



Confusion and Clarity: A Guide to Improve Your Marketing

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Your car runs better when the oil is changed regularly and the tires rotated on a consistent basis. Marketing is similar. Small changes on an ongoing basis stave off major problems down the road. The day-to-day takes over and it is challenging at times to lift our heads above the fray and notice that a tweak here or there can improve marketing results and keep costs at acceptable levels. Many hospitals create or have confusion over the following marketing initiatives.

Consistent branding

In yesteryear, it was easy peasy to keep branding consistent: logo, sign and scrubs all matched. Today, with multiple platforms on different devices that change at different rates, it is much harder to keep your brand exactly the same. Take a gander at the following to make sure your practice isn't showing a disjointed digital "face" to the world and causing confusion for pet owners:

- **Logo file** – Make sure to use the same exact logo file for everything people see. Many hospitals have multiple files that have been collected over the years. Delete or archive anything that is not in use today. Make sure staff has the approved logo for use.
- **Font** – Did you know there are conventions where people go to discuss fonts? It is a "thing." Fonts convey emotions, including non-verbal information about a veterinary hospital. Making sure the same font is used



on all marketing materials helps define the brand and promotes the same message wherever it is seen.

- **Voice** – What is the tone used across the internet and offline about your practice? For example, here in Minnesota, we have Caribou Coffee (<https://www.cariboucoffee.com/>). The “voice” is humor and Minnesota culture mixed into inspiring messages. Is your tone the same everywhere your hospital can be found?
- **Identical everywhere** – Aside from humans looking for matching branding across the web, Google is too. To have better placement in Google, addresses and other identifying information have to be the exact same everywhere. All review platforms: Google My Business, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.—everywhere.

Major brands have socialized us to expect simple short messages that are identical everywhere we see that brand. In time, this has built trust. If inconsistencies show up, people tend to be uneasy with a brand.

Competing ads

What happens when multiple ads are run on Google or Facebook and they are targeting the same audience? Google and Facebook “see” each individual ad in competition to the other ad. Rates can go up because the hospital is competing with itself to reach the same audience. The way to stop this problem is to carefully select the target for each ad, or to run one ad at a time if the same audience is desired for both ads.

Google My Business

Pet owners can be confused when Google My Business is inaccurate and out of date. Increasingly, Google is pulling data about a business from the Google My Business (GMB) area. The human who needs to look at the GMB to make sure it is correct? You. Google assumes that if there is an inaccuracy, the business will correct it and, if they cannot correct it directly, they’ll reach out to Google. Here are the top things to check:

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- **Hours** – Are the hospital hours correct? Especially around holidays, this information can be erroneous.
- **Map location** – Make sure the practice is located on the map correctly. Many times, it can be off by a few streets or just not listed in the right place. Pet owners trying to find you will end up driving to where Google thinks the hospital is located instead of where it really is located.
- **Pictures** – Pictures in Google My Business can be less than desirable and not represent the business you want to portray. Happy people with happy animals are key. Videos can even be uploaded for people to view. Remember, crazy cat videos are beloved on the internet.

An outside "eye" is sometimes what's needed to see the forest through the trees. Beyond Indigo is keenly aware of brand awareness and the requirements of Google. We are here to ride the wave of life and keep your practice busy. Give us a call and we will focus on your goals and sending tails through your doors. Beyond Indigo has been conducting internet marketing for 21 years. Our CEO and COO have each been working in marketing online for 23 years. Our team knows the old and the new, as well as how to generate revenue and tails through the door. We focus on results first and discuss costs second. We are committed to staying up-to-date with the changing online environment, such as ADA compliance. Plus, we are Google Ads Partners, and we know how to build Google mobile-friendly and fast websites. Need help creating a marketing plan? Call 877.244.9322, ext. 100, or go to <https://www.beyondindigopets.com/contact/>.

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Kelly Baltzell, M.A. is President and CEO of the Beyond Indigo family of companies which she founded in 1997. Beyond Indigo is a full-service marketing company focusing on Search Engine Optimization, is a Google Adwords Partner, Social Media Marketing, Online Reviews and websites. She has been a monthly columnist for MWI Animal Health since 2011. She has also presented and been published in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the UK.

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