



The World of Private Practice

L. Gordon Brewer

MEd, LMFT

www.practiceoftherapy.com

&

Dr. S. David Hall

PsyD, LMFT, LPC-MHSP-AS, CST, NCC

www.psychmaven.com

1

Excerpt from “Mental Health Marketing Kit”

See full course and other courses at

www.psychmaven.teachable.com

2

Marketing your Practice

- 3 Levels of Practice Marketing
 - Special Marketing
 - Active Marketing
 - Passive Marketing

3

Your Marketing Budget

- It is helpful to have a budget of both money and time that you are spending on your marketing for each month.
- Starting out, most of us have more time than money to spend on building our practices and the proportions can change over time but you must be mindful of both.
- For a guideline, we would say \$50 to \$75 is good place to start with the money, look to about 5 to 8 hours a month as well.

4

Special Marketing

- They are the things that are unique and in some ways you may only do them once.
- They tend to be the most labor-intensive marketing tasks and yield the least initial results.
- But they are a foundational part of marketing and will still bring you clients.

5

Types of Special Marketing

- Personally connecting with potential referral sources
- Creating Business Cards/Brochures/Handouts
- Creating a Seminar or Community Presentation
- Build Your Media Presence
- Become a Community Resource

6

Connecting with Potential Referral Sources

- Take them out for coffee or a meal
 - *hint: try for breakfast and always pay
- Ask to meet with them in their workspace
- Always present the conversation first with what you can do that will be helpful for **them!**

7

Creating Business Cards and Brochures

- **Business cards** are still a must for most professionals. If your budget is tight there are a lot of cheap to free options from places like Vista Print, but if you are serious about marketing at all you need to have a good looking business card with your name, credentials, and contact info (address, phone, fax, email, website, etc.)

8

Creating Business Cards and Brochures

- There are several computer programs available to format and create a brochure; I typically use the standard layout trifold when I am creating brochures. You might do a brochure for your practice in general, or for a specific service you offer such as a group for food addiction or EMDR for trauma. Having a brochure is just another means of telling the story of what you do.

9

Creating Business Cards and Brochures

- Brochures can be used in several ways. If you have an established relationship with a potential referrer, like a physician, they may be open for you to place your brochure in their waiting room where patients can look through while they are waiting for their appointment.
- It also has the secondary effect of reminding your potential referral source that you are out there when they have your brochure around. The more they think of you

10

Creating Business Cards and Brochures

- Brochures can also be used for mailings, particularly for target groups. Such as if you had a brochure for a group you were doing on postpartum depression and you mailed it out to all of the OB/GYN's in your area. Because your brochure speaks specifically to something that they might be seeing, there is a greater likelihood that you might get a positive response from it.

11

Handouts

- Handouts for Clients
 - On time-out rules, progressive relaxation, active listening, etc
- Handouts for Professionals
 - Referral List
- Always make sure your branding and contact info is on any handout you give out. If you need to make a logo for yourself, try a group like [Tailor Brands](#).

12

Creating a Seminar or Talk

- For many introverted psychotherapists, the idea of teaching in front of a group of strangers can be rather anxiety provoking. Many of you would rather work doubly hard on other forms of marketing rather than teaching something, and if that is you, feel free to put that extra effort in some other forms of marketing. But if educating people regarding psychotherapeutic topics is something that interests you, it can be a great form of marketing.

13

Creating a Seminar or Talk

- Schools, churches, support groups, professional associations and social clubs are all entities that might be interested in hearing talks on a psychotherapeutic topic.
- Develop a talk on something you like working with in therapy, like obsessive-compulsive disorder, and then create an educational lecture on understanding and managing OCD. By giving lectures it helps establish your authority on your topic and individuals and other professionals will begin seeking you out.
- Thinking about creating professional and lay versions of the same talk.

14

Creating a Seminar or Talk

- It is easy to get be people to let you speak if you are doing it for **free!**
- Don't get hung up on this, it is just part of your marketing.
- If you get one client that is generated by a talk that comes 3 times, then that talk has possibly paid you a few hundred dollars.

15

Build Your Media Presence

- Social Media (know your audience's spots)
- Build a Website ([Wix](#), Squarespace, Wordpress)
- Therapist Directory (psychologytoday, goodtherapy, association directories)
- Blog
- Podcast (your own or others)
- Local Media

16

Become a Community Resource

- Be active and volunteer in local associations.
- Make yourself available for things that do not have a clear marketing objective.

17

Active Marketing

18

Active Marketing

- They are the things that take some planning, but that they are much less work than special marketing tasks
- These tasks also tend to yield more immediate results than special marketing

19

Types of Active Marketing

- Maintaining referral relationships
 - Particularly ones that you know are sending you clients
- Reusing and updating popular talks and revisiting groups
- Keeping your website, brochures, and web directories updated.
- Maybe a newsletter

20

Active Marketing

- Without thinking of any new marketing ideas, what would be some active marketing that you do based on what else you have done?

21

Passive Marketing

- Passive marketing is less about doing anything new as much as it is monitoring well what you are doing.
- It will be your most significant marketing long-term, but you still have to keep feeding it with special and active marketing, especially in the early stages of a practice.

22

Passive Marketing

- Doing Your Job Well
- Monitoring Client Retention
- Purposeful Office Interactions
- Continuing education and professional development
- Positive Word-of-Mouth

23

Doing Your Job Well

- All of us should be striving to become more aware of our weak points as therapists and be working to improve the quality of our work, whether we have been in practice 2 years or 20 years.
- That being said, even a new therapist should be hitting certain baselines in their work. Do you make a connection with clients? Do people seem to feel helped by their work with you?

24

Doing Your Job Well

- Many psychotherapists who are new in a practice setting have the benefit of still being in the process of supervision. It is important to think about your continued growth as a therapist as being a central part to your marketing. You could be driving tons of clients in your direction, but if they do not feel helped by you then they will not stick around for a long period.

25

Monitoring Client Retention

- All of us know the phrase “a penny saved is a penny earned.” The same principle applies to therapists regarding client retention
- Some of us work for brief therapy models while others of us work from depth models.
- Yet regardless of this, retention rate for most clients is 5 to 7 sessions.

26

Monitoring Client Retention

- Look at your average for how long clients stay with you. For as long as I have been doing this
- I have average between about 11 and 17 sessions per client.
- When you have your average down, you can find out how many intakes you need to average to have the client number you are looking for.

27

Monitoring Client Retention

- For example, if you are wanting to get to 20 clients per week, and your average client stays for 10 sessions. Then if you average 2 intakes a week you will level off at 20 clients per week

28

Monitoring Client Retention

- Low client retention may not mean that you are doing bad therapy. Your rate may not be right for your client demographic. Your client demographic itself may affect client retention; outpatient addiction work often times has lower client retention than does other therapeutic issues. But keeping a finger on this pulse is a good way to effectively manage your client load.

29

Monitoring Client Retention

- Also, note your referral sources.
- This is really important in helping you shape how you market. It is where you find out what of your special and active marketing is working.

30

Purposeful Office Interactions

- For those of us working in a group practice or an agency, some of the best referral sources we have are in the room next door; when I refer to other therapists, more times than not it is to a therapist who works in my office.

31

Continuing education and professional development

- Involvement with professional organization (AAMFT, ACA, NASW, APA, etc.)
- Growing in specialty areas or getting certifications (addiction work, EMDR, etc.)
- Doing further schooling.

32

Positive Word-of-Mouth

- No matter what sort of relationship with referral partners you develop, in the long run your biggest referral source will be your clients. When you have been able to positively affect somebody's life through your work in therapy with them, they are often times be quite happy to share with others about their positive experience with you.

33

Positive Word-of-Mouth

- Though it is important not to exploit your power in the therapeutic relationship to make your clients go out and sell your practice for you, there are still nonintrusive ways to let your clients know that their positive word-of-mouth matters to you.

34

Positive Word-of-Mouth

- One idea is to put WOM flyers in your lobby and/or bathroom. (WOM stands for “word-of-mouth,”).
- The flyer simply talks about how our practice is grown through positive word-of-mouth and we appreciate it when people who have felt they have been helped by us spread the word so that other people can also be helped.

35

Positive Word-of-Mouth

- Letting your client in on this process can be very empowering for them. It gives them a sense that they can help others by spreading the word about something that is help them.
- Oftentimes, clients just make assumptions that you are busy and do not need any new clients.
- Un-intrusive reminders about the importance of their word-of-mouth advertising can be a great way to keep that ball rolling.

36

Combining the 3 Types of Marketing

- In starting in practice, we would suggest a minimum 1 task of special marketing per week.
- When you feel you are starting to get a good stream of clients, you can start looking at how to put more energy in active and passive marketing.
- A full practice can look at a monthly active marketing task and a special task once or twice a year. Find ways to be checking in on your passive work regularly

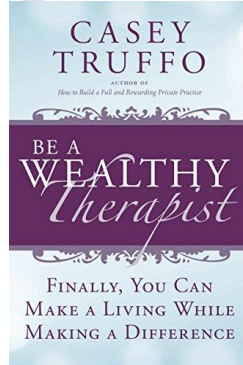
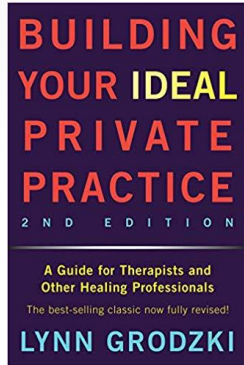
37

Combining the 3 Types of Marketing

- It is easy lose motivation to market when you feel your caseload does not seem to be filling or when you feel that you are full. DON'T GIVE IN TO THIS!!!
- You are always marketing for 6 to 10 weeks in the future, and that is where you will see the results.
- This # difference between full and desperate is slim in private practice, and you will feel the fluctuations hard if you don't stay steady with all marketing.

38

Marketing Books



- [Building Your Ideal Private Practice](#) (2015) by Lynn Grodzki
- [Be a Wealthy Therapist](#) (2007) by Casey Truffo