of Bioethics evaluate. Consider a patient with cancer

who is started on a chemotherapy regimen and subsequently feels nauseous and fatigued. To evaluate treatment quality requires medical expertise to contextualize her experience. Has her tumor shrunk? Are her symptoms associated with her chemotherapy? Are these symptoms likely to persist or resolve? Would a different treatment modality such as radiation therapy have been more effective or have resulted in fewer side effects? Patients may know what their desired health outcomes are, but most lack the medical expertise needed to contextualize and fully evaluate the quality of care they receive. In some cases, patients may alter their use of health care services based on a marker of quality that is more easily evaluated – such as clinic wait times or the friendliness of a provider (Schenker, Arnold, and London, 2014). The problem is that such markers do not fully show the quality of medical care.

### **3. Technological forces**

Technology is a major environmental force, refers to invention or innovations from applied science or engineering research. Each new wave of technological innovation can replace existing product and companies. Advanced technology, the development of computers, tablets, smartphones having a significant impact on marketing. The world of marketing is constantly changing, especially in the era of modern social media, automated advertising techniques and audience analyzes. In order to reach customers effectively, brands must keep up with these changes and new trends, especially as consumers are becoming more and more prudent and more skeptical about advertising. The question arises how the latest trends can be used: from technologies such as virtual reality and artificial intelligence to strategies such as influencers and account-based marketing. What can we adapt in medical care services. Below there is the analysis of newest trends made by Forbes in February 2018:

#### **1. Virtual reality (VR).**

Virtual reality is becoming an increasingly common marketing tool for large and small brands. The challenge is to use virtual reality in a manner that coincides with all brand communication and is suitable for target audiences. VR marketing is still evolving, so it's a great opportunity to explore different options and stay ahead of the competition. (Murphy, 2018).

#### **2. Interactive content.**

Many brands, especially in the B2B area, rely on the content of blogs or publishers' publications and guides in PDF format to acquire clients as part of the content marketing strategy. Interactive forms can be more used on websites: displaying content in a more convincing, animated and visually attractive way can attract new customers.

### 3. Pinterest.

Although Pinterest is often seen as a niche social platform, it can be another great platform. Using Pinterest Lens and its functionalities to get in touch with customers and present products, services and style to them, the best marketing way to gain more attention.

### 4. Artificial Intelligence (AI).

The first proponents of artificial intelligence have already noticed that it increases the involvement of users. However, the integration of AI with chat on the website or with the Facebook communicator require even more creativity and understanding of the target brand market. AI should primarily respond to the needs and problems of customers just as well as human beings. Contact with artificial intelligence appeals to customers, if it will be in a cheerful and light style.

### 5. User-generated content.

Consumers expect from brands of authenticity. Our recent study shows that 86 percent. consumers declare that authenticity is important when deciding what brands interest them, and 60 percent. claims that user-generated content is the most authentic form of page content. By integrating a trusted and engaging UGC with multi-channel marketing activities, brands can win the hearts and wallets of consumers.

### 6. Voice search.

Voice search is one of the most dynamically used technologies in the recent history and changes the way consumers interact with the world around them. After asking a question, you do not receive 10 returnable links, you get one direct answer. Marketers should make sure that the main providers of voice services (Google, Apple, Microsoft) have the correct data of their companies so that they can guarantee correct answers.

### 7. Honesty.

Brutal honesty is the current trend that is gaining popularity and one should assume that it will continue. Marketers can gain the advantage of clearly saying which products and services are good and which still need to be amended. These statements may be supported by objective opinions of clients. Such honesty translates into brand reliability, and thus confidence in it and sales growth.

### 8. Virtual advisors (chatbot).

Chatbots appear everywhere, both on Facebook and in other chat rooms. As the huts with artificial intelligence develop, chatbots are used everywhere: to answer the most frequently asked questions, accept orders or provide customer service. Marketers should follow this trend by placing sales materials and communication in company chatbots to bring real value growth.

### 9. Account Based Content Marketing (ABCM).

ABCM will help B2B companies to reach specific people in companies. Marketers now have the ability to move from a unified advertising approach to a precisely

targeted, individual user and use of customized content via microsites, landing pages, images and/or call-to-action links (CTAs) to the destinations.

#### 10. Consumer education.

Because decision-makers are flooded with data – and it is known that data is not the same as knowledge – marketers try to be teachers. Buyers create their own shopping paths, and there is the opportunity to present and highlight key elements and give the knowledge needed to the final consumer. By facilitating understanding and locating content, it can create brand awareness (Holder-Browne).

#### 11. Marketing sensations and event marketing.

Experiential and event marketing are back in style and brands use these types of activities. sponsoring musical concert tours gets a new life - brands can organize even better events with which the audience interacts and broadcast them to a much larger audience using digital media.

#### 12. Influencers.

Marketing using influencers was gaining in popularity and was a fashionable marketing concept and a hot topic in 2018. Targeted at company influencers, marketing managers and influencers can work effectively with the media at lower costs. (Trinh, 2018).

In fact, marketing professionals should be aware of the new trends. What is important thing in healthcare marketing is the change. It is the degree of change that marks a meaningful trend. It becomes something worth watching, evaluating and bringing into your thinking and marketing planning. Doctors, hospital executives and marketing professionals have the option of “going along,” or they can proactively manage the course and direction of change.

The another analysis shows how those trends can be adapted by health care services and how to use new technologies properly and efficiently:

1. **‘Social messaging apps are becoming marketing platforms.** Facebook, Twitter and the other big-names are still popular social hangouts. But what’s growing in popular use are the social messaging apps, such as Snapchat, Messenger, WhatsApp and others. Real-time customer conversations and relationships are the traditional roots of messaging. Expect new advertising and marketing possibilities to emerge as chat apps continue to grow (Gandolf, 2017).
2. **Smarter content wins patients.** The significant trend is presenting content that is authoritative, interesting and share-worthy. The Internet is healthcare marketing’s front door. Patients – now responsible for an expanded share of medical costs – search online for valuable and relevant information. Amid increased competition for the reader’s attention, today’s content must be fresh, social-sharable and reliable to earn respect and build trust.
3. **Personalize; individualize.** Marketing delivery systems are more sophisticated. The public/audience has also become resistant to old-style, broad brush advertising

methods. Contemporary marketing methods identify user interests and deliver timely, personalized and relevant content on a one-to-one basis. Retargeting, for example, displays ads to individuals who indicate an interest in your website or content. As digital marketing automation creates a user profile, relevant, and personalized messaging is more attention getting and generates greater interest and response (Gandolf, 2017).

4. **Optimize for mobile, the new universal standard.** In the US, four out of five Americans own and use a smartphone. Laptops, desktops and tablets are still commonplace. But an individual will likely connect first using a smartphone. The ability to send and receive email, make Internet connections and do immediate online research is ever present.
5. **Healthcare marketing** needs to think of the mobile screen first, and budget for and adapt that message to other options.
6. **Location-based marketing.** Ubiquitous smartphones present marketers with the ability to target and reach a patient/audience by their location as well as by niche. For example, in one strategy uses the device's location to alert the audience about nearby facilities. Further, location-based marketing can detect and adapt to the social and personal preferences of the audience ( Gandolf, 2017).
7. **Live video speaks louder than text.** Internet technology now supports online video delivery, with far more available options than YouTube. What's more, video has a stronger audience appeal (about four to one) than text. Contemporary healthcare marketing can share stories by way of video content and live streaming video on websites, blogs and by way of social media platforms. The advantages include timeliness, immediacy and educational impact. Marketing plans and budgets are shifting and increasing in video categories.
8. **Programmatic video buying is more cost-effective.** Sophisticated software can draw on real-time data and produce greater effectiveness from a media budget. Programmatic media buying purchases digital video advertising and presents video ads to precisely qualified customers at the exactly the right time. Within the next two years programmatic video will account for the majority of digital video spending.
9. **Monetizing telemedicine.** Telemedicine advancements are due mainly to technology and consumer expectations. But telemedicine services are experiencing a breakthrough as medical practices become aware of the ways and means to charge for these services. Medical practices are beginning to recognize consumer demand for text, email, and similar connectivity conveniences. What's more, monetized telemedicine options – such as online doctor-patient consultations – contribute to office efficiency, profitability and brand differentiation (Gandolf, 2017).
10. **Patients as informed consumer/buyers.** The marketing battle for new patients is played out long before the first appointment phone call. Patients research medical and

health information, treatment options, provider selection criteria and dozens of other considerations. Today's patient has a great deal more "skin in the game" than previously, and their research guides their decisions about treatment as well as their selection of provider and/or hospital. Today's informed consumer/patient is willing to post physician ratings online, and to make (or withhold) provider recommendations.

11. **Patient's time is just as valuable as a doctor's time.** In a patient-centric world, convenience is the new competitive currency. Patients want convenient and prompt appointment times. There is no patience for waiting days or weeks for an appointment. And little understanding about having to "wait in the waiting room." Change has driven a new consumer reality. Patients expect and demand a retail-consumer experience (Gandolf, 2017).

#### 4. Conclusion

The newest trends in healthcare marketing have shown that it is one-to-one conversation between the health care provider and the individual prospective patient. Thanks to new technology, marketing continues to be personalized conversation.

Patients-consumers can be reached in a defined geographic location addressed by their personal smartphone. It's about the ability to deliver exactly the right message at exactly the right time to the specific individual in need. And today, more than in the past, marketing is about a dialog, a conversation, and a relationship. But without good quality of offered medical services it wouldn't be possible. Patient-customers comment their medical appointments, give opinions about personnel, doctors, clinic, etc. If they are not satisfied all the world knows about it. Patients show their likes and dislikes using social media. Nowadays good quality and modern marketing is a must have to survive on the market.

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