

Marketing Machine

Interview with Steven Visentin, D.C.

The American Chiropractor recently heard about an e-book written by Dr. Steven Visentin (SV), *Blow Your Head Off: Practice Building Secrets*. Dr. Visentin graduated from the National College of Chiropractic and decided to practice in Denver, Colorado, for its excellent quality of life. Unfortunately for him, many other chiropractors had the same idea and the Denver economy tanked in 1983. He states, “when you're in a town that's saturated with competition or has a bad economy, you must innovate or perish”. He had to develop unique systems to attract new patients because other marketing systems did not work well in areas like his.

Read on to learn how this writer of a marketing ebook who owns a chiropractic clinic, has managed to attract over 18,000 new patients as a solo practitioner.



TAC: It's clear that you're an expert at marketing on a shoestring budget. Tell us more about how you came about this knowledge.

VISENTIN: I had no money to start with. Just like many students who graduate today, I was in debt.

I went from banker to banker begging for a modest loan and they laughed at me.

When you have no money, you get creative fast. You do what every good business does -- maximize free marketing

methods first. There are many of them. For example, if you're working with a limited budget, it's essential to pour massive amounts of personal energy into every patient visit. Each adjustment should be an experience. The patient should walk away thinking, I received more than I expected. I want to tell others about this.

The adjustment is the art and heart of chiropractic. When we're in search of marketing magic, we often lose site of how important this is to the patient. It's essential to connect with the patient and deliver the goods on each and every visit. We give them something unique and life changing, delivered from the heart. This is the way to build a massive following.

TAC: What are the biggest errors in marketing that chiropractors make?

VISENTIN: The biggest error is lack of an organized approach. Chiropractors usually hate marketing and delay doing anything about it until their practices slow down. Then they desperately search for any program that might offer hope. They end up wasting thousands of dollars chasing after new patients with ineffective, uninspired, and poorly thought-out campaigns.

TAC: What should they do about it?

VISENTIN: At least once per month, they should evaluate



“It's essential to connect with the patient and deliver the goods on each and every visit”.

their new-patient strategy and ask themselves, What's working? Then they can eliminate ineffective or marginal programs and expand cost-effective approaches that produce new patients.

With the help of a friend or mentor, I recommend they brainstorm at least six or more low-cost programs to move their practice forward. This flexible plan can bring a steady flow of patients with even a modest marketing budget.

TAC: Do you have different marketing approaches for each demographic in your area?

VISENTIN: My clinic is like a chiropractic United Nations. For example, the front of my clinic has an American flag in a prominent place along with flags of various nations. I serve many Mexican, Ethiopian, Russian, German, and, most recently, Somali-Americans.

I have very professional looking business cards for doctors and lawyers. I use different cards for non-professionals and use cards in the languages of the various ethnic niches I serve. In my clinic, I stock flyers and show videos in their languages. I also hire staff that is at least bilingual.

I support the businesses and churches of our patient base whenever possible.

This way we reach out to various groups throughout the community. My niche marketing has rewarded me.

TAC: What marketing strategies do you use to attract new patients and keep the current ones?

VISENTIN: There is no way to bore someone into becoming your patient. Your approach must be audacious and attractive. Find out what other doctors are doing in your area and then DON'T DO IT! Create original systems. Adapt them to your unique circumstances and apply them.

For example, I placed a crash test dummy on a chair in front of my center. It was a mannequin I bought online and had painted to look like a crash test dummy. Above the dummy was a yellow banner with red letters that read: Whiplash Specialist. Over the years, the dummy attracted many accident victims as new patients. It became a local landmark. People complained when I finally retired the dummy to my basement.

TAC: What general advice would you give an established chiropractor whose practice might be struggling?

VISENTIN: There are many successful doctors who would love to help you if you have enough courage to introduce

yourself. You can walk up to nearly anyone at a seminar or call someone who is at least ten miles from your office and ask for advice. You will be amazed at how much help you'll get for free. Of course, don't ask for advice unless you're going to use it. Do what you know you must do to move ahead. Have

the courage to reach out and act on what you've learned. You have absolutely nothing to lose.

Six years into practice, I reached a low point in my professional career. I felt totally burned-out and called the most successful doctor I knew at that time for advice. We talked briefly and he was very helpful. He'd already been through what I was experiencing and with a little encouragement, I felt inspired again.

Everyone goes through moments of terror, extreme stress, and loneliness on their way to success. Don't go it alone. Don't struggle through it. Get some help from a trusted advisor and ACT ON IT.

TAC: Any final words for our readers?

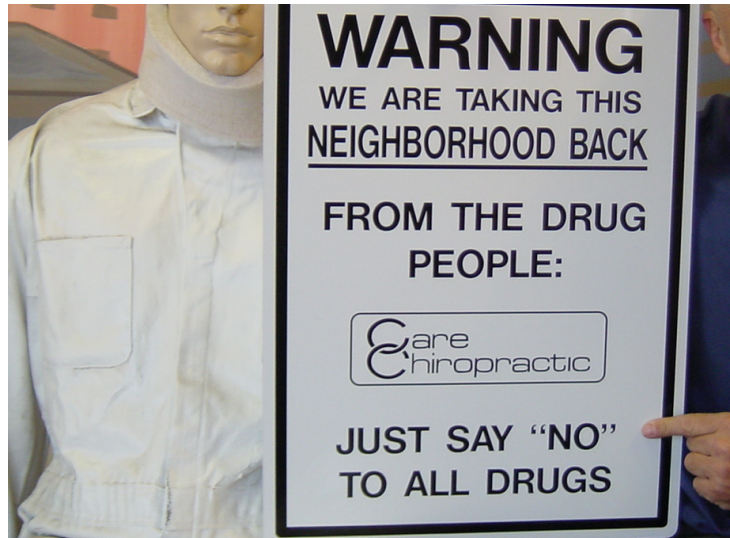
VISENTIN: I know that building a practice is a skill that any doctor can learn. There is no reason to starve in practice or even endure an initial famine period. It's much like learning to drive a car or play a sport. With the right guidance, the skill set for attracting new patients, educating

them, and serving them can be mastered. You don't need to be charismatic or extroverted. What is required is a genuine desire to reach out to people who are suffering. A doctor with a burning wish to serve, solid clinical skills, and good business sense will break through the toughest markets even in the worst economic times.

Dr. Steven Visentin, D.C. is a solo practitioner and clinic director of Care Chiropractic in Denver, CO, and author of an e-book entitled "Blow Your Head Off Practice Building Secrets" for the chiropractic profession.

As an accomplished public speaker, he is available for corporate events, training seminars, and other group functions as well as private consultations and trainings on a limited basis.

For additional information, visit www.practicesecrets.com. TAC



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