

Using Media Type to Target Your Ideal Candidate

by Shawn Kessler

Today, more than any time in history, we are seeing a distinct line drawn between the way young physicians (28-35) and more experienced physicians (36+) want to be recruited. With younger physicians being more comfortable with emerging and recently established communication platforms (web and text messaging), we are seeing a fundamental shift in recruitment marketing tactical trends. Where the old adage was to place an advertisement for an entry-level Gastroenterologist in three different professional journals, we are now seeing web and social networking being used in a far more effective manner. The good news... these trends can help you save money by targeting the audience you are trying to reach with not only written communications but through the utilization of the correct media tactic.

Journal Advertising – Still has its purpose.

Search directors will tell you the only jobs worth applying for are advertised in their professional association's journal. In the past, this may have been true. In today's market, that is not the case. If you are seeking to hire a younger physician, resident, or fellow, this age group doesn't want to wait for their professional association to tell them where to practice. They are comfortable seeking out the "good" jobs on their own.

So, when are journal ads appropriate? When you are looking for an experienced person who can step right into a position and be working very quickly, or if you are looking for a director or higher-level position, journal advertising is the appropriate medium. These physicians still feel journals are the only place to look for quality jobs. They also scan the classifieds regularly, whether to come back to their recruitment staff with the newest "look at what so and so did, why aren't we doing it?" or to simply keep a beat on what is going on in their specialty.

Website Advertising – Wow, what a difference a few years makes.

Where more experienced physicians still have their hang-ups about the web, younger physicians are using it to its fullest capabilities. In a survey produced by the Health Care Advisory Board, the number of final year residents seeking employment on the Internet went from 38% in 2003 to 77% in 2006. In the same amount of time, journal advertising went from 19% in 2003 to just 7% in 2006.

Direct Mail – Reaching the candidates who aren't actively looking.

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get along with their partners, are happy with their compensation and their lifestyle. Unlike journal advertising and web postings, direct mail does not require the potential candidate to look up the opportunity. Nor does it require them to turn to the classifieds section of a journal or do a search on their society website. All they need to do is look in their mailbox. Though sometimes considered expensive, direct mail is the only “tried-and-true” way to pique the interest of candidates who didn’t realize there may be a better position out there for them. The key to recruiting through direct mail is to do something different. You’ll need to make sure your piece stands out and is easily readable.

Today’s highly competitive physician recruitment market requires us to think differently about how to market our different opportunities. The old ways are just that... old. It’s time to re-evaluate how to best communicate with the audience we are trying to reach.

About the Author

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