

DOCTORS NO LONGER "HAVE IT MADE";
TO SURVIVE AMIDST CORPORATE MEDICAL GIANTS
THE PRESCRIPTION IS PROMOTION

Hanging out a shingle used to be enough to guarantee a steady stream of patients. Now, private practice physicians are being squeezed out by medical giants luring patients with megabuck budgets, aggressive marketing campaigns, and prepaid plans at lower prices. Despite stubborn resistance against self-promotion, doctors must get "marketing smart" to survive, says Andrea Eliscu of Orlando-based Medical Marketing Inc.

Her Rx for doctors is the standard David & Goliath strategy: 1) find a niche, 2) build a brand-name identity, 3) network for referrals, 4) develop long-range plan, then 5) use the media to gain visibility in the marketplace.

Eliscu and her partner Mary Scott say the hard part is convincing physicians that marketing/public relations is not "undignified" but sound business practice. They urge clients to a) focus on the human side of medicine, b) improve customer service, c) use lay language, d) not medical shop-talk.

Competition is heating up in many professions which traditionally shy away from self-promotion, e.g., law, accounting, architecture, medicine and dentistry. Sprucing up image is just superficial. Survival of the fittest will require a keen sense of when, where and how to build a solid marketing/public relations effort.

A recommended tactic for one clinic client was to employ a full-time hostess to greet patients, serve snacks, keep people comfortable. For a diabetes center, they suggested opening a discount medical supply store on premises as a service to patients.

Medical Marketing also encourages physicians to go beyond usual care -- to telephone their patients at home to follow-up and provide non-traditional office hours when necessary.

Is it working? "Absolutely," says Eliscu. "Our clients are seeing more patients and billings are up substantially." And for those who still refuse to self-promote? "According to recent research, some salaries are down by as much as 30%!" says Eliscu.

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO PRACTITIONERS

****Effective use of humor** remains a hallmark of Ronald Reagan. Here's how he responded to the annual Gridiron Dinner lampoon, which naturally featured Irangate: "Remember the flap when I said, 'We begin bombing in 5 minutes?' Remember when I fell asleep during my audience with the Pope? Remember Bitburg? Boy, those were the good old days."

****Employees who feel underpaid or undervalued** almost always find ways to get back at their employers, business adm prof Olga Crocker, WindsorU told an Ontario commission investigating a pay equity law. "They find ways to sabotage the company." Some resort to white collar crime, others become "time robbers" -- visiting by phone or in person, taking long lunches & coffee breaks. "They usually hang around daring their companies to dismiss them." This is apparent with the pay-equity issue. But, argues Crocker, when women "feel they are being treated as human beings and paid the same as men are," they are usually more productive & display a greater sense of commitment to their companies.

pr reporter

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MONSTER EMPLOYEE RELATIONS CHALLENGE: OVERCOME APPREHENSION WHEN
1) INDUSTRY IS IN DUMPS, 2) LAYOFFS ARE OCCURRING, 3) CEO LEAVES,
AND 4) 3,000 WORKERS MUST MOVE TO UNPOPULAR HQ BUILDING

Attitudinal surveys found Standard Oil (Cleveland) employees suffering from poor morale & apprehension -- in part due to an impending move into a new world-headquarters building. "The company had employees scattered in 4 different locations around town. It would mean a massive move to put everybody in the new building," Pam Barr told prr. Her firm, Watt, Roop & Co, assisted with the employee relations program.

PROBLEMS. 1) The new building would be very different -- contemporary, with many open offices. "Quite a few people would be losing private office space." 2) Standard Oil was still in the process of cutting employees because of the oil market, causing job insecurity. 3) Company had embarked on a corporate art collection -- contemporary, as part of the decor and as an enhancement to the open office spaces. "There was a lot of hostility to this program, in addition to everything else."

OBJECTIVES were to a) reinforce belief in management's commitment & concern for employees' well-being; b) inform employees about the advantages of the building; c) generate pride & participation in the move; d) change perceptions about the art acquisition program. "We're talking about 3,000 employees. It was a massive undertaking."

THE PROGRAM. 1. Video segments -- called Added Dimensions -- were used to provide weekly updates on building's progress, discuss art or any issue of concern. "They were shown in the lobbies & public spaces so employees could see them as they entered in the morning or during their lunch hour."

2. Began newsletter, called HQ, completely devoted to the new building. Covered advantages like how the mailroom would work, state-of-the-art phone system to be installed, the new cafeteria.

37 Silver Anvils were awarded this year by PRSA from a record 551 entries. 12 categories went unawarded. Standard Oil's program was the sole winner in the 4 internal communications categories. Several firms won more than one: Daniel J. Edelman, Inc. (3); Golin/Harris Communications (3); Burson-Marsteller (2); Hill & Knowlton (2); Henry J. Kaufman & Assocs (2); Watt, Roop & Co. (2); Doremus Porter Novelli (2). "Silver Anvil winning programs demonstrate that organizations with effective public relations take the lead in addressing social problems, economic & political issues, health concerns & many other important matters," says Mitchell Kozikowski, Silver Anvil Awards chrm. (Set of 2-pg summary statements of all winners will be available by end of April from PRSA's Research Info Ctr, 845 3rd Ave, NYC-10022; \$17, mbrs \$12, prepaid)



3. Offered tours of a typical office floor mock-up. "We used incentives, giveaways, to get them to come. We had them fill out a questionnaire to measure their reactions before & after the tour. We reached our goal of having all employees take the tour. After they saw what the office spaces would be like, we noticed a change in attitude."

4. Held an art reception. "We turned a trade exhibit hall into a Soho art gallery. Did a brochure about the collection and had the art consultants there to talk with employees. 2,500 attended the after work, wine & cheese opening. CEO spoke. It was a success."

5. Held a Christmas party in the half-finished, unheated building. 3,000 employees came. "It was a good dry run for our upcoming open house because we learned a lot about the logistical problems of having a party in this building. Found it's so spread out we'd need 2-way radios for the big event. We ordered 48 and had training sessions."

6. An open house was planned for November. But obstacles loomed. a) "In October we were informed that the building wouldn't be completed. We rescheduled the event for March, but it meant lots of contract renegotiations with vendors."

b) In the middle of everything, the company had a name change (from Standard Oil of Ohio, or Sohio), "so all the collateral materials we had been preparing were out the window."

c) One month before the new date, the CEO/pres was ousted. "The new CEO changed the tone of our plans somewhat. And it presented another uncertainty for employees. We were called in on a different counseling mode. Do we throw an elaborate party when the reason for the management change was because of the depressed oil industry & the need for austerity? We advised throwing the party, but finding a mid ground -- making sure it doesn't look ostentatious or skimpy."

12,000 people came to the open house in shifts over 2 days. "To prepare for those numbers we hired crowd management consultants because the building wasn't designed for what we were going to do with it." Key measure of success was that 500 employees volunteered to help throw the party, giving up their weekend to do it. "It turned out they were really excited about helping." They were positioned in corridors & elevators as greeters, handing out momentos & maps of the building.

EVALUATION. "We evaluated as we went along." 1. Survey taken after tours of the mock-up office showed changing attitudes.

2. Plus the "sheer numbers of people attending the events -- which kept increasing, from 2,500 to 3,000 to 12,000 -- showed increasing interest."

3. Along with good feedback & letters to management about their success.

4. Attitudes about the art collection changed. Employees were invited to pick prints for their offices from the collection. "It became a heated competition. They were getting their claims in before they even moved. Before the art reception, this wouldn't have happened."

5. "The 500 employee volunteers had high morale & interest and wanted everybody else to feel proud about the building."

SURPRISE! THREAT OF NUCLEAR WAR IS THE LEAST OF PUBLIC'S CONCERNS, FINDS CONFERENCE BOARD STUDY

Drug abuse, rising cost of medical care and the Federal budget deficit are the 3 most serious social & economic problems, according to a nationwide survey by National Family Opinion for The Conference Board. 5,000 families were interviewed. The 3 top issues concern people in nearly all age & income groups. "The survey findings suggest that the major concerns of the public are not always the same as those expressed by public officials," notes Fabian Linden, exec dir of CB's Consumer Research Center. Some findings:

**Rising cost of medical care tops list of worries for over-55-yr-olds and is a leading concern of younger people.

**Concern about Federal budget deficit rises sharply with age & income. It is the number 1 worry among those earning \$50,000+.

**Families in farm-dominated North Central states show more concern for the plight of farmers than the rest of the nation. But even in this region, the Federal budget deficit is considered a more serious problem.

Issues Ranked Most To Least	Total U.S.	New Eng	Middle Atl	E.N. Cent	W.N. Cent	South Atl	E.S. Cent	W.S. Cent	Mtn	Pacific
Drug abuse	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
Cost of medical care	2	1	1	3	4	2	2	3	2	3
Federal budget deficit	3	3	5	5	3	3	6	4	3	2
Unemployment	4	14	3	2	2	8	3	1	4	5
Crime	5	5	6	8	10	4	7	5	6	4
Loss of jobs in mfg.	6	13	4	4	7	7	4	7	9	12
Alcoholism	7	11	11	7	5	5	5	6	5	6
Farmers' plight	8	10	10	6	6	9	8	8	8	11
AIDS	9	4	9	9	9	6	9	11	7	10
Poverty	10	12	8	10	8	10	10	10	11	8
Foreign trade deficit	11	7	12	12	11	11	11	9	10	7
The homeless	12	6	7	11	12	12	12	12	12	9
Pollution	13	8	13	13	17	14	17	16	13	13
Housing costs	14	9	14	14	15	13	15	14	16	14
White collar crime	15	15	15	15	14	15	13	13	14	15
Smoking	16	17	16	16	16	16	16	17	17	16
Pornography	17	18	18	17	13	17	14	15	15	18
Threat of nuclear war	18	16	17	18	18	18	18	18	18	17