

The Top 10 Marketing Mistakes that 99% of all Audiology & Hearing Aid Practices Make

And how to overcome them...

Kevin D. St.Clergy, M.S.

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Sign up for our most popular webinar, “Beating Online Retailers At Their Own Game”. You will discover why so many patients are actually getting the WRONG information on hearing aids and what you can do about it. You will also receive instant access to my blog posts that will teach you valuable strategies that will help you transform your practice from Good to Great. Just use this link to sign up:

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You can unsubscribe at any time. Join countless others who are already using these valuable practice building tips to bring more patients through your door and increase profitability.



Looking for a better way to educate your patients?

Are you looking for innovative new strategies to bring more patients through your door?

Discover affordable and exciting marketing tools at

<http://www.educatedpatients.com/market.php>

These unique marketing tools will help educate your patients about hearing loss and hearing aids before they even meet you! As a result, the patients that you took the time to educate will have the information they need to make a good decision about their hearing health care. In turn, they will trust you enough to buy from you! That is why an educated patient is your best patient!



The Top 10 Marketing Mistakes 99% of all Audiologists Make...and how to overcome them

By

Kevin D. St.Clergy, M.S.

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1.

Marketing Activity without an Effective Marketing Strategy

Picture this! Your favorite manufacturer representative walks in, eager to tell you about his current product promotion. And what a deal it is! You can buy his hearing aid for less than you usually can and he will even help pay for the ad! Never mind the fact that the ad will feature a prominent logo of the manufacturer's brand instead of your business logo, and that you KNOW you shouldn't promote product over your services. Sales are down and you need some patients...fast!

There is an old saying that describes insanity as doing the same thing over and over again while expecting different results. Does this apply to the way you market your practice?

- Do you expect to increase profits by using the same marketing strategy year after year?
- Do you only market when the manufacturer has a special offer?
- Do you have a marketing strategy that will motivate patients to actually *book appointments*?
- Do you have a specific strategy in place designed to motivate the potential patient who sees your marketing message to actually *book an appointment*?
- Do you recognize the marketing opportunities the Internet offers?

The Solution:

- Put your marketing plan in writing and plot it on a calendar.
- Develop a marketing plan that takes into consideration *every way* your patients can find out about you. Don't forget to consider "grassroots" and public relations opportunities as well as paid advertising in your plan.
- Promote your web site by including your web address in all advertising and on your business cards and stationery.
- Improve the volume and quality of traffic to your web site from search engines. Update your site to include keywords that tell the search engine what your site is about. Add inbound links that tell the search engine your site is important and outbound links from your web site that link to authoritative pages.

Want an effective marketing strategy?
Use this link >>

<http://www.educatedpatients.com/FreeConsult.php>

2.

Poor Budgeting of Resources

Your competitor has a ½ page black and white ad in the local yellow pages. You decide that to compete, you have to increase the size of your ad. To make it stand out even more, you add color, without stopping to ask, “Does my advertising tracking indicate that the money I spend on yellow page advertising make this a worthwhile investment?”

Do you have a marketing plan and budget? Or do you tend to “wing it.”

Without a marketing plan budget, you will never get ahead of the curve. You will only be able to react to what life brings you instead of creating your own opportunities.

- Do you budget how much money you spend on marketing each and every year?
- Do you treat your marketing budget like rent that you pay every month no matter what?
- Do you budget more for yellow pages even though it doesn't get the results for the money?
- How much do you budget to your web advertising efforts?

The Solution:

- Budget for the entire year! An *annual* marketing calendar will allow you to plan and create a consistent message for your marketing campaign and to adequately budget for all marketing activities.
- Allocate enough advertising dollars to get the results you want. If your business is less than 3 years old, budget 15-25% of your annual gross revenues. If your business is more established, plan on spending 8-15% of your annual gross sales on marketing.
- Include Internet advertising and web site development in your budget.
- Track and record all marketing results to gauge success.

Want to make the most out of your marketing resources? Find out how>>

<http://www.educatedpatients.com/FreeConsult.php>

3.

Using Outdated Marketing Methods and Mediums

The manufacturer representative is in your office again; trying to convince you to do a huge 5,000 piece mailer to generate leads and potential new patients into your office. You agree, and to your surprise, you receive only 1 call from a woman who has requested to be taken off your mailing list and who threatens to call the United States Postal Inspector about your illegal direct mail piece you have just sent her.

If you are like most Audiologists, you've tried traditional approaches to marketing, typically choosing direct mail, newspaper advertising and consumer seminars as your primary marketing mediums. Are you 100% satisfied with the results of your efforts? Do you ever wonder whether your efforts could produce more revenue?

The facts are:

- Newspaper circulation and readership have declined.
- Direct mail is expensive and less effective as the cost of postage increases and target audiences search for solutions to hearing loss online.
- The traditional "lunch and learn" format is expensive...averaging \$5000 per luncheon.

The Solution:

- Invest in driving local patients to your web site and harness the “global” Internet to reap “local” benefits.
- Consider “Pay per Click” advertising, an Internet marketing system that allows the advertiser to pay only for the ads that are “clicked” on by the viewer. Once the viewer clicks on the ad, he will be taken to the advertiser’s web site. This results-oriented method of advertising is unique when compared to the standard method of paying for placement of a banner ad on a Web page.
- Replace and/or complement traditional retail strategies with educational forums utilizing interactive audio and video tools on your web site.

Update your marketing methods and mediums today. Take action now>>

<http://www.educatedpatients.com/market.php>

4.

Not Marketing Where People are Looking

You have a 50-Year old baby boomer come into your office for a hearing aid evaluation. He is noticeably a gadget guy, already wears a blue tooth device, is very successful, and wants the best. When you make your final recommendation, he informs you that he will need to go research your recommendation on the Internet. AHHHHHH!

How certain are you that you are effectively reaching your target audience **FIRST**? A recent study showed that more time is spent on the Internet than reading newspapers. Statistics also show that Internet usage is increasing dramatically among seniors. Between 1998 and 2005, the percentage of Internet users aged 50-64 increased from 31% to 65%, users aged 65-74 increased from 12% to 45% and those over the age of 75 increased from 4% to 25%.

In addition, a 2005 PEW Internet survey showed that searching for health related information online ranked as one of the most popular online activities...above activities like searching for employment, downloading music or online banking.

Even after learning all of this, you still don't market online...

The Solution:

- Review the look and feel of your website. Did you use a template from a large company that looks similar to other websites in your market?
- Are you promoting existing offline materials on your website? Consider adding interactive, educational materials that use *video, graphs and testimonials* to your web site.
- Offer a personalized map to your location.
- Offer added conveniences. Give the patient the ability to download and fill out required paperwork BEFORE the appointment.
- Feature your current promotional print or radio ads on your site.

Want to start marketing where people are looking?
Sign up for our most popular webinar>>

<http://www.educatedpatients.com>

5.

Wasting Money on Marketing that Doesn't Get Results

Your industry friend in another region has just sent you the "magic" ad. He ran the ad and booked 30 appointments. As soon as you see the ad, you decide you love it. You run it once and make 5 appointments. Frustrated, you run it again and book no appointments. You think to yourself, "Gosh, I love this ad. Maybe it didn't work because it is too late in the season or because I didn't run it on Coupon Day like everyone told me to do." So you run it one more time with no response. Been there, done that?

Do your current marketing efforts consistently cause your phone to ring? Does your marketing result in appointments being made? Can you effectively capture the contact information for those who are exposed to your marketing message, regardless of the advertising medium you use?

If you answer "no"...or worse yet..."I don't know"...to any of these questions, you are not alone.

However, with some very easy changes you can stop wasting money on ineffective marketing and get the results you want.

The Solution:

- If your marketing message is a promotional one, always include a call to action as well as a specific deadline.
- Offer something of value “free” for providing contact information.
- Use retail strategies to get more appointments at least twice a year.
- Track your results to determine whether or not your marketing efforts were successful.
- Seek customer feedback. Ask everyone who calls or walks through your door how they heard about you and document it.

Get more results from your Marketing today.
Use this link>>

<http://www.educatedpatients.com/FreeConsult.php>

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Losing Patients to Online Retailers

You just spent an hour with a patient, conducting a hearing aid evaluation, reviewing the results, and giving your final recommendation. When you ask the patient if they are ready to move forward with a purchase, the patient utters our favorite phrase, “You are a lot more expensive than the hearing aids I found online!”

Online retailers are a threat to your ongoing success! Are you one of those thousands of Audiologists who feel “used” when patients come to you for a hearing test or fitting, only to have them purchase their hearing aids from an online retailer? Does it frustrate you that your web-based competitor is unqualified and lacks the credentials to diagnose hearing loss and fit hearing aids, yet profits from hearing aid sales that should be yours?

The Solution:

- Operate from a position of strength. Develop an online presence so powerful, so professional, so technically advanced that, once the patient has visited your site, he wouldn't think of going anywhere else to buy hearing aids!
- Focus on the patient's NEEDS rather than the product. By doing so, you will earn the patient's trust and will begin the process required to build the product's value as it relates to the patient's unique set of needs.

Death to Online Retailers...get your patients to choose you first. Take Action Now>>

<http://www.educatedpatients.com/market.php>

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Trying to Sell Patients too Soon

Have you ever made a recommendation to a patient and heard things like,

“That’s expensive!”

“I need to think about it”

“I need to talk to my wife”

“I need to ... get the heck outta here!”

These types of comments come from trying to sell a patient too soon. When it is time to make your recommendation, it should not be a question of **if** the patient is buying hearing aids, but rather, **which ones**.

Even the best professionals sometimes forget to follow the protocols that are outlined in many "Best Practice" studies. Your sales success requires your commitment to routinely follow a proven sales process designed to help you **EARN** the right to ask for the sale.

The Solution:

- Develop trust by taking the time to establish a personal, one-on-one relationship with the patient.
- Find out as much as you can about the patient's day- to- day personal life and how hearing loss affects his unique, daily routine.
- Use educational tools such as graphs, videos and statistics that are designed to reinforce the patient's understanding of his personal hearing loss.
- Show you understand by asking all the patient's questions before he asks them.
- Establish your credibility by using the words "I recommend" when proposing a solution.
- Use testimonials to establish the value of the services and products you offer.
- Talk about specific benefits, as opposed to features, that are meaningful to the patient to create the desire to purchase.

Want to improve your counseling process and sales skills? Use this link>>

<http://www.educatedpatients.com/FreeConsult.php>

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Expecting Results Online Without a Lead Generating System

You finally decide to improve your marketing efforts by developing your own website. To help accomplish this, you choose a company that you trust...one that provides templates for many other Audiologists across the country. However, once your website is up and running, nothing happens. No leads are generated and you realize your template website is as about as useful as a screen door in a submarine.

If you have a custom web site that is unique in your area, good for you. Ask yourself how many sales have you generated from it?

Chances are when you created your web site, you designed it to be an information site. You viewed it as a way to get your name out there and to tell those who stumbled upon it a little bit about yourself and your business. You hoped that if someone viewed your site that they would notice your phone number and call you.

Consider how much more valuable your web site would be if you could generate actual leads from it?

The Solution:

- Actively invite visitors to your web site to sign up to receive something free. That something could be a subscription to a Patient Newsletter, free batteries or a paper you have written.
- Once you have the visitor's name and email address and other contact information, you are well on the way to developing new leads for your database.

Start generating leads from your website today? Use this link to find out you can add this simple strategy>>

<http://www.educatedpatients.com/freeconsult.php>

9.

Missing Out on 80% of Sales Due to Lack of Follow Up

Picture yourself walking out into the waiting room to greet a patient and immediately showing the patient the choices of hearing aids they would like to buy and then asking them to go ahead and make impressions. Sounds absurd doesn't it? You can't do that, you have to build rapport, show the patient you care, learn about their needs, diagnose their hearing loss, then make a recommendation. In essence, build a relationship with the patient before you sell them something.

Internet marketing works the same way, you need to learn to build a relationship with your patients that come to your website. You are missing out on 80% of your potential sales due to lack of follow up with your web leads. Especially if that potential patient decides to give you their name and email address.

Once you have contact information for prospective patients, it is not enough to simply add their names to your database. It is time to begin the process of developing a personal relationship that will lead to an appointment being made.



The Solution:

- Invest in an computer program that automatically emails the patients who choose to give you their contact information
- Make sure the patient confirms the request to receive emails from your office.
- Send electronic newsletters, specials, and other learning materials to your patients to build relationships and trust over time

Want to build trust and value before the patients comes into your office? Learn more>>

<http://www.educatedpatients.com/freeconsult.php>

10.

Not Having An Automatic Referral System Set Up In Your Office Designed to Get All The Referrals You Can Handle

Have you ever received a referral from a satisfied patient? How did it feel? Pretty good I hope.

Have you ever tried to implement a program that could help cultivate referrals for your practice? If not, are you not sure where to start?

To begin your referral program, simply ask your patients for referrals. Ask in person, ask by mail, send out special greeting cards to patients.

Don't assume that just because you have great services and products that people will just start sending you patients, you have to start building relationships and then ask for a referral.

The Solution:

- Find a system that can automatically build relationships with patients without you having to ask in person
- Develop pre-written messages so that you can send out referral request cards from the front desk to maximize efficiencies
- Send thank you cards and letters from you and your practice, the more personal the better
- Send out marketing and referral touches as much as you can, birthdays, anniversaries etc.

STOP Begging for Referrals and START Generating a Constant Stream of New Patients Using A Proven Referral System that You Can Put on Autopilot.>>

<http://www.AudiologyReferrals.com>



Need Help Growing your Practice?

Kevin St. Clergy helps Audiology & Hearing Aid practices attract more patients and increase profitability. He has worked with hundreds of practices nationwide to help practice owners and managers reach their goals to run a more successful organization by improving operations and increasing patient satisfaction.



Kevin is a regular speaker at many state and national conferences on a variety of Practice Management subjects. His ideas have been published widely and his articles have appeared in several industry publications.

Ready to grow your practice?

If you're serious about seeing your practice flourish, Kevin can help you reach your goals. If you haven't done so already, sign up for your free 30 minute consultation by clicking on the link below.

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