



## A Marketing Approach: Navigating a New Landscape During this Pandemic

While marketing “tips” may be the last thing on your mind during these challenging times, it is also one of the areas in which you can take control of and ensure that your practice can successfully weather the storm as your method of practice and delivering care to your patients changes.

As independent business owners and practitioners, one of your biggest concerns is how to keep the doors open as you are currently unable to see patients, thereby affecting your revenue streams. While many of you have incorporated telemedicine into your practice, this is also a good time to invest in yourself and your practice for the day when the pandemic is over and business is back to normal.

I know this sounds counter intuitive but investing a dollar now into yourself and your business will bring you a bigger return on your investment later!

While we are all in the same situation, the playing field has now been leveled – but you can stand out from the rest by doing a few simple steps to ensure your business will thrive once our world gets back to “normal”.

Let me start by saying that **Social Media is no longer optional. It is a NECESSITY.** If you have toyed with the idea in the past of having a social media presence either on FB, Instagram, Twitter, a blog post and even on your website but haven’t been active, you need to be now more than ever! This is how the world is getting their information and where you can carve out a spot for yourself and your practice.

The key is to spend some energy on **NURTURE MARKETING.** The most important piece to this effort is **COMMUNICATION.** Here is how you can do that.

1. With all that is going on and your worries about how to make ends meet in your practice and not to mention your worries as a Canadian and handling the day to day during these times, you cannot forget your patients. Many of them are also left in the dark. They can have questions such as: “Can I see my doctor during this time? Are they taking appointments? What do I do if I don’t feel well? Who will manage my condition during this time?”  
And the list goes on. A big reason that many of your patients have chosen Naturopathic Medicine is because what they receive from their medical doctor is often episodic care and what makes NDs different is that you are more interested in the lifetime value of that patient - through good and bad!

One way to set yourself apart from other healthcare professionals is to **check in with your patients.** This can be done through a phone call or email.

- a. Be personal
- b. Don’t sell anything

- c. Show them that you are invested in their health and that although you cannot see them now, that your doors will be open soon and you are ready to welcome them back

Develop and foster your **BRAND STORY**. This is your opportunity to establish and set yourself apart as a practitioner. Focus on a **CONTENT STRATEGY**- sounds scary but it is very simple, here's how you can do it.

1. This is your opportunity to pull away from the pack and position yourself as unique! While many NDs are general practitioners, it is important to take a look at your practice and identify what conditions you see most of or what seems to be your niche. While this is not all that you do, it is a focus and will set you apart. Patients will then see that your breadth of work once they are in the door.
2. By committing to this strategy and finding your niche, your goal is to become a **THOUGHT LEADER** in this field. You can do this by starting small and writing a post either on your website or blog or FB about your niche or about a condition that you treat. You can share and re-share this information on multiple platforms. Future posts should also focus on a similar subject matter.
3. The goal with this strategy is to **BE CONSISTENT!** If you can only post something once a month that is okay – but be sure to post every month and on the same day. This creates consistency and people know they can rely on new information from you on a regular schedule. Ideally you should be posting/sharing once a week if you can. Perhaps you can set aside a couple hours once a week and write several blog posts at once that way you can be set for the full month. This is an easy way to manage your time.
4. Your focus should be on **FOUNDATIONAL CONTENT** spiced up with your personality. The thought behind this to provide valuable information but in your unique way. Always remember to **BE AUTHENTIC** and **BE PERSONAL**. It is vital that Ontarians see what makes you a unique practitioner. Don't be afraid to add in humor or personal snippets from your clinic life or even your home life. This will set you apart.

Double Down on your marketing spend – with the knowledge that your return on investment is coming once the world gets back to normal. **INCREASE YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE.**

1. If you have invested in google ads, or Facebook ads, boosting posts etc., now is the time to consider increasing that spend. Now is the time to grow and nurture your relationships with current patients and introduce yourself to new potential patients by sharing information. People are often desperate for information and if your ads or your posts are at the top of that list, you also remain at the top of that list. You become the go to source.
2. Information is at a premium these days and in a time where there are more questions than answers, you can make your voice stand out by providing consistent, valuable content. Letting people know that you are there for them, guiding them through these difficult times.
3. Monitor how people interact with you. Is it through your website? What are they clicking on first? Are you seeing more interaction through your social media posts? This type of information is invaluable and can guide the kind of content you put out there. It is also important to do this with your phone calls. What are they calling about? Where did they hear about you? There are

your analytics and can tell you a lot about how well you are doing and what needs improvement.

Lastly, it is important to remember what your ultimate goal is. You are practitioners and not social media influencers. If your goal is to be the best practitioner, you need to be true to yourself and post about what you know. You don't have to be internet sensations or post content multiple times a day. That is not your role. Do not compare yourself with those individuals who have chosen that path. If you remain, **AUTHENTIC**, **CONSISTENT** and true to your **BRAND STORY** you will be successful.

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