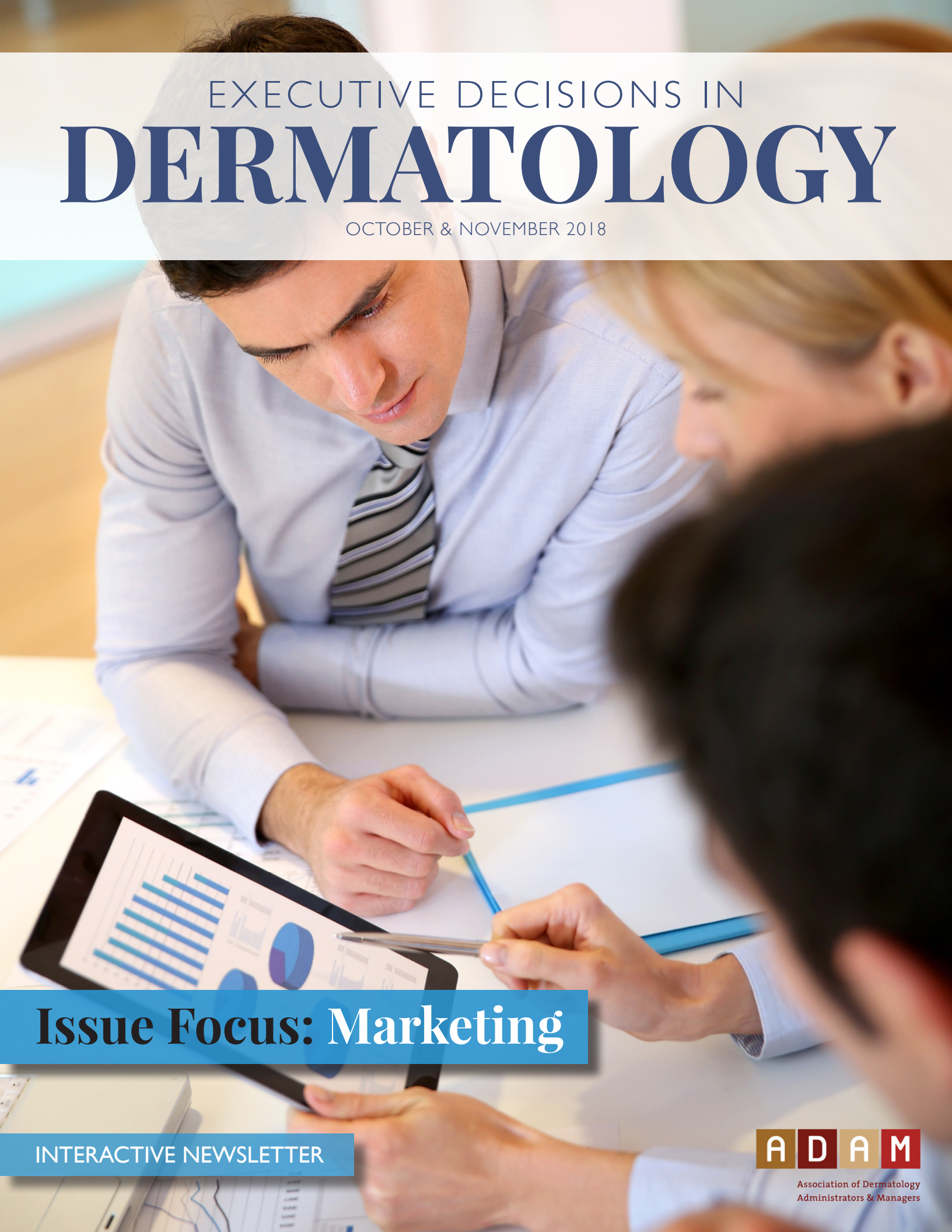




EXECUTIVE DECISIONS IN DERMATOLOGY

OCTOBER & NOVEMBER 2018

Issue Focus: Marketing

INTERACTIVE NEWSLETTER



Association of Dermatology
Administrators & Managers

EXECUTIVE DECISIONS IN DERMATOLOGY

OCTOBER & NOVEMBER 2018

inside

Interactive newsletter

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Executive Decisions in Dermatology is a bimonthly publication of the **Association of Dermatology Administrators & Managers (ADAM)**. ADAM is the only national organization dedicated to dermatology administrative professionals. ADAM offers its members exclusive access to educational opportunities and resources needed to help their practices grow. Our 600 members include administrators, practice managers, attorneys, accountants and physicians in private, group and academic practice.

To join ADAM or for more information, please visit our website at ada-m.org, call 866.480.3573, email ADAMinfo@samiworks.net, fax 800.671.3763 or write Association of Dermatology Administrators & Managers, 5550 Meadowbrook Drive, Suite 210, Rolling Meadows, IL 60008.



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President's Corner

Welcome to the marketing issue of Executive Decisions in Dermatology. In this issue, you will find an array of articles to help your practice grow through the power of marketing, promotion and innovation.

Marketing: The study and management of exchange relationships.

Marketing is used to create, keep and satisfy the customer. With the customer as the focus of its activities, it can be concluded that marketing is one of the premier components of business management.

ADAM's Marketing: As an organization, ADAM is more focused than ever on marketing.

- A marketing plan is being developed to move ourselves forward and create programs and products for the benefit of our membership.
- We are overhauling our website and database, which will change the way we communicate with our members. Our new website will offer a community, where members can speak to one another without having to go through other social media channels. Our members enjoy exchanging ideas in many areas of practice management, and we want to make communicating and connecting easier than ever before.
- Our Leadership College Committee is developing a brand new program for all members. More information on this will be available in the next few months.
- The Benchmarking Committee is finalizing the 2017 Benchmarking Survey. Stay tuned for the launch of our latest report.
- The Annual Meeting Committee shared the first draft of the 2019 Annual Meeting schedule with all Board members. The Program Chairs have incorporated many of your requests. The upcoming meeting will be an engaging and rewarding experience. Join us in Washington, DC, February 26-28, 2019.

ADAM Mission: To serve dermatology practice management by providing education, best practices, leadership growth and networking opportunities.

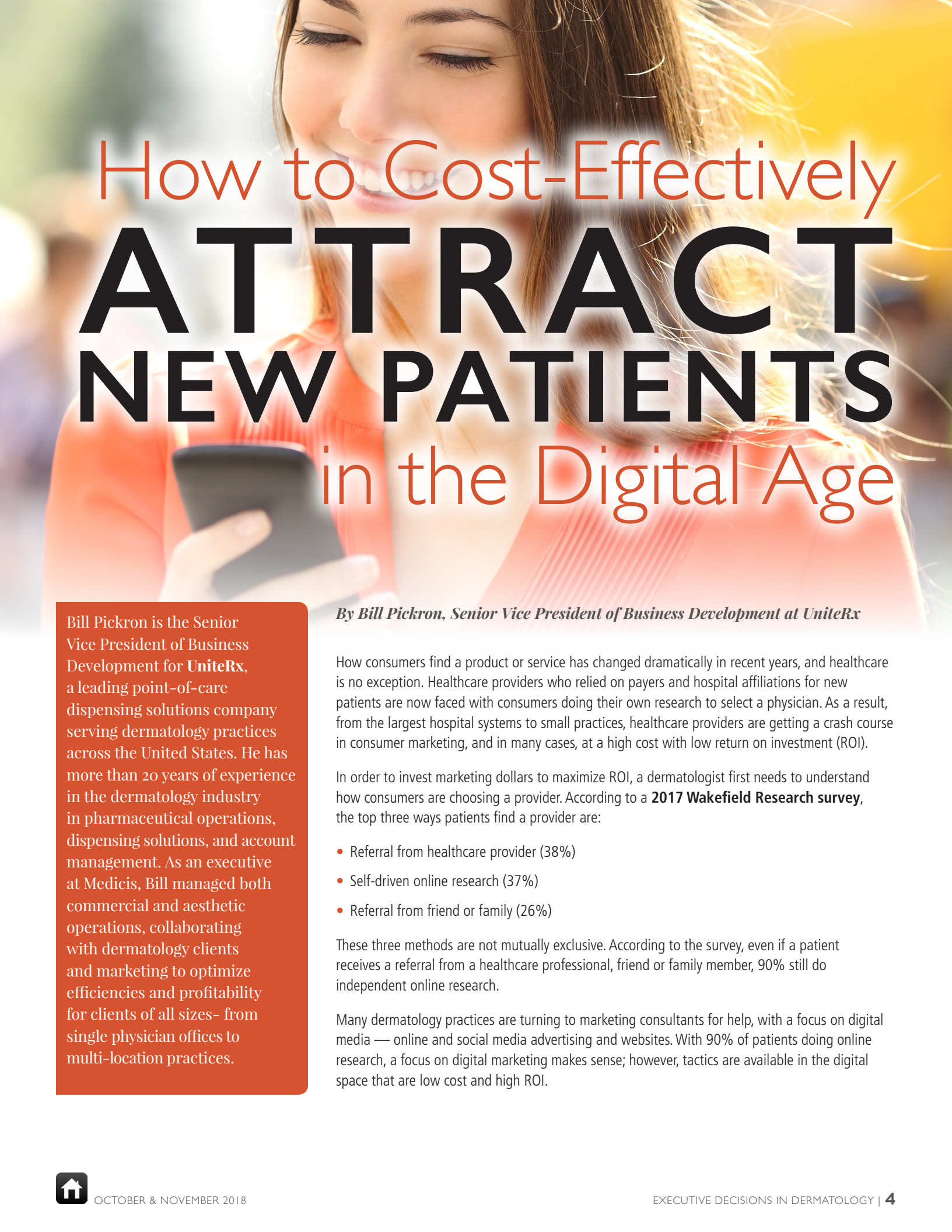
We are striving to find new ways to assist our members' personal growth through educational opportunities, networking and sharing of ideas.

Thank you for being an ADAM member!

Best,

Tony Davis, ADAM President





How to Cost-Effectively **ATTRACT** **NEW PATIENTS** in the Digital Age

Bill Pickron is the Senior Vice President of Business Development for **UniteRx**, a leading point-of-care dispensing solutions company serving dermatology practices across the United States. He has more than 20 years of experience in the dermatology industry in pharmaceutical operations, dispensing solutions, and account management. As an executive at Medicis, Bill managed both commercial and aesthetic operations, collaborating with dermatology clients and marketing to optimize efficiencies and profitability for clients of all sizes- from single physician offices to multi-location practices.

By Bill Pickron, Senior Vice President of Business Development at UniteRx

How consumers find a product or service has changed dramatically in recent years, and healthcare is no exception. Healthcare providers who relied on payers and hospital affiliations for new patients are now faced with consumers doing their own research to select a physician. As a result, from the largest hospital systems to small practices, healthcare providers are getting a crash course in consumer marketing, and in many cases, at a high cost with low return on investment (ROI).

In order to invest marketing dollars to maximize ROI, a dermatologist first needs to understand how consumers are choosing a provider. According to a **2017 Wakefield Research survey**, the top three ways patients find a provider are:

- Referral from healthcare provider (38%)
- Self-driven online research (37%)
- Referral from friend or family (26%)

These three methods are not mutually exclusive. According to the survey, even if a patient receives a referral from a healthcare professional, friend or family member, 90% still do independent online research.

Many dermatology practices are turning to marketing consultants for help, with a focus on digital media — online and social media advertising and websites. With 90% of patients doing online research, a focus on digital marketing makes sense; however, tactics are available in the digital space that are low cost and high ROI.



Three Tactics to Optimize Your Digital Presence

1. Optimize your website. The word “optimize” is most commonly linked to search engine optimization (SEO). Consumers are savvy and realize that the top search engine results are paid advertisements (and are noted as such) and place more validity on the organic results. The goal is for your website to be among the top three to five organic search results when a patient searches for your name or practice; a dermatologist in your zip code; or the top three services your practice offers. This need is where a marketing professional is critical, as this expert can:

- Ensure your website content includes key SEO search terms.
- Clean up your website so it emphasizes the services you want to promote and differentiates you from competition.
- Make your website easy to navigate to minimize abandonment and optimize ease of the patient finding the information he wants quickly.

Regardless of the number of practice locations or services offered, maintain one website. Having more than one website compromises SEO as your websites will compete against each other. While getting the practice website optimized could cost up to \$20,000, the ROI is significant, regardless of if you rely on organic results or choose to invest in online advertising.

2. Claim and maintain online profiles. In addition to the Google profile, provider information and reviews are available on Healthgrades, Doximity, Vitals and Yelp. When a consumer searches for a provider by name, these sites are often among the top organic search results. They provide basic information about the physician, including medical school, residency, fellowship and board certification(s), as well as a headshot and patient reviews. Ensuring that information is accurate and current is critical, and in most cases, claiming and maintaining your profile is free.

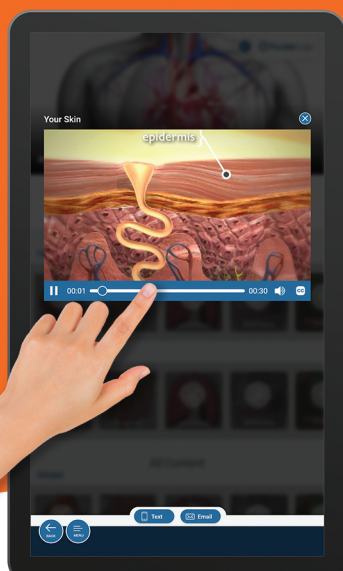
3. Manage your online reputation. A survey by Software Advice revealed that 72% of patients use online reviews to select a physician. While patients write the reviews, you can influence how readers use them by:

- **Asking patients to post positive reviews.** According to the 2016 Local Consumer Review Survey, 70% of consumers will write a review if asked. More positive reviews not only improve your online reputation, they also increase SEO. If your practice uses an online patient satisfaction survey, inquire with the survey vendor as to how to incorporate an automated request asking patients who rate the practice highly to leave an online review; many survey tools can automatically redirect the patient to a third-party site to leave a review.

- **Responding to reviews.** Whether you engage a marketing consultant or handle yourself, timely responses to online reviews are critical in demonstrating that you are customer-service focused. With negative reviews, the goal is to get the conversation off the third-party site and maintain patient privacy; use a simple response such as, “We are sorry to hear you had an unsatisfactory experience. Will you call our practice manager, Jane, at (111) 555-1234 or email Jane@dermatology.com so we can address your concerns personally? Thanks.” Of equal importance is thanking patients for positive reviews.

The costs of running a practice continue to rise, but with the right partners, you can identify cost-effective ways to optimize your digital marketing presence, as well as find new revenue sources with new and existing patients. ■

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GET SOCIAL:

How to Create a Social Media Strategy for Your Medical Practice



Julie Strong has 11 years of experience in the marketing field, with an emphasis on skin care and beauty. She began her career as a copywriter, then moved into a content management role for an online beauty retailer. She then centered her focus in on social media with Glasses.com, a Luxottica-owned company. She has been with colorescence for over two years where she manages the company's social media profiles, influencer relations and public relations.

By Julie Strong, Social Media and Content Manager at colorescence

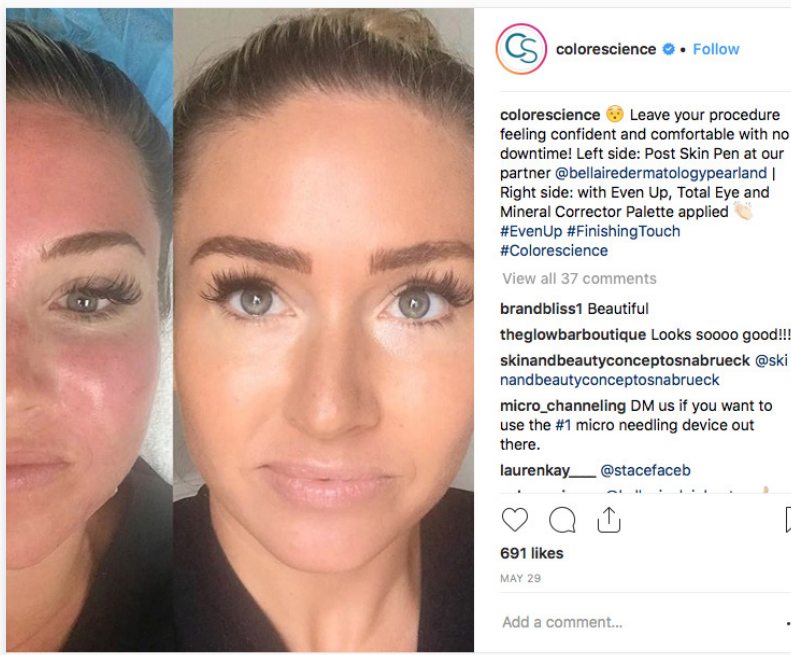
Social media can be overwhelming, and you may not even be sure where to begin when creating a strategy for your practice. What platforms should I focus on? How do I know it's making a difference? With the influx of patients bringing in photos of their favorite Instagram models for your physicians to mimic, you can't deny the importance of putting effort into your own social media channels. Whether it's skin like J.Lo or lips like Kylie Jenner, many patients are getting their inspiration online, and you need to join the conversation to help guide them in the right direction.

On what platform(s) should my practice focus?

Look at your customer demographic. Are they primarily in the 35+ age range? Chances are the majority of your clients will be most active on Facebook with an up and coming following on Instagram. Instagram is the fastest growing and most-evolving platform. You'll want to focus most of your attention on these two channels. The great thing about Facebook and Instagram is that they're owned by the same company, which means you can easily cross-post and cut down on your workload.

Be sure to create accounts for all top social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Pinterest, YouTube) in your name so that you have them for the future, even if you aren't currently active on them. If possible, use the same name across all channels for consistency – the shorter and easier to tag, the better.





What type of content should I post?

Medical practices have access to incredibly engaging content on a daily basis! Here are some ways to capture your own content:

1. Before and after images* (patients, staff, physicians) (photo by @Bellairedermatologypearland)
2. Quick procedure demo videos / photos
3. Patient testimonials
4. Facebook and Instagram LIVE videos showing patient demonstrations during procedures or host a Q&A session with your physicians — be sure your staff is comfortable in the LIVE format since there's no ability to edit. You can also partner with your retail accounts to gain a wider reach. (video by @rejuvene)
5. Giveaways (products and / or services) — the more likes and shares you can generate on your posts, the higher the reach, which will in turn increase your engagement and follower count. Giveaways are a great way to boost excitement and keep followers coming back to your channel for more opportunities to win. (photo by @Colorescience)

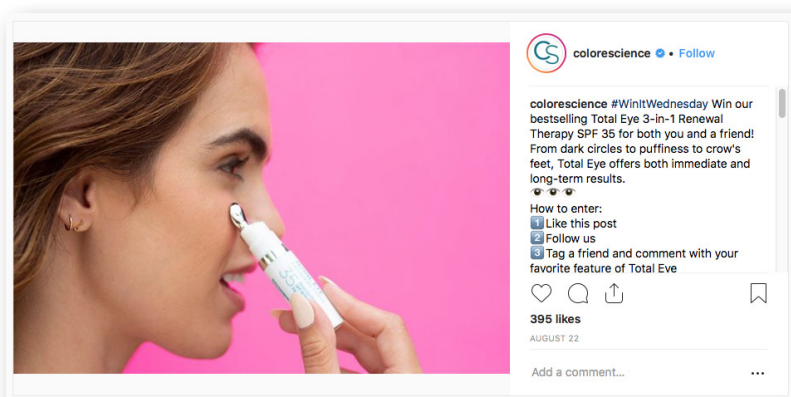
In addition to creating your own content, don't forget to utilize content from your patients and retail partners! If you don't have time to photograph or film much of your own content, sharing other users' content is an extremely valuable resource for your strategy.

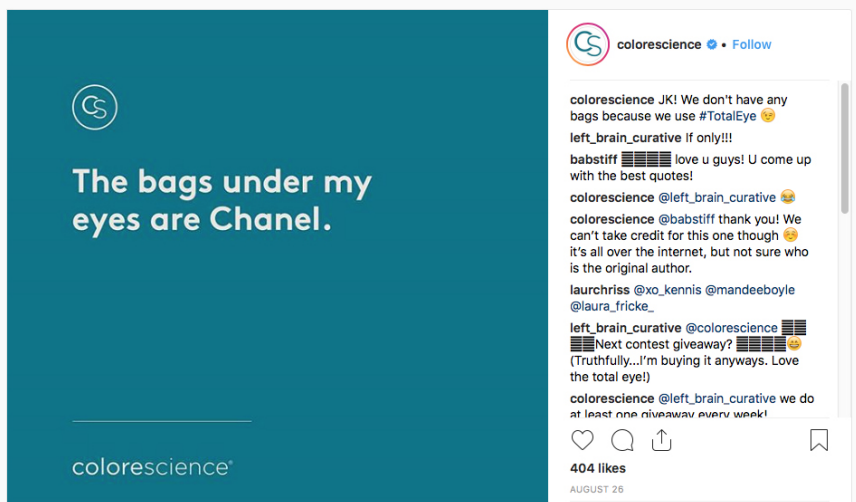
1. Check your notifications and direct messages daily to monitor posts that tag your account.
2. Follow your retail brand partners and share their product images / videos. (photo by @colorescience)

Be sure to include relevant hashtags on your posts (i.e. #lipfiller) and add a location to each post so prospective patients in your area can more easily find you.

How often should I post?

The most important thing to focus on when planning your content schedule is consistency. If you're only able to post two days per week, your followers will be looking for those posts, so be sure to remain consistent. Ideally, you'll want to post 1-2 times per day, but that can be difficult unless you have a marketing person dedicated to your social media efforts. When first starting out, you don't need unique content for each platform; it's acceptable to post identical content across all your social media accounts.





How can I get my posts noticed?

When social media began, you'd see all the accounts you follow in a chronological stream. Since then, platforms have adapted and introduced algorithms to present the best, most engaging and relevant content it thinks you would prefer to see first. Here are the top factors to consider in order to get the most eyes on your posts:

1. Post quality content – this will in turn be more engaging and the more engaging your posts are, the more they will be served to additional users.
2. Post frequently with a mix of regular profile posts (which live forever) and stories (which disappear after 24 hours).
3. Use LIVE video – this type of content is very exciting to users, and they will be notified when you "go LIVE." It gives them a chance to interact with you directly in real-time.
4. Post engaging captions that provide a call to action or encourage followers to comment and tag others to increase your reach.
5. Don't forget about your posts once you hit the submit button; be sure to reply to the comments on your posts to continue the conversation.
6. Jump on trends whenever possible. For example, if a celebrity has just posted great results from a recent procedure that your practice offers, this is your opportunity to utilize that content.
7. Post during the most active hours. This will vary by account and can be viewed in the insights sections of your accounts, but generally users are most active between the hours of 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

How do I measure success?

The top two ways to measure success for your social media platforms are engagement rates and new patient acquisition. Engagement refers to the total number of likes, comments, shares, clicks and views. The average engagement rates on Instagram and Facebook for Health &

Beauty accounts is 1.14% and 0.14%, respectively. Admins of the accounts can access all the analytics to see where you stand.

To promote new patient acquisition, you'll want to make sure that each of your posts has a call to action, such as directing your followers to your website or including your phone number. In order to track clicks from your social posts to your website, you can create a free bit.ly account to create custom URLs. For Instagram, since the only clickable link is in your profile, you'll want to direct them to this link in each post.

Social media marketing continues to gain momentum and will add value to your practice with each passing day. Taking small measures to engage with your followers and give them insight into your practice's treatments and procedures can significantly boost new patient acquisitions and keep them coming back for more. ■

**Be sure to get model release forms signed for any imagery / video content showcasing patients.*

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Three Strategies for Taking Your Practice Marketing to THE NEXT LEVEL



By Robin Ntoh, Senior Professional Services Consultant at Nextech

There are many benefits to effectively marketing a specialty physician practice. A solid communications program can cultivate relationships, drive referrals, establish a practice's expertise and cement the organization's reputation in the community. Yet even when providers appreciate the value of a marketing program, they sometimes struggle with where to begin in creating one. Here are three straightforward tactics that deliver a strong return on investment for any practice's marketing initiatives.

Robin Ntoh has more than 20 years of experience working with healthcare providers. She began her career working in a facial plastic surgery practice and continued on with Mirror Image, managing client services and training. Robin started her own business consulting with cosmetic practices in various capacities, including the overall optimization of the office. She has seen success with both her personal business venture, guiding clients as a Nextech implementation trainer and now leading the professional services consulting team for Nextech Products. Write her at r.ntoh@nextech.com.

Allocate the necessary resources. Dermatology practices don't have to hire a specific individual to lead the marketing efforts, however, they should tap someone or a group of people in the practice to take ownership of the efforts. Those tasked with marketing should have an interest in communications and relationship building. To support these individuals, it can be beneficial to include marketing and communications technology in the onboarding process. These tools can pull data about the practice – like common treatments, appointment times, cancellation trends and more – which can pinpoint areas of opportunity. For example, easy-to-create reports can reveal the biggest referral sources, the most frequently requested procedures and whether patients are continuing to come to the practice year after year. Based on this information, the marketing team can develop an overall communications strategy.

Target referral relationships. For a specialty practice like dermatology, the best source of new patients is often other physicians. By using integrated marketing technology, staff can identify which physicians are recommending the practice to their patients and reach out to further solidify those relationships. This may involve written or verbal communications in which the practice checks that the referring physician has all the information he or she needs to continue recommending patients. Marketers can supply referral cards that list the practice's contact information, direct phone numbers for dedicated schedulers, leave-behind pieces about specific procedures and so on. The ultimate goal of these communications is to promote a partnership with the referring provider, communicating that the practice stands ready to seamlessly transition the patient to his or her next care step and will continue the high-level of care the patient and referring provider expect.





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Before seeing a specialty physician or having a complex procedure, patients often do some research, which could entail checking a practice's website or other online resources. When a practice has easily accessible blogs, podcasts or newsletters, patients can quickly obtain the information they seek. If an organization's physicians, nurses and other professional staff generate this content, it can underscore the practice's reputation as a group of experts. Even if a provider only crafts one or two pieces, the practice's marketer can reuse the information to further spread the word. For instance, a blog post can be turned into an infographic, presentation, video or podcast. These different media types can then be shared on various platforms or through automated email communications to expand reach.

Laying the groundwork for success. Increasing patient volume, fostering loyalty and maintaining a positive reputation are critical to a specialty practice's long-term health. By allocating resources, leveraging technology and relying on content expertise, an organization can build relationships with patients, providers and the community, establishing a well-regarded presence for years to come. ■





Content Marketing: WHERE and HOW to Deploy Your Voice for MAXIMUM IMPACT



As a co-founder of MetaMed Marketing, Brent Cavender heads up business development and is chief educator and advocate to practice professionals. In this role, Brent provides site assessments, shares insights for more effective medical marketing and supports clients with custom solutions maximizing marketing return on investment for every practice's unique circumstances.

By Brent Cavender, Co-Founder of MetaMed Marketing

In last month's newsletter, we addressed why content is king and how it supports successful marketing campaigns. Let's take an initial look this month at how practices can create and deploy content to maximum advantage.

Regardless of media type or means of distribution, content must say the right things to the right people in the right voice in order to be persuasive. For medical practices in particular, truly great content informs, educates, inspires and can even entertain – where appropriate – to ultimately garner better rankings from search engines and patient inquiries and loyalty. With all of this in mind, here are some higher-level considerations when deploying effective content:

- Brand messaging
- Target audience
- Relevancy (type of content and distribution channel)
- Audience size
- Storytelling
- Editorial calendar

In support of brand messaging in new content, consider the historic “voice” of your organization's most successful communications. Have they been ultra-conservative and staunchly professional? Or were they avant-garde, relaxed in tone and diction, and perhaps even a tad familiar with the audience? A successful brand can be built on communication that falls anywhere on the spectrum





between these two voices — or even slightly outside it. Regardless of your specific tone, your messaging should reflect your authentic voice, be consistent and support the brand, all while staying aligned with the practice's personality and services.

To some practices, this strategy will raise a much larger and much scarier question: Have we even considered and settled on a unique brand? We won't dive deep into brand strategy here, but we will note that any practice considering branding (especially for the purpose of generating content that resonates and influences) should comfortably marry the target patient audience with the chosen services / products and the natural personality of the practices' principals (physicians and owners). In this current era of ubiquitous digital content, when there is more available information than can ever be consumed and where filtering out irrelevant and unworthy content becomes a key survival strategy, authenticity is an important differentiator. Practice professionals who convey authenticity attract, hold and influence audiences. You shouldn't force a square peg into round hole, and you wouldn't ask a naturally shy, conservative and humble dermatologist to communicate boastfully or loudly.

In light of the argument around content aligning with global brand messaging, note that every piece of content also carries its own unique purpose. To be effective, a particular piece of content should be structured and distributed through those channels that best support its intent.

A very specific example: Press releases, blogs and articles published on various websites are often created and placed to generate hyperlinks that influence search engines. Of course, it's important that the commentary be medically topical, accurate, grammatically correct and well written to be worthy of interest on its own merits. However, the higher, overarching purpose is to provide content of such authority that placement is earned in independent web properties that enjoy authority of their own, so that a link in an article leads readers

(and search engines) back to the practice's website. The quality of the prose and choice of topics (messaging) for the piece earn its placement online, which in turn generates the new hyperlink. The mere presence of the link influences search ranking, and with greater visibility comes improved ability to attract interested patients. Site visitation increases, leading to higher conversion numbers and inquiries. In this tactical example, one could argue that the intended audience is the publications themselves, which focus on presenting quality content for their own audiences.

As another example, consider video. On websites, video supports conversion to inquiries because it virtually introduces the personality of the practice while engaging and entertaining visitors, prompting them to consume even more website content and make a deeper connection with the practice. In social media, video generates longer-term practice consideration and loyalty by attracting attention in platforms with less control and fewer opportunities to stand out. Simply put, video is a shiny object to capture visitors' attention. Ironically, by achieving this engagement and top-of-mind awareness in social media, the video can ultimately contribute to website visitations, since patients are inspired by what they see to dive into deeper research. In both instances, video is being used for the respective channel's conversion.

Looking deeper at how multiple forms of content contribute, the intent of text-based content on websites is to be authoritative and comprehensive in order to attract search queries and then to impress and inform patients. Video and also custom illustrations are key elements to complement the text, because they can break up the text to make it more digestible and to also explain advanced medical concepts. With increasing competition among neighboring dermatological practice websites, the use of rich media — like well-organized and relevant videos and instructive custom illustrations — provide an edge for a practice's property when

contrasted against competitors' content. We see here how different forms of content are deployed and combined to meet individual objectives which roll up to support higher level objectives.

Different channels are ideal for different purposes. Photo gallery content may visually impress potential patients by displaying treatment results; but when utilized to their full extent, they may also foster connection with new patients by revealing a past patient's story. Blog content provides an easy opportunity for personally engaging in dialogue with patients and demonstrating expertise in specialty topics. Social media is the virtual water cooler, where visitors stay in touch with the practice, hear from other stakeholders, get to know the practice's personality, and stay informed of latest news.

Invariably, potential patients visit a practice's website to vet doctors, research conditions and sample the vibe of the office and organization. They'll click around to become more educated in services and treatments, and to learn about the practice's hours, directions and communication channels, including telephone numbers and email. Websites represent the foundation of a practice's online content marketing, where all actual patients travel. As such, they must be thoughtfully planned out, filled with relevant and rich content, and then continually nurtured with new content to influence reputation online.

Audience size matters. The same content reaching a larger audience will generally be more successful for the same production cost. If a social media page or newsletter subscription base enjoys 1,000 followers, any new piece of content is nearly twice as effective than if it is exposed to only 500 followers. While there are specialty software programs to increase followership in social media, content that is more vibrant and relevant is shared further to increase followership organically. Recall also that blogs are the original social media platform. Similarly, blog audience increases and engages more enthusiastically with insights that are topical and valuable.





Content and audience size have an analogous relationship in practice websites. Without going into great technical detail about SEO (search engine optimization) and optimized content, we will say that sufficient, unique and well-written text-based content that is grammatically correct and speaks to the patient audience (not to other physicians) is the cornerstone of an optimized website. With properly optimized and formatted content, website visitation grows because the site comes to be recognized by search engines as an authoritative source of information. There is even a slight compounding effect. Great website content generates higher-quality visitation (patients stay longer and browse deeper), which in turn influences search engines to rank the site even higher, leading to additional visitation.

With a millennium of evolution, we humans enjoy a history made rich from shared stories. Our future will undoubtedly be further influenced through story. Stories allow us to learn from and inspire each other, but mostly we connect to each other through stories to gain trust and have more richness in our lives. One of the most valuable strategies a practice can adopt in generating rich and compelling content for its audience is to start from the perspective of story.

A good story involves character, settings, conflict and plot. For our purposes, consider “story” to be the narrative that moves potential patients from one place to another. Potential patients embark upon a journey at one level of awareness and appreciation for a practice and its available medical procedures. Great content housed in a story informs these patients and moves them along to new levels of awareness, with new visions of themselves and what they will experience by interacting with the organization. In particular, content created from the perspective of story can

be helpful in video production, in articles and press releases and even in how topics are sequenced on a procedure page. The idea of being story-based is especially effective in photo galleries, where a past patient’s own journey can inspire new patients to take the first step of their own.

When content creation is a regular activity for ongoing campaign initiatives – such as newsletters, blogs, and social media updates – practices can manage the process better and improve the choice of topics by keeping editorial calendars. These calendars can be as simple as a written list of topics chosen at the outset of some recurring period (annually or every six months, for example) or they can be as sophisticated as an online shared document holding topics, back-up topics, deadlines, publication dates and contributors. Not only do editorial calendars serve as organizational tools; they also generate better quality content and prove

helpful as a repository where practices can keep track of the new creative content ideas being developed regularly.

When content is rich, relevant and effectively conveys a practice’s brand story through engaging the right audience with the right messaging, it influences potential patients to look deeper in considering and getting to know a practice. Ultimately, high-quality content connects patients more closely to service providers so that actual inquiries materialize and the size of the audience – made up of your potential patients – continues to grow. ■

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Board Member INTERVIEW

Sarah Nielson, CPC, CPPM

Practice Administrator

Center for Dermatology & Plastic Surgery, Scottsdale, AZ



Can you describe the practice you lead?

Center For Dermatology & Plastic Surgery is a multi-specialty dermatology and plastic surgery practice. We consist of 23 board-certified providers and 128 support staff. We have eight locations spanning the Phoenix metropolitan area. Our practice offers general dermatology, cosmetic dermatology, Mohs surgery, plastic surgery, veins, dermpath and aesthetic services.

What do you find are the most challenging marketing issues and requirements as you run your practice?

There are so many aspects of marketing that when we first started to design our “marketing plan” we had no idea where to start. We learned how to strategically develop our marketing plans but only after we made several mistakes. We now set requirements for every marketing strategy; keep to our brand, know the target audience we are trying to reach and use the collected data to drive our strategy.

The most challenging part that we have experienced is online bad reviews. Although we continue to offer the best service that is focused on great patient care and satisfaction as a top priority, there are times we cannot meet everyone’s expectations. Sometimes it is completely out of our control such as medication costs or deductibles. This can be challenging to handle. We have learned to look at every negative review as an opportunity to improve. We tackle every review with the same basic principles. First, we respond with empathy and apologize if we have not met their expectations, then we offer them to contact our team directly so we may hear their concerns and find a resolution. Most times the problem is resolved just by listening to the patient’s concern.

Are there any specific tools or processes you have incorporated recently to support marketing needs?

We have started using Google Analytics as a tool for our online presence. We have learned so much. With the data that Google Analytics provides, we have been able to improve our marketing strategies.

How do you measure or evaluate the success of marketing efforts?

We collect data from various sources to evaluate our marketing efforts. Our marketing sources like Google, Yelp, Constant Contact, Demandforce, our internal PM system and phone system have been set up to collect useful data that help us measure the success of our marketing efforts. We also measure through our patients’ referral source.

What method of evaluation has proven to be most successful for you?

The most successful way we measure our marketing efforts is with our patients. Every new patient that calls is asked how they heard about us. The responses are recorded in our PM system to give us real insight of how our new patients are coming to us. Additionally, we track the number dialed when a patient calls in. Our event marketing has different numbers to track the success.

What do you see as the ideal skill set necessary in managing a dermatology practice?

There are multiple skills that come to mind that one should possess, acquire or perfect to successfully manage a dermatology practice. A few skills that I require of myself are to lead by example, be positive, be an inspiration, continue to learn, have the ability to adapt to change with a calming presence, learn from the people you are surrounded by, learn from your mistakes, be humble, listen, see all sides of a situation, be fair, find solutions, learn to delegate and ask for help.

How were you able to acquire those skills over your career?

Education, life experiences and peers. I strongly believe in education; both traditional education and learning from others. I surround myself with individuals that challenge me to learn and grow.



Have you marketed your practice through any of the following methods? Were your efforts successful?

Direct marketing through your primary care physicians - Our company was built by "pounding the pavement." Our founder, Dr. Gary McCracken, believes that collaboration of care will give the best outcome for the patient. We continue to foster our relationships with the primary care physicians and other specialty providers by meeting with them, learning about their needs and collaborating to provide great care for our patients. We have a physician liaison within our practice that regularly meets with the PCPs to keep the lines of communication open and address any questions or concerns that may arise.

Low cost and high impact marketing - Google. It doesn't cost anything to create a page, and we have a huge success with the information it has produced. Our community outreach events are also a great example of our low cost and high impact marketing. We are able to offer a service to the community and partner with other companies. This return is two-fold; we gain market awareness, and we form and foster relationships with our neighboring companies.

Email newsletters - We email our monthly newsletters to our existing patients. This is hugely successful to get information out to our patients about our upcoming events, new services offered, monthly specials and feature our Employee of the Month. Our patients and staff love it.

Event Marketing (VIP events, open houses, participating in health fairs) - We participate in various health fairs and community events. The biggest event that we offer to the public is our "Melanoma Monday" skin cancer screening on the first Monday in May. This year marked our 10th year, and it continues to be very successful. Not only is it good marketing, it is great for our entire team. We look forward to this event every year. It is a "feel good" event in which we help educate the community about the dangers of skin cancer and have fun doing it.

Loyalty programs, such as sending out important date promotions on a patient's birthday - We have tried in the past to start a loyalty program, but found that it took a large amount of time on our staff and was difficult to maintain. I know other practices that have great success with their loyalty programs; unfortunately, we did not.

Working with advertisers. - Yes, we currently work with advertisers. It is always good when measuring marketing efforts to include the time it takes to launch your strategy. Sometimes it is best to bring in an expert so you can focus on the growth of the practice.

Inserts in mailers or when people move into the neighborhood - No, we have not tried direct mail.

Local Chamber of Commerce - We actively participate with the local Chamber of Commerce in the city and towns we occupy. It has been very successful, not just for marketing our practice, but we have formed great relationships with other companies within the community; learned from their successes and partnered in community outreach events.

How do you market a new location?

Each location that we have opened has been unique, and we have evolved our marketing strategies with each one. The foundational marketing efforts that we put forth with every new location is meeting the surrounding companies and neighbors to introduce our company and build a relationship with them by learning about their company as well. We join the local Chamber of Commerce and actively support the community. I recommend hosting an open house, meeting surrounding PCPs and hosting skin cancer screenings for community outreach.

What marketing advice would you offer managers in the field?

The start of your marketing plan should be a plan. Most mistakes that we made early on were because we didn't have a plan. Your marketing plan should include how to track the data before you roll it out. Develop your brand before you start to market and be consistent with it. Know what you do best and let people visualize that in your marketing efforts. Set realistic goals; some marketing campaigns take time to see the return. Lastly, don't forget to inform and educate your staff of the current marketing campaigns.

When did you first become involved with ADAM?

I joined ADAM in 2009. I met a practice manager that had been a member of ADAM for years. She spoke so highly of this organization, so I joined right away. I am sad to say I did not do much with my membership in the beginning. A few years ago, I was really struggling with the growth of my practice and did not know where to get information that I needed or even just someone to understand what I was going through. It was right before the Annual Meeting. I signed up for the meeting and have been hooked ever since!

Can you describe the opportunities ADAM has provided you both as a member as well as a Board Member?

ADAM has provided me with resources to find answers to the daily challenges that I face. The knowledge that I gain by attending the Annual Meetings, listening to the webinars and participating in committees has not only helped me grow as a person, it has helped me guide and direct my staff, providers and our company through the ever-changing world of healthcare. The relationships that I have formed with other professionals have given me the opportunity for support and ability to learn from one another. The work I have contributed to the Billing Task Force, Education Committee and Communications Committee has given me an opportunity to meet new people and be a part of something that makes a difference. It has been an honor to be a member of the ADAM Board of Directors. The Board Members are wonderful individuals that pull their strengths together to bring solutions to the real problems all ADAM members face. It has been such a pleasure to learn and grow with them. ■



MARKETING YOUR PRACTICE



June McKernan is the COO of Patient Preferred Dermatology and has been in dermatology management for over 30 years. She served on the Executive Board of Directors for California Medical Group Management Association and as a Board Member of ADAM. June has also been honored as the inaugural recipient of the 2014 Practice Manager of the Year ADAM.

By June McKernan, Chief Operating Officer, Patient Preferred Dermatology

In today's competitive environment, marketing is necessary to grow a successful aesthetic practice. It is important to understand that marketing is more than advertising, as it encompasses a wide span of items to consider.

Brand Identity – This is often defined as the face of your business. Your face includes your name, logo, tagline, fonts and shape that send an appealing message to the consumer / patient.

Brand Personality – You need to bring personality into your brand in order to connect emotionally with your consumers / patients. Most practices tend to use sincerity and competency as their core traits. They present an honest, realistic picture of what patient outcomes will be achieved and the competency of the provider performing the procedure.



Define Your Brand – It is imperative to know your audience in order to make an impression. Appeal to patients on both an emotional and intellectual level. Make sure your telephone skills, customer service and treatments are up-to-date and the best offered. Offer solutions to the patient and not just a treatment. Set yourself apart from your competitors by giving the patient a memorable experience.

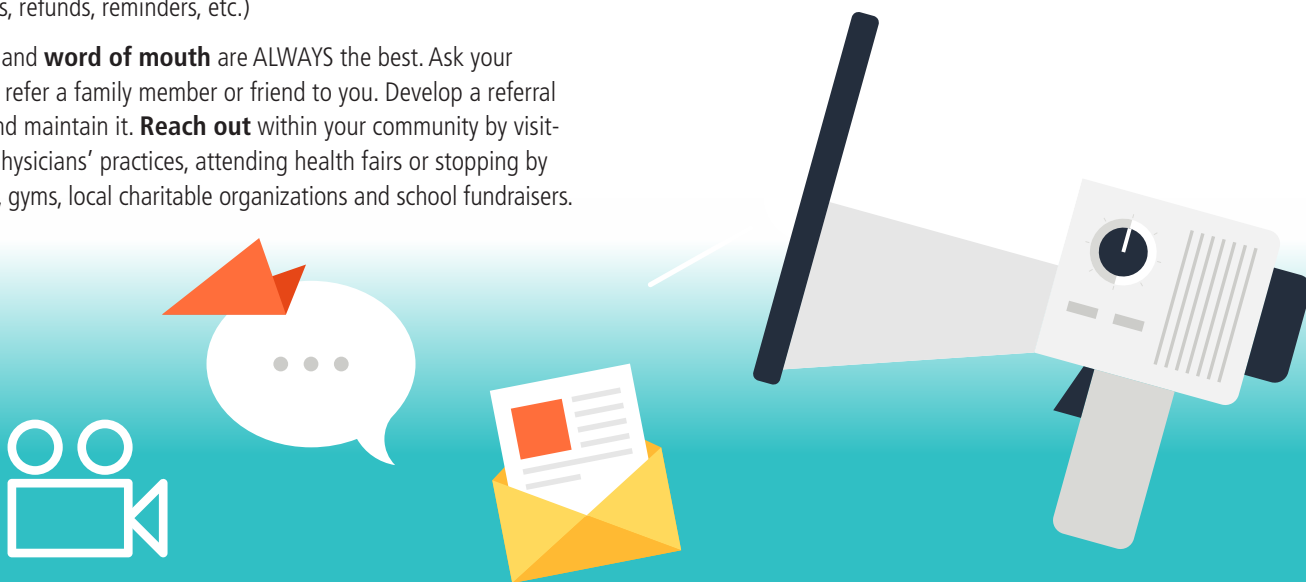
There are numerous ways to drive business into a practice. Whichever route you choose, you can start small and slowly work your way into additional marketing channels once you've mastered the first.

- Your practice's **website** is the most important tool driving business to your practice. Practices fail when they have a website that is not effective. Make sure it is up to date in creative original content and include a photo gallery. The photos and videos drive business and leads more than any other content residing on your site.
- **Blogs** will also keep the search engines happy. Healthy productive websites are never stagnant for long. They are living dynamic entities that constantly evolve and change to continually be improved, appealing further and further to search engines and patients.
- **E-blasts** promotions are common for most businesses to communicate information and / or specials to their customers and the healthcare marketplace is no different. Your personalized e-blast should be capable of capturing leads, bringing them into your website and through your practice doors.
- **Direct mail** is still a viable means of communication. If you are a blended medical practice, offering both clinical and aesthetic services, you most likely send out statements to your patients, so why not include a statement stuffer? American Express does this, so why not you? It is quick and easy to create a 1/3 page flyer (fit three copies per page) with information about a product or service, print and cut them in thirds on a paper cutter and stuff them into all your mailings (statements, refunds, reminders, etc.)
- **Referrals** and **word of mouth** are ALWAYS the best. Ask your patients to refer a family member or friend to you. Develop a referral network and maintain it. **Reach out** within your community by visiting other physicians' practices, attending health fairs or stopping by hair salons, gyms, local charitable organizations and school fundraisers.

- Marketing and **social media** go hand in hand. All practices need to have a social media presence. Boost your content across multiple platforms. With over one billion people online, tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest are imperative to building a fan following in a short period of time. It takes time and a creative mind to do all this, so practices either hire someone specifically to do these tasks or outsource them to a third party company.
- **Print ads** are still working. Newspapers are available online, so you get a bit of both worlds here. There are small community papers in areas that are heavily visited by tourists such as local coffee shops and small businesses. They are relatively inexpensive and well read.
- **Seminars** work. Invite patients to your practice after hours for a fun educational evening. Perform facial assessments, run specials and have vendors there to help answer questions. It is easy to capture appointments and generate income hosting this type of event.
- **Radio, television and magazines** are additional options for larger practices. Just make sure you can accommodate the influx of patients and phone calls.

Now that you brought more consumers into your practice, make sure you cater to their ever-changing needs. Make them feel special, assuring them that they are in the best hands. The provider-patient relationship is sacred. Oftentimes, the patient needs to be guided in making a decision through the vast array of treatments available in today's marketplace.

Develop a retention program. If you do not stay in touch with your patients, you will lose them to the competition. Patient loyalty programs, such as Brilliant Distinctions and Aspire, have assisted many practices with the retention of current patients. Patients love the rewards, and practices love the loyalty. So if you have not embraced these programs, do so now. ■





Federal Fodder

HIPAA: Patient Rights and Provider Responsibility

By SAMI Advocacy and Practice Affairs Team

As highlighted in a June article from the Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners newsletter, a recent lawsuit in Alaska has tested the boundaries of what to do when a suspected HIPAA violation takes place. Physicians know that their primary role at all times is to do no harm. However, “harm” can occur when an action is taken without patient consent, leading to negligence, a violation of duty of care and confidentiality and privacy. Unfortunately, more stories are in the news headlines of physicians sending explicit text messages during surgeries, taking selfies with anesthetized patients or explicit photos of patients under sedation.

The lawsuit alleges that the patient did not give consent for his physician to take photos during a surgical procedure that had no relevance to the procedure at hand. When hospital personnel reported the physician’s possible criminal activity to law enforcement, the physician refused to give a statement to police or participate in an investigation. Subsequently, the police seized the doctor’s cell phone, but were unable to unlock the passcode. The hospital compliance officer ordered the doctor to delete any images—a move that was meant to be well-intentioned but moved the issue into the realm of spoliation of evidence.

What is the correct course of action in these situations? The hospital reported the incident to authorities, but the doctor deleted evidence of wrong-doing. Under HIPAA, there are some exceptions for disclosing protected health information (PHI): When authorized by law, to report abuse and / or neglect for law enforcement purposes. Therefore, the hospital did not violate HIPAA by reporting to the police.

Other situations where PHI can be disclosed are as follows:

- When a workforce member or business associate believes in good faith that the covered entity has engaged in unlawful conduct that violates professional clinical standards or that the care, services or conditions provided by the covered entity potentially endangers one or more patients, workers and members of the public and;

- The disclosure is to:

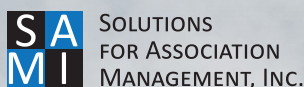
- A health oversight agency or public health authority authorized by law to investigate or oversee the conduct of the covered entity or to an appropriate healthcare accreditation organization for the purpose of reporting the allegation of failure to meet professional standards; or
- An attorney retained by or on behalf of the workforce member or business associate for the purpose of determining the legal options of the workforce member or business associate in regard to the conduct in question.

The hospital made the correct decision in reporting the behavior to authorities. The physician violated HIPAA; the hospital did not since it was protected by law to disclose the conduct that involved PHI.

Whether a patient is stepping into an exam room or wheeled in to an operating room, they're placing an incredible amount of trust in their healthcare provider. They expect excellent care — and that their rights, as patients, are not casually dismissed. If you believe a physician, colleague or any other medical professional has violated a patient, someone you know, or yourself, contact local law enforcement as well as the appropriate state board to file a complaint. ■

Disclaimer

The materials presented here are for informational purposes only and not for the purpose of providing legal advice. You should contact your attorney to obtain advice with respect to any particular issue or potential risk.



The SAMI Advocacy and Practice Affairs Team is dedicated to education and advocacy on behalf of dermatology practice managers and their patients.

Upcoming ADAM Webinar

Surviving a MIPS Audit

This webinar will cover proactive steps you can take to prepare your practice in the event you're selected for an audit. We'll discuss the penalty breakdown, hardship exemptions and appeals process should you fail.

- Tuesday, Oct. 23 at Noon EST
- Courtney Tesvich, Vice President, Regulatory, for Nextech

HIPAA for Patients

As healthcare providers who deal with PHI on a daily basis and have to address compliance concerns regularly, we understand the ins and outs of HIPAA compliance. But our patients have a very limited understanding of how HIPAA affects them, their healthcare treatment and other patients in the practice. Recently, more breaches have been reported due to patient actions while in the office and not providers such as cell phone use, social media posts, etc.

- Thursday, Oct. 25 at Noon EST
- Eric Christensen, Director of Client Services at Healthcare Compliance Pros

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or purchase your ADAM Access Pass to view ALL of the ADAM recorded webinars through 2018.





MyADAM:

A Digital Resource for Dermatology Practice Administrators

The **ADAM Resource Center** offers an expansive list of resources to help members' dermatology practices succeed. These valuable tools range from practical how-to information to real-time data on topical issues such as legislation.

The Resource Center's library organizes dozens of articles and recorded webinars on hot topics such as aesthetics, human resources and marketing. It also provides members with a wide variety of forms ranging from checklists to job description templates and consent forms.

ADAM's Career Center is the premier resource for those seeking careers within a dermatology practice and is complimentary to members. Whether looking for new opportunities or a place to list job openings, the ADAM Career Center is a versatile digital tool for either situation.

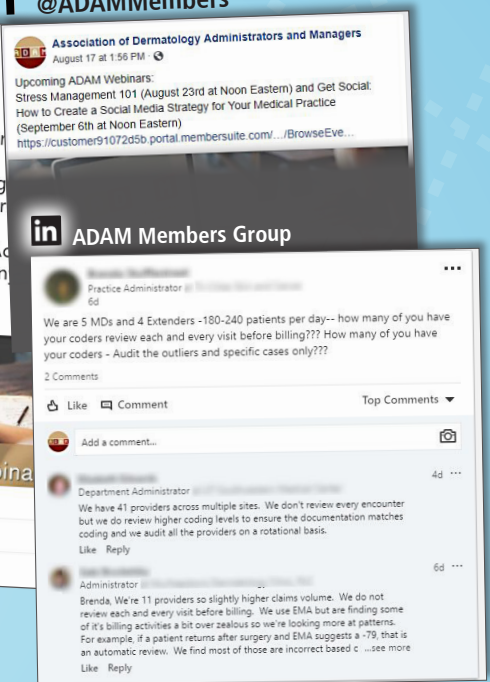
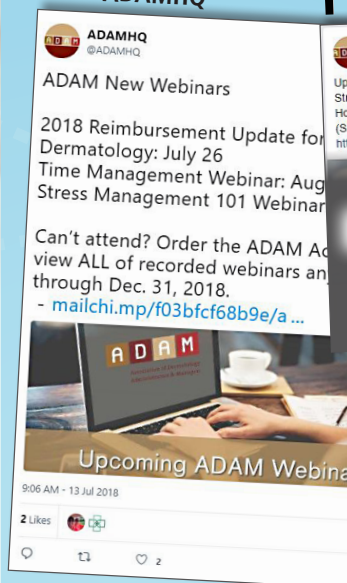
As an ADAM member, you are part of a strong network that lets you tap into best practices and learn from other leaders in dermatology practice management. Take advantage of all your ADAM member benefits by visiting *MyADAM* today! ■

Get CONNECTED!

Join the digital conversation on **LinkedIn**, **Facebook** and **Twitter**! Connect with ADAM and fellow members by engaging with ADAM's social media channels.

 @ADAMHQ

 @ADAMMembers



In addition to ADAM's public LinkedIn Page, ADAM members get exclusive access to the private ADAM LinkedIn Group! In order to join the group, visit the group page **here** and click the "Ask to Join" button. This will send ADAM Headquarters a request to add you. Once membership is confirmed, staff will accept your request. LinkedIn will send you an email confirming your access to the private member-only group; just click the link provided.

To share a post with all members, simply type in the box at the top of the group page that reads, "start a conversation with your group." Once you have completed your comment, hit post. This will allow all members in the group to read and respond to your comment.

To visit the group page in the future, click the "My Groups" tab from the top navigation bar and select ADAM. Be part of the conversation today!





Ask the **LAWYER**

Q&A with Michael J. Sacopulos, JD
Medical Risk Institute

A Map to the Legal Landminds of Marketing

Question: I am a relatively new practice manager in the upper Midwest. I have been tasked with growing the practice, so I am looking at different marketing strategies. I understand that marketing for patients is not the same as trying to sell used cars. Can you point out landmines for me to avoid?

Answer: First, congrats on the new job. You are correct in saying that there can be legal landmines for those trying to attract new patients to a practice. The good news is with a little bit of planning and knowledge, you will be able to waltz your way safely through the minefield.

I see efforts to attract patients coming from three large categories:

1. Seeking patients from other medical providers
2. Seeking patients from current patients
3. Seeking patients from the internet and general marketing efforts

I. Seeking Patients from Other Medical Providers

When seeking patients from other medical providers, be careful. Everyone likes referrals, but you cannot financially incentivize them. There is a body of law known as Stark Laws that prohibit you paying for referrals. It might seem like a good idea to “share the love” by paying some type of commission for each new patient sent to you by the pediatric practice down the street. It is not a good idea. It is illegal. In an effort to do an end run around these laws, some individuals have entered into creative relationships with referral sources. This too can be impermissible.

Inducements for referrals are illegal. For example, you may not offer office space at below market rates to a physician that is likely to refer patients to your practice. The Office of Inspector General takes a very dim view for schemes to financially incentivize referrals. This is a complex and tricky area of the law and far beyond the scope of this article. I simply caution you that this is an area of major concern.

II. Seeking Patients from Current Patients

Some of the best marketing efforts on behalf of your practice come from your current happy patient's basis. Studies show that most patients arrive at a practice either by a referral from friends, family or by looking at online reviews of physicians. Step one is to make sure that your current patients are happy. Step two is to give them a platform to help spread the word about your practice.





Jeff Segal is both an attorney and a physician. He founded and operates eMerit. eMerit is a service that allows for uploading of patient reviews. A “volume of fresh, positive reviews can serve as a great source for attracting new patients to your practice,” states Segal. Having an efficient and compliant mechanism to capture patient reviews at the time of service will result in practice growth.

However, third party services that assist with patient reviews can pose some legal risk. “Any service that promises to filter out negative reviews for your practice should be avoided,” explains Segal. “Ethical guidelines administered by Boards of Medicine prohibit the filtering or cherry picking of reviews,” cautioned Segal. He is right. The Federation of State Medical Board’s social media guidelines do not support this type of behavior.

Compensating patients for positive online reviews or directing patients to your practice is also problematic. The Federal Trade Commission takes the position that any compensation to an individual for a positive online review is legally an endorsement deal. This means that there must be a disclosure to the public that the reviewer has been compensated for his or her endorsement. So, if you were thinking of offering a patient \$50 off her next wrinkle-relaxing injection treatment in exchange for an online review, think again. Your practice should steer clear from any plan to compensate patients for new referrals.

III. Seeking Patients from the Internet and General Marketing Efforts

There are many great third party vendors that assist practices like yours with general marketing efforts. One solid place to start with your marketing efforts is to make sure that your practice has a quality website. Brent Cavender of MetaMed Marketing is an expert in this area. “If the internet is the doorway through which searching patients find medical practices, a website’s content and quality of construction is the key to opening that door,” states Cavender. “A well designed website is the cornerstone for your marketing efforts.”

Be careful of using vendors that offer platforms for texting to engage patients or prospective patients. We have recently seen an uptick in Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) claims. The FCC updated its TCP regulations in July 2015 and that statutory damages for violations can be as high as \$500 per text. As you might imagine, penalties can quickly grow, and some practices have been faced with class action lawsuits based upon TCPA. There are ways to safely market to patients and prospective patients via text. If express prior written consent is obtained, text marketing does not run a foul of TCPA.

With any vendor handling patient information, you need to be cautious. Make sure you have a current business associate agreement in place. I also recommend checking with your insurance broker to see if you have coverage in the event

of an electronic breach. Should your vendor make a mistake with patient information, you want to make sure you are covered for any damages that may arise. Finally, I recommend putting your personal information in with any list of contact information you share with a third party vendor. That way you will receive communications, emails and text just like patients and prospective patients. It will help you to gauge the efficiency of the marketing campaign and monitor your vendors actions in real time.

I wish you and your practice much success. I am sure that your safe, compliant marketing efforts will yield many new patients! ■

Michael J. Sacopulos is the CEO of Medical Risk Institute (MRI). Medical Risk Institute provides proactive counsel to the healthcare community to identify where liability risks originate, and to reduce or remove these risks. In 2017, Michael was named National Counsel for Sciemus, a Lloyd's of London firm, for its SafeHealth policy. SafeHealth is the first cyber insurance product designed exclusively for healthcare industry. He is a frequent national speaker and has written for Wall Street Journal, Forbes, Bloomberg and many publications for the medical profession. He may be reached at msacopulos@medriskinstitute.com.

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