

Guiding Decision-Making
through Insight into True Image

The Back Page

Precision Marketing



Renee Catania

By Renee Catania,
Consulting Analyst,
Press Ganey Associates

Hospital and medical practice marketing departments have their work cut out for them. With their budgets often low-hanging fruit for finance amid the continuing economic downturn, marketers have to make the most of limited funds to promote their organization, showcase physicians, highlight new technologies and tout renovations. Targeted correctly, these efforts can pay off in increased market share, higher referral rates and greater philanthropy – without wasting time, money and effort.

The key is understanding what topics will resonate strongest with your community using the media that reach the appropriate target audience. Do you know what health care issues are important to the people in your community – not just former patients, but future patients? Do you know what they really think about you and

your competition? Do you know if the average person recalls your previous advertising or how most residents want to receive information? All these questions must be answered before you leap into action.

In 2007, a team of marketing and research specialists at Press Ganey set out to create a tool that would allow health care marketing professionals to ask and answer those very questions. Development began with a series of client-driven focus groups at the 2007 Press Ganey National Client Conference and continued with a pilot program in the summer of 2008. In 2009, we formally launched Community InsightsSM – a phone-based survey tool that delves into the values, perceptions, expectations and preferences of people in a defined community. This highly customizable tool allows hospitals and medical practices to learn what is important to and valued by the

people in their community so they can build their marketing strategies based on solid information, not just anecdotal beliefs.

Because the survey uses a blinded phone methodology, it provides unbiased, unprompted awareness, preference and value data that paint a clearer picture of true market position.

Leslie Fossey, vice president of marketing at Azalea Orthopedics in Tyler, Texas, was a participant in the developmental focus groups and was invited, along with partner organization Texas Spine and Joint Hospital, to be a part of the initial pilot survey.

"Being able to be part of the pilot was really important to us," Fossey says. "We had no idea where we were in the market. We thought we did, but we really didn't."

As is the case for most providers of care, the health care market faced by Azalea Orthopedics is very competitive, and large institutions spend a lot of money promoting themselves on TV, radio, billboards, etc., often indiscriminately. If you are going to play in this market, you have to know what works and spend wisely.

Community Insights answered many questions for the marketing team at Azalea. In fact, the results were so compelling that significant changes were made to its campaigns based on the outcomes. Its current "Choose Wisely" campaign highlights the fact that members of the community have many choices when looking for a great orthopedic provider, and the data show that Azalea is the preferred provider. Because the survey results provided preference results at the overall and service-line levels, Azalea is tailoring its promotional efforts at the service-line level, specifically sports medicine.

Recalling the results of the 2008 pilot study, Fossey said: "It let us know that at that point in time we were top-of-mind and the most respected in the area – that is always good news. We were more confident at that point to go forward with our marketing efforts because

If you overlay the image study, and show 'this is how we look,' it becomes a source of pride. We aren't just interested in being No. 1; we really care about our patients and doing what is best for them. When we see the comments from Community Insights and patient satisfaction surveys that say 'I recommend you,' or 'you are the most friendly or helpful' ... that means something to the physician and the caregiver."

Leslie Fossey
Vice President of Marketing
Azalea Orthopedics



we knew what was working. When you find out that you are good at what you do, you aren't going to change things up a lot. But we used the results in our campaigns."

In addition to learning about community awareness, preference and Azalea's market position at the service-line level, for Fossey and her team, the survey showed how important the opinions of friends and family members are when choosing a care provider. This is a key area where patient satisfaction data come in. The Press Ganey team of consultants works with both patient satisfaction and Community Insights data to uncover patterns or incongruities between what patients say on surveys about their actual experience and

The data from Community Insights further convinced the marketers, physicians and practice leaders that patient satisfaction is strongly connected to the opinions of friends and family – a key driver of referrals and increased likelihood to recommend.

what the larger community's more generalized perceptions are of the organization.

Fossey and her team were confident that they had good patient satisfaction numbers to build from. The data from Community Insights further convinced the marketers, physicians and practice leaders that patient satisfaction is strongly connected to the opinions of friends and family – a key driver of referrals and increased likelihood to recommend. The Azalea study found that 12% of respondents said they chose their most recent orthopedics provider based on the recommendation of a family member or friend and that 51% of participants who preferred Azalea said it was because of past positive experiences – either personal or those of friends or family.


“With patient satisfaction you have to remember you are asking, ‘What can I do better?’ If you are a staff member, a physician, a leader ... it can feel like you are under scrutiny,” Fossey says. “If you overlay the image study, and show ‘this is how we look,’ it becomes a source of pride. We aren’t just interested in being No. 1; we really care about our patients and doing what is best for them. When we see the comments from Community Insights and patient satisfaction surveys that say ‘I recommend you,’ or ‘you are the most friendly or helpful’ ... that means something to the physician and the caregiver.”

Since the initial pilot, Press Ganey has made several enhancements to Community Insights. Most notably, it incorporated into the product



Ryan W. Patterson, MD, a hand specialist, examines a patient at Azalea.

It's a matter of choice.



Jan H. Garrett, M.D.
Orthopedic Surgeon

Choose Wisely.

Texans are pretty independent people. We like choices. And who you choose for orthopedic care is up to you. Nobody else. Azalea Orthopedics is the largest and most experienced team of orthopedic surgeons and physicians in this part of Texas, specializing in knees, ankles, shoulders, spine, elbows, hands, hips, sports injuries and even children's orthopedics. It's your choice. The one most preferred in East Texas.*

Ask your doctor to refer you or call

AZALEA
ORTHOPEDICS
IT'S YOUR CHOICE

Community Insights results helped Azalea target sports medicine as a service line to promote.

the Brand Position Analysis, a tool based on the 3-Circle model, a proprietary model developed by professors at the University of Notre Dame (Nov/Dec 2010 issue, page 34). The model applies the latest research on consumer values and the principles that drive strategic growth. By combining perception ratings and importance ratings, the Brand Position Analysis reveals organizational strengths, weaknesses and opportunities – as well as those of key competitors – and then quantifies how valuable each attribute is to the surveyed public.

“When it came time to do the second survey, I was really excited,” Fossey says. “Press Ganey had made several changes to the survey and the methodology, and they were all positive. We wanted to see what the new survey had to offer. It was done by phone, was more in-depth and got to more information. It was better for us, and the ability to customize and cut the data was very helpful.”

Because the Community Insights tool is so flexible, it allows organizations to focus on key geographic areas and demographic groups. Data can be analyzed by ZIP code, county, region or one of several demographic groups. This allows providers to dig deeper into their markets and tailor their messages or media utilization based on the preferences of the people in specific areas. Providers can look at the different regions and see where they have strengths or weaknesses and decide where to do more marketing or community outreach. “Without Community Insights, it's like marketing with your eyes closed,” Fossey says. “From placing advertising to finding out where you stand in the community by county, ZIP, etc., it is crucial.”

Azalea Orthopedics' latest round of Community Insights research confirmed the previous hypothesis but also generated some surprises. Based on those surprises, Fossey and her team will be fine-tuning some of their media choices based on geography. “One of the things – when you run data by age and demos and you can slice, dice and dig – the way one county wants to get info may be different. You can look at that and choose what is best and most effective.”

Fossey learned that Azalea is still facing stiff competition, but there is clear room for growth, even in such a competitive market. Key insights and recommendations provided by Press Ganey consultants regarding geography, insurance coverage and preference will drive further modifications to the Azalea strategy.

“It was clear to me that I work for the best practice in town; I want to show what it really is to the market, and then it is up to (my colleagues) to provide the best care,” Fossey says.



To learn more about Community Insights, go to pressganey.com/ourSolutions.aspx.