



Rural Health Care

Marketing & Education Consultancy

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How to Spot Marketing Losers in Health Care

The industry is full of consulting-marketing losers. The key is how to spot one right away.

Here are common consulting / marketing firm mistakes which include putting your name, logo or ad on or in:

- Matchbook Covers
- Restaurant Placemats
- Tourist or Local Maps
- Grocery Cart Ads
- Grocery receipt
- Local Merchants Co-op Listing
- Local or any Donut Boxes
- Event Programs or Souvenirs
- Car Wash Bulletin Boards
- Refrigerator Magnets, Calendars
- Imprinted Toys, Trinkets & merchandise
- Cash Register Tape (or back of anything)
- Small Yellow Pages Ad (last in the section)

Enterprising salespeople will find you and these great "opportunities" will be pitched to you or your office staff. If not daily then maybe weekly. What's truly amazing is that the new and unusual gizmo and the carefully crafted pitch will sound compelling, enticing and urgent. Proceed with caution as it's probably not what it seems and or it will not benefit you no matter how cool or cheap it is.

If you have a well maintained marketing plan these type of fast pitched to good to be true ideas will be easier to say **NO** too.

Here's how to spot the pitch and avoid the losers

Pitch: "The price is low for what we are offering you" - Of course it's cheap. If it could deliver a quantifiable audience and/or measurable response then maybe it would not be such a bargain. Let them know your marketing plan looks only at measurable opportunities and if they may provide this info and leave it to be looked over than it will be considered. (Most of the time it is a have to buy now to get this deal opportunity).

Pitch: "Just one new patient and it will pay for its self" - Another variation of "low cost," but worse, there's usually no accurate means to track.

Pitch: "It's cute, creative, and original" - Yes, they may be right and people may buy into the gimmick idea because "they love it" or "everyone would love this" - like a witty toy with your name on it. This is especially true with toys and trinkets. However, don't confuse clever with effective. Imprinted merchandise is not a good medium for most circumstances. It is used in other areas of marketing but you need to understand the purpose and the audience and if you have an effective marketing plan you will know when to say yes or no.

Pitch: "You'll be First in your area" - If you have a good marketing plan you understand being first should send up a red flag. "Let someone else prove the concept". If this breakthrough proves to be effective, you can revisit and evaluate when it actually has a track record. If the company wants to build any type of cliental they will give you time to look into their product and evaluate if it may be useful within your marketing plan.

Pitch: "This is the only remaining item, position, space" - See above. First, last or discounted rate is a selling technique and no assurance that it will produce results. Just say NO!

Pitch: "Your staff is all for it." – This is common and staff tends to have a persuasive ability in the office. Remember, they do not realize the whole process for marketing and have a tendency to buy on instinct because it's cute, etc. If it's great and your staff likes, see if they're ready to pay for it. Go with your plan and don't be pressured to buy due to your staff.

Pitch: "We print thousands of these and distribute them free all over." - Two caution flags here: The quantity printed is not the same as quantity of readers or responders. Plus, being free may not be a plus either. You will not be able to have a good measure of effectiveness. You may have a better opportunity of buying a few boxes of business cards and throwing them out all over town. (We do not recommend either one of these methods).

Pitch: "An ad in this program supports the community (or event, band, team, etc)" – this sounds like a trick question. If the charitable organization gains something from this, then you may want to make a contribution. (Confirm this directly with the charity.) But if you decide to give a gift, be creative utilizing services or other means within the facility. This should be personal and from different budget. Preserve your marketing budget for marketing expenses only.

Pitch: "If you don't do this, I'll have to take it to your competitor" – The word "slimy" comes to mind. This person needs a class on ethical salesmanship. When you hear this one I suggest you get out your yellow pages directory, hand it to the rep, and tell him "they should be listed in here." If you are lucky, your most aggressive competitor will fall for this waste of precious marketing dollars on this losing proposition.

Here's the bottom line on Born Losers

1. These things rarely work, so don't waste your time or marketing budget.
2. Stick with your well thought out planned marketing program.
3. Let new ideas or opportunity prove itself on someone else's dime.

Do it right the first time. When it's done right and well, the personal and professional gains are satisfying and the value of a recognized authority will gain the respect of the community, patients and staff and is an effective marketing plan that is rewarding.

Trizzie understands that successful characteristics are developed over time and are an important part of any business. Let Trizzie assist you in evaluating and implementing the right strategies for your current and future success.

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