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*Quick Reference Guide To Patient Marketing*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .....	1
Creating A Smile Today™ Ambassador Program .....	2
Hosting Patient Education Events .....	2
Creating Advertisements .....	6
Television Advertising .....	7
Radio Advertising .....	8
Direct Mail & Databases .....	8
Summary .....	9

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the BIOMET 3i Smile Today™ Patient Marketing Program. This program was developed to help clinicians utilizing the DIEM®2 Protocol for immediate full arch restoration to position themselves in their local market as a provider of the treatment solution known as Smile Today. This Quick Reference Guide to Patient Marketing should serve as a tool to enable you to identify impactful tactics to support your marketing plan.

The first step in promoting your practice with marketing activities is the development of a strategic marketing plan. The development of a marketing plan is an exercise designed to guide you through examining your current market situation and creating a plan that supports the future growth of your practice.

Annual marketing plans typically include more than one campaign and sometimes these multiple campaigns can be targeted to different groups. Below, you will find an example of how a campaign would differ based on the target audience.



## CREATING A Smile Today™ AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Since we know that word-of-mouth advertising can be the most effective and least expensive method for creating awareness about your practice, why not enlist your staff in the effort by asking them to be Smile Today Ambassadors for the practice? After all, they are members of the community and interact with a wide variety of people in the course of their daily lives.



There are two ways to turn your staff members into ambassadors for your practice—motivating them and giving them the tools they need.

### Motivation

You'll need to be clear with your team about the goals of the program and why its success depends on them. The following are some suggestions on how you might be able to increase their motivation:

- **Set Team Goals** – Share your ideas with the team and allow them to give feedback and to offer their own suggestions. Be sure that you cover what the team should be focusing on (i.e., everyone is familiar with Smile Today and knows the benefits of the treatment). Remember to have short-term goals (what you want them to accomplish within the next month or quarter) that are quantifiable and measurable. For example, a short-term goal might be to personally distribute five Smile Today Brochures and/or business cards in one month resulting in at least one scheduled patient. A longer term goal might be to achieve a 98% patient satisfaction rate over time. Give each person an opportunity to share their experiences during team meetings.
- **Coaching** – Begin by ensuring that you are meeting regularly as a team and by making a commitment to meeting times. Give each team member an opportunity to participate in the Smile Today Ambassador Program in his or her own way (this is where their ideas come in). Because of the differences in personalities and skill sets, it makes no sense to try to get everyone to contribute in exactly the same way. Offer positive feedback for those who have achieved their goals and support ideas for those who have not.
- **Recognize Results And Say Thank You** – Employees will often say that feeling appreciated is important. Don't forget to congratulate your staff members along the way.

### Tools

- **Business Cards** – make sure that your team members have business cards with their names and titles on them. It goes a long way towards showing them your commitment to their success as Smile Today Ambassadors and it projects a professional image to the community.
- **Brochures** – Ensure that your staff has an adequate supply of Smile Today Brochures to use as talking points when they interact with potential Smile Today Patients. As part of the Smile Today Patient Marketing Program, you will have access to brochures specially designed to educate potential patients about the benefits of Smile Today. Taking the brochure to the next level by customization is likely to increase the response rate. The Smile Today CustomPoint Site will enable you to customize the brochure to include your practice information.
- **Creating Talking Points** – It is helpful to the team if they know what is expected to be communicated, so you'll need to get together and make sure that everyone is on the same page. For example, create a list of the top five things your practice is known for (e.g. aesthetic dentistry, legendary customer service, an elegant and soothing environment or renowned clinicians) and/or the top 10 things you think that patients need to know (e.g. the benefits of dental implants, why they should choose a clinician who is board certified, etc.).

## HOSTING PATIENT EDUCATION EVENTS

This section discusses several opportunities for you and your staff to identify and create ways to personally provide educational information about your practice or business. Such opportunities are perfect for presenting the benefits of implant therapy to patients who may benefit from the dental implant treatment option. Reaching out in this manner involves making a commitment to execute organized efforts on a regular basis.

For a variety of reasons, you may decide to keep costs associated with your events to a minimum, but remember that you do not get a second chance to make a first impression. That's why it is important to plan your event in advance.

## Planning And Hosting A Patient Day

As members of the dental implant team, you and your staff are probably very good at explaining the long-term advantages of dental implants. Hosting a Patient Day is a way for you to share your knowledge with your patients in a personable manner. A Patient Day may also be a cost-effective way to attract dental implant candidates because you will be meeting the people most likely to have missing teeth.

Be prepared to schedule consultation appointments for your program attendees, however, understand that the primary goal of a Patient Day is to create awareness about the benefits of dental implant therapy as compared to traditional therapies for replacing missing teeth. Conducting a Patient Day is a win for the surgical practice, the restorative practice and most importantly, it is an opportunity for dental professionals to provide patients with information they may not be able to get elsewhere.

Planning your Patient Day will require a team effort. Assemble key team members or advisors to consider four primary questions.

**1. Who Is Your Preferred Audience?** Answering this question first will help you tailor the entire event to a specific audience, which is a more successful approach than marketing “en masse”. The target audience may be fully edentulous or partially edentulous patients of record and their family members or older adults who reside in an independent living facility for active adults or even residents of a particular geographic area. Consider inviting a group with whom you already have a relationship with as a first course of action, as this will likely yield higher attendance than inviting complete strangers. You should make your decisions based on which groups you think may yield the types of results you seek. You will likely have more than one event per year and can focus on different segments at different times until you find what works best for your business.

**2. What Is The “Program”?** Once you have selected your preferred audience, you will need to develop a presentation that is appropriate for that audience. As part of the Smile Today™ Patient Marketing Program, you will have access to a patient education presentation. Here are some basic tips if you choose to create your own presentation:

- Use a dark background with light letters or a light background with dark letters for your presentation. Use a simple font style, make letters large enough for the audience to read and keep the written text to a bare minimum. Incorporate interesting images or animations where appropriate. Check and double-check spelling. Practice your presentation several times before presenting it to your audience.
- Resist the temptation to reveal too much about your personal life such as hobbies, vacations and the neighborhood you live in. All of the attendee's time should be used to communicate how you and your team might improve their oral health.
- Remember that prospective patients need to know how dental implant therapy may improve their oral health before they will even consider the implant option.
- Do not underestimate the embarrassment people may experience due to having missing teeth. For this reason, do not limit your presentation to fully edentulous patients (signaling to the audience that they are all fully edentulous). Make sure your audience understands that having missing teeth is very common and that it can happen to anyone for a variety of reasons. Consider presenting basic options for single anterior, multiple posterior and fully edentulous scenarios.
- Since most people are concerned about their appearance and masticatory function, be sure to focus on how dental implants may preserve oral bone and may provide stable and predictable support for a prostheses (helping to avoid embarrassing moments).
- Before and after photos can be used with your existing patient's written consent, but these should be well done and representative of the patient's natural smile.
- Explain that each patient's case is different and that they need a personalized evaluation to determine if they are a “candidate” for dental implant therapy. Specifics regarding the case should be discussed with the patient at that time.
- All team members and associates who attend should be required to dress professionally; either in a suit or business casual attire.



**3. Where Is Your Venue?** Now that you have decided who you will be hosting and what your presentation will entail, you will need to select an appropriate venue for the event. An obvious choice may be your dental practice, provided you have ample room for seating, a presentation area and a place to serve refreshments. There are probably many other options that may be appropriate in your community such as:

- A small auditorium at a local hospital or university
- An extended care facility's meeting hall
- A restaurant or hotel

Regardless of the venue you select, you will need to have certain basics covered:

- A meeting space large enough (but not too large) with ample complimentary or free parking
- Audio-visual (A/V) requirements such as a presentation screen, laptop, LCD projector, laser pointer and microphone
- A greeting team (Smile Today™ Ambassadors) and guest sign-in area
- Display tables covered with cloths and drapes
- A place to serve light hors d'oeuvres and non-alcoholic beverages

**4. Will You Involve Your Referrals Or Other Business Partners?** Only you can decide whether or not you will involve some of your other business colleagues in your event. Consider how collaborating may create a win-win situation for you and your colleagues. At a minimum, be sure you inform your closest business colleagues of the event in advance to avoid any misunderstanding.

Finally, you'll want to make sure that your team leader has an event checklist of things to do:

- Create a Patient Day ad and brochure to promote the event
- Determine quantities of each item needed (brochures, flyers, posters, etc.)
- Create an RSVP list and keep it in a central location
- Order and deliver refreshments and floral arrangements
- Plan for staffing, including attire and name tags
- Distribute Patient Day brochures by mail and to referrals
- Prepare patient education bags (patient education DVD and brochure(s), a practice brochure and other dental amenities)
- Create data collection slips
- Create a guest sign-in sheet
- Consider preparing a cursory consultation area with consultation materials in the event a guest desires additional information immediately
- Conduct a site inspection of the venue in advance and take necessary steps to ensure an appropriate environment for guests
- Have a calendar of dates and times available for consultations for the two weeks following the event

## Promoting Your Patient Day

Begin your promotional planning by selecting artwork from one of the several BIOMET 3i Smile Today advertising templates. Consider the audience(s) you are selecting for your event and what might elicit a positive response. Brochures, flyers and posters should be proofed, printed and ready to go at least three months in advance of the event. Think of everything you'd want to know about an event in order to decide to attend and incorporate that information into the invitation. Talk to your local printer about the lead-time for printing and factor this into your timeline. This information will allow you to mail the brochures, as well as distribute brochures, posters and flyers in a timely manner.

Whomever you decide to invite, you should plan to promote your Patient Day in a number of ways to ensure that your event will be well attended. (Plan to capture information from respondents as to how they learned of your event. This will help you determine which advertising efforts yielded the highest response rate and will be valuable information for planning future event advertising.)

- **In Office** – Have printed brochures available and distribute these to targeted patients and family members who have appointments during the promotional period. Place posters or flyers in prominent common areas. Create an outline for staff to use to explain the event to callers and distribute it along with the details of the event at a staff meeting. Keep the RSVP list up-to-date and in a central location.
- **Targeted Direct Mail** – The brochure and postcard in the BIOMET 3i Smile Today™ Patient Marketing Program can be customized for you via the Smile Today CustomPoint Site or by your local printer. These printed pieces can be mailed to a specific segment of your patients if you have identified them as potential implant candidates. Alternatively, you can utilize the Smile Today CustomPoint Site to create mailing lists focused on the consumer segments that you want to invite to your event. Non-targeted direct mailings generally yield unfavorable results and should not be considered as a reasonable way to direct your advertising dollars.
- **Business Website** – An ad can be placed on your website, but do not depend on this to drive a significant number of participants to the event, unless you have high traffic on your site or you mention your website within print advertisements to drive traffic.
- **Print Media Advertising** – Depending on the rates and your budget, you may want to advertise your event in your local paper or community magazine. Your local media can use the ads in the BIOMET 3i Smile Today Patient Marketing Program and customize them to meet your advertising needs. If you decide to use print advertising to promote your event, make sure that you research the different publications in your area and ask readership demographic questions in order to find the best fit. You should plan to run your ad 3-5 times in advance of the event and in the section of the publication that your targeted readers are most likely to see. Consider how the size of your ad will attract attention. Advertisements in full color are more impactful than in black and white. Make sure you proof the final copy and that you get a copy of the publication as soon as it is released.
- **Radio/Television** – Placing advertisements on the radio or on TV to promote your Patient Day can also be effective, but remember to conduct extensive research before spending your money to ensure that you are reaching the right audience.

## The Day Of The Event

Using your checklist, make sure that all of the comforts and concerns of your guests will be well attended to. The team should plan to arrive at the venue at least 1-2 hours early to make sure that the refreshments, flowers and A/V are all in order. When your guests arrive, they should each be greeted by smiling hosts who understand the plan for the event, the location of the refreshments and should make each guest feel comfortable. Do not ask your guests questions about their dental status, medical history or reasons for attending in front of others.

Someone from the practice who has public speaking skills should professionally introduce the speaker. At the beginning of the presentation, the speaker should address the audience by saying that he/she wants to make sure to cover as many questions throughout the course of the presentation as possible and should encourage audience members to share the things they hope the presentation will cover. The speaker should write down any questions (on an easel board, if possible) and make sure to tailor portions of the presentation to answer those questions. Additional questions can be handled at the end of the presentation or in a personalized consultation.

Remember, the main point of having a Patient Day is to create awareness in the community regarding the services you offer and what the significant benefits of dental implant therapy are when compared to traditional treatment options for patients with missing teeth. The Patient Day should be used as part of a larger marketing plan that includes a variety of marketing activities relative to your growth goals.

## Following The Event

Send a follow up communication to all of the attendees thanking them for attending and reminding them of the benefits of dental implant therapy. Be sure to include an "actionable" step such as how to request more information or schedule a consultation. When possible, include information about upcoming events or news of interest.

## CREATING ADVERTISEMENTS

### Print Advertising

One of the most obvious print vehicles of choice for marketing messages will be newspapers. Even with the Internet revolution, some consumers still like to receive their local news via the newspaper. With that in mind, here are a few basics for you to know when considering placing newspaper advertising:

Newspapers charge by the column inch. A standard newspaper page is six columns across (usually 10 in the classifieds, but unless you're looking for employees, you won't be placing any ads here) and about 21 inches high. So, if your ad is three columns wide and six inches high, it is an 18-column-inch ad (3 x 6 = 18). Therefore, as an example, if you're being charged \$25.00 per column inch (PCI), just multiply 18" by \$25.00. Using this example, your ad will cost \$450.00. Your newspaper representative can go over the rate card with you. If you plan your year accordingly and estimate that you may run a cumulative total of 100 inches or numerous advertisements, you may qualify for a lower rate.

Although newspapers do not normally guarantee placement on a specific page, you should request a specific section, such as "Health & Medicine," "Lifestyle" (if you're targeting women, the group that makes the majority of household purchases including health care) or "Sports" (if you're targeting men). You might also consider the "Business" section for two reasons: 1) Few other clinicians are likely to advertise there, so you're less likely to be competing with similar ads, and 2) Readers of this section may be more affluent and thus able to afford the higher initial cost of implant therapy as compared to other restorations.

The deadline for placement of an ad is usually 4-5 days prior to the date on which you wish your ad to run, while deadlines for the actual artwork are usually 1-2 days prior, however each newspaper's requirements are different so you will need to ask that question in advance.

All of the days of the week are available to you for placement, so consider the following:

- Sunday will be the most expensive because it has the highest circulation and readership
- The sooner readers can act upon your ad the better. If you are not open on Saturday, don't run an ad on Saturday, since readers will be unable to respond for two full days
- Normally, there are a lot of "grocery" ads on Thursday, so you might get lost in the clutter
- If you are promoting an upcoming seminar, you may wish to run 2-3 ads per week for one week or two ads prior to the seminar

The local Chamber of Commerce or Business Development Board usually publishes a newsletter once a month. If you're a member, you can probably run an ad in this publication for a nominal fee. You may also wish to consider other community papers, shoppers or even local magazines. Be aware, however, magazine deadlines are much longer than those of newspapers; usually a least one month ahead of publication.

In the BIOMET **3i** Smile Today™ Patient Marketing Program, there is a choice of ads you might consider for your immediate full arch restoration awareness campaign. The ads come in several sizes: larger for greater impact and smaller for economy. There are also versions of an ad for promoting a Patient Day. The text for each version is the same, but the pictures are different to target different demographic segments of the population.

All of the ads are designed to be personalized with your practice name and contact information. It is strongly recommended that you do not personalize these yourself. Rather, have the newspaper or magazine in which these are to run do the typesetting. After typesetting and before your ad runs, be certain to proofread the copy carefully.

### Media Strategy

- The bigger the ad, the bigger the impact and the bigger the advertiser is perceived to be.
- Frequency trumps size. It takes several impressions on the average reader's mind to go from awareness to action.

### Awareness Vs. Promotional Advertising

1. **Awareness** – The advertisement raises awareness of your practice and dental implant therapy without a specific offer. Don't expect instant results; awareness ads should be run on a regular year-round schedule, such as once a week, or be "flighted", such as running two times a week for 3-4 weeks, then dropping out for 3-4 weeks.
2. **Promotional** – This usually promotes a time-specific event or service, such as a patient seminar or a free screening clinic. Run promotional ads several times during the two weeks leading up to the event.

### Creating Your Own Advertisements

If you plan to create your own print ads, here are some things to keep in mind:

#### Advertisement Design

- Establishing and maintaining a unique and consistent graphic image is important so that each new ad benefits from those that have run in the past. This is called "building brand equity".
- Obtain the services of an ad agency or freelance graphic designer to develop an ad format and use it for all of your ads. You get what you pay for. Don't let the newspaper (or magazine) design your ad for you; even though it may cost you nothing. Each new ad is likely to bear little resemblance to the last and you lose the opportunity to build brand equity.

#### Copyrighting

If you're going to write your own ads (or critique your copywriter's work), remember these principles:

- Follow the AIDA formula. Get their attention. Arouse their interest. Create a desire. Call them to action.
- Brevity is best. Edit until you've made your message as succinct as possible.
- One idea only. Most readers can only recall one point from an ad or commercial.
- Write in a conversational, one-to-one tone, using more "you's" than "we's".

#### Litmus Tests Of Good Copy

- Does it reinforce or contradict my image (in style and tone, as well as content)?
- Does it concentrate on benefits to the patient rather than features of the procedure?
- Does it clearly and persuasively answer the patient's question, "What's in it for me?"

## TELEVISION ADVERTISING

If you are interested in TV advertising, it is crucial that you plan out your strategy. TV advertising can be an expensive proposition, so you want to ensure that you cover all of the basics before making a decision.

### How Are You Going To Create Your TV Advertisement?

Essentially, you have 2 choices.

First, you can decide to have the media outlet you wish to advertise with assist you in creating the commercial. Many outlets do not offer this service, but those that do will provide it at a lower cost because their onsite production team will shoot and edit video. In addition, the production team is usually able to provide "Voice over" during the commercial. This option may provide you with a price break because they will be producing and running your ad.

The other choice is to hire a video production company. Pricing differs amongst production companies, so you should shop around and find the company that will best suit your needs. This will likely be more expensive than the first option, however in some instances it is the only route; especially if the media outlets you are interested in do not produce commercials.

Stay involved in the process. Make sure that the video is clear and the audio isn't too loud or soft. More importantly, make sure the commercial covers your key messages and promotes dentistry in a positive way. This may be the first impression you make on a potential patient and you want to ensure it is a good one.

### How Long Should Your Advertisement Be?

The best TV commercials are typically no longer than 30 seconds. If you cannot get your message across in 30 seconds, then take another look at your script. Are your sentences too wordy? Are you trying to cover too much?

### Where Should You Advertise And Can You Afford To Run An Adequate TV Commercial Schedule?

The best way to determine this is to contact your local network affiliate (ABC, NBC, CBS, etc.) or your local cable provider to see how much it would cost to run a commercial schedule on one of their advertising supported networks



(CNN, USA, Lifetime, etc). Advertising fees vary from hour to hour and are typically the highest between 8-11pm Eastern Time, which is considered Prime Time. Those are the times when most people are watching television and the networks will charge a premium. It is also more expensive to run a TV commercial during highly rated TV shows and sporting events.

You can also get the demographics of viewers during different times of the day. Request information on the type of demographic you seek or ask about the types of viewers who may watch TV at a certain time of day. If you plan on advertising several times per day, make sure you explain to the provider that you do not want to be “clustered” or have a number of your advertisements run at the same time.

Most advertising experts recognize the value of repetition/frequency and feel that the average viewer needs to see a commercial at least three times before it makes an impression. However, that is the absolute minimum. A qualified representative should meet with you and help you make an educated decision as to how many times to run the commercial, at what times of the day and where.

## RADIO ADVERTISING

Radio stations segment the day into the Morning Drive (6-10am), Midday (10-3pm), Evening Drive (3-7pm) and Evening and Weekends. The rate will be predicated on the size of the audience. As mentioned previously, different times of the day naturally have audiences of different sizes.

Radio is typically sold in 60 second increments. There are many different formats for radio stations: County & Western, Rock, Classical, Talk, etc. and each will appeal to a specific audience. For example, if you’re looking to appeal to an adult who is aged 35-60, you’ll want to take the programming format of each station into consideration. If there is a popular talk station in your area, chances are it may have a “health” program that could present a sponsorship opportunity for you.

Information on the number of people who listen to different radio stations at various times of the day and days of the week, along with their age ranges, sex, and other demographic data, is measured and reported by an independent research firm called Arbitron (a similar service to the Nielsen ratings of television shows). Most credible radio stations subscribe to the quarterly Arbitron report and can provide you with the demographics profiles of the listeners they attract.

You’ll also want to consider the frequency of your message. If you’re planning a seminar, you’ll probably want to have your commercial or “spot” air many times throughout the course of a week or two. You might consider two or three targeted stations and to repeatedly run your spot as opposed to spreading out your advertisements to run on several stations.

A radio spot should be placed using an insertion order that provides the specifics of your spot, when and where it is to run and other details.

## DIRECT MAIL & DATABASES

Direct Mail may be one of the most targeted ways to reach prospective implant patients (your target audience). Direct mail can build awareness.

Most practices already use some form of direct mail. A few examples include:

- Newsletters
- Season greetings
- Invitations to open houses or seminars
- Brochures
- Announcements, such as a new clinician joining the practice, a new office location or change in address, a merger or acquisition, offering a new service, etc.
- Simply reminding patients of upcoming appointments

With direct mail, you know exactly how many pieces of mail were sent out, who received them, how much each piece cost to send and how many responses came back. This information makes it easy to calculate cost-per-order or cost-per-response. You can even track how much repeat business and income a sequence of mailings generated throughout a longer period of time. This tracking information can be secured by instructing your staff to ask callers what prompted them to call and then recording their responses.

Successful direct mail rests on the quality of your mailing list; specifically, correct addresses, zip codes and names. Use of databases has made direct mail less labor intensive and more targeted. Some practices choose to manage their own databases and direct mailings. Others opt to use a mail house to update their list and manage the entire mailing process, from obtaining bulk-rate permits, to sorting and batching by zip code.

Deciding whether to handle your direct mailings in-house or out-of-house depends on a variety of factors, such as:

- Do you have adequate computer software to accommodate your own list?
- What is the source of your database? Is your patient billing software capable of exporting names, addresses and other data into other file formats to import into a database?
- Alternatively, does your practice management software automatically create patient databases from which labels or envelopes can be addressed to groups of patients sorted by various parameters?
- Is your staff knowledgeable in the use of database or spreadsheet software?
- Does your staff have adequate time to manage a database and the mailing process?
- How big or extensive is your mailing list?

Regardless of whether you keep your database in-house or out-of-house, it is critical that information is updated regularly and systematically. Establish a system for managing updates (adding or deleting information), designate a person to do it, set a time for it to get done (daily or weekly) and determine what backup systems you may wish to institute in case of a computer or human malfunction.

Another aspect to consider when planning for or building a database is what type of information or “fields” will make your information more valuable. For example, at the absolute minimum, fields should include first and last names, mailing addresses, telephone numbers, fax numbers and email addresses.

Practically anything that gives you information to better serve your patients or target your marketing efforts can be included in the database. Additionally, consider the benefits of adding a field that allows your practice to differentiate between its patients, prospective patients, past patients, media contacts, suppliers and referring dentists. This feature offers the ability to divide or categorize your database, with names in one category getting all direct mail pieces and others getting only specific ones. If your practice plans to use direct mail on a regular basis and will be sending at least 200 of the same piece per mailing, the U.S. Postal Service can offer a bulk-rate permit that may reduce postage expenses. The post office also holds free classes to teach businesses how to prepare bulk mail. Your local postmaster can give you the specifics on when and where.

Direct mail campaigns do not guarantee results. The average response rate for a direct mail campaign ranges from 1.5% to 4%.

## SUMMARY

The BIOMET *3i* Quick Reference Guide to Patient Marketing is not intended to provide legal or business advice. Always consult with your legal counsel to insure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations as well as professional advertising restrictions and guidelines as established by your state’s professional board.

Proper training is necessary for the proper placement and restoration of dental implants. We encourage clinicians and their staffs to actively participate in continuing education programs on all subject matters related to the practice and promotion of implant dentistry.



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