

Madow vs. Horrocks

Which new patient marketing works better - 'smart bomb' or 'carpet bomb'

I am embarking into the unknown seas of dental marketing. I am going to try a new move-in mailing with Pro-Mail from the Madow people. I am going to try it for 6 months. If the response is less than 1% I will go with Howie's people. I have bought and read his **Unlimited New Patients** books, which are great. Anyone try promail and if so, any ideas for a mailing?

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Hi August,

Let me see if I can be of some help here. First, we must agree that these are two conceptually different programs. True, both involve advertising, but that is where the similarity ends. The Madow approach is to send a mailing to EVERYONE who is "new to the area". I liken it to a carpet-bombing philosophy. You know, you drop enough bombs you're going to hit something. Now, don't think I'm putting it down. Actually, I am a Madow subscriber and use this method to attract new patients. I just want to differentiate it from a much more targeted approach that I think Howie Horrocks uses. From what I understand, Howie uses a more demographic approach, limiting the mailings to only those that meet certain criteria such as income level and such; more of a laser guided cruise missile type strike. You might want to spend more money per mailing here, as you are limiting your advertising to those you specifically know can afford your services and who hopefully want to have them done.

So why do I go with the Madow? Well, I have gone into this in more detail on another post but to simplify: I get about a 2-3 (or 4%) success rate with the mailings which cost approx \$1 per address. For 200 mailings a month I get 4-6 or more families...at least a 10:1 ROI easy. So why not do it, right! As I go on for more advanced cosmetic training I intend to contact Howie to try and attract those so inclined. Right now I'm busier than I've ever been and lovin' it. But, you can't ever take it for granted, always have to be looking ahead... not in the rear view. Madow has a bunch of info as far as new patient letters and such. I don't do any coupons or anything like that. Just a simple one page letter and business card. They also tell you to repeat

mailings to the same individuals for 2 or three months. I've never done this. Just seems like too much work. It may be effective however, don't know.

If you would like a copy of my "Welcome to the Neighborhood" letter let me know I'll fax it to you. Its nothing special but you're welcome to it if you like!

Flyer@dentaltown.com

Mike,

Yes, you're right. We try to smart bomb rather than carpet bomb. But don't get me wrong, I like the Madow's approach and in fact heartily recommend their Promail product in both my books. (And it has nothing to do with the fact that Rich and Dave are good friends of mine!) It all depends on your needs. If you are getting 10:1 ROI then break out the campagne! As my Dad used to say, "where's the hard part?"

There are two basic approaches in new patient marketing. There's no one right way, just what works for you. One is to drag as many bodies as possible through your front door, develop a sixth sense about who are the "good" patients and who are the flakes, and spend your days sifting the chaff from the wheat. Perfectly valid approach.

The other method is to be more vigilant about pre-selecting your audience. Find out who can afford your service, where they live, what they would respond to, what they never would respond to, then craft a marketing message that you feel would get them to pick up the phone. Then go after them. You will have less quantity but more quality. With the other approach you have quantity but you have seek out the quality. I've had plenty of clients do both methods. You can do well either way but it usually boils down to the temperament of the doctor and how much he/she can "take."

Most of our clients (although not all) are NOT interested in attracting EVERY patient in town. They just want the right ones. ("Right" being defined however they define it - OK , let's be real - the ones that can afford you!)

To do this you need a selected approach. It's not rocket science. Hell it's not RCT either. Just send your message to people who first of all can afford you

and then are likely to respond; don't waste your money sending it to people that could never afford you (mobile home parks, low rent apartments) or are likely to never respond to it. This comes down to using a good list broker (selecting the right mailing list is THE most important part of a direct mail campaign. Even more important than having a good letter.) Then having a well crafted and written piece that is not boring but engages the reader (sorry, you have to be, or hire, a good copywriter for this part). And finally repeating your message enough that people notice. Good luck!

Howie Horrocks