

- Speaker 1: Since March 2009, the Pharmacy Podcast has been developing content monthly, weekly, and daily for the business of pharmacy. With more than 25 different podcast channels, more than one million downloads, and 30 plus participating pharmacists, the Pharmacy Podcast Network is the global leader in podcasting for the pharmacy professional. Find all of our podcast channels by going to pharmacypodcast.com/shows.
- Todd Eury: Pharmacy Podcast Nation, this is the host of the Pharmacy Podcast and founder, Todd Eury. It's 2020, and what's that mean? There's so many changes in the pharmacy industry specifically, and healthcare, but I'd like to concentrate more on the business of pharmacy. We have 23,000 plus independently owned pharmacies out there that really have to do so many different things to keep their business going. The hats that they wear, it's amazing. Patients that they're caring for, the injection of their passion into their communities.
- Todd Eury: When I get to partner with other organizations and thought leaders around technology, around best business practices, accounting, how to finance your next pharmacy buy or expansion of your pharmacy in the marketplace that you're choosing, or what we're talking about today, which is marketing. I know that's a huge 30,000 foot view statement, but it's very important to talk specifically about pharmacy marketing and what that means to you as a business owner. We have a expert in marketing that is part of the Pharmacy Podcast Network, has been for years, Nicolle McClure with GRX Marketing. I want to say congratulations Nicolle on your 10th year in business as GRX Marketing.
- Nicolle McClure: Thank you. Thank you so much. It's been a great 10 years and happy to be here.
- Todd Eury: Let's talk about that. What made you ... I know the story, but I'm not sure if the listeners do. What made you start GRX Marketing? How did that come to be?
- Nicolle McClure: Our parent company here in Des Moines owns several locations and I actually 10 years ago started marketing for those stores. My path prior to that is in marketing, Medicap Pharmacies Incorporated. Used to be based out of here. It's a franchise business where I handled marketing for those locations.
- Nicolle McClure: Started making those connections and realized pretty early on that pharmacists struggle with marketing. It's something that they know they need to do as a small business owner, but they're not really taught it in school. They get out there and want to open their own pharmacy, but then they're like, "How do I market it? How do I get people to come to me?" Marketing is not just something that you can do once in a while. We tell our clients it's an investment that you constantly have to be doing because people's needs change and things like that. Just saw an opportunity being within the industry to help other pharmacy owners with their marketing, and that's kind of how it came about.

Todd Eury: Marketing has changed and I get tired of even saying the word because of how wide and huge the whole thing is. The definition of marketing, the action or business of promoting and selling products or services including marketing research or advertising, but today in 2020, marketing is really that form of communication. It's from a simplistic perspective on a physical aspect. If you're in your pharmacy and someone walks in, marketing is the very first impression that they get of your pharmacy. The way that your pharmacy looks, the way that your aisles are set up, even the smells in your pharmacy.

Todd Eury: I know of, Nicolle, pharmacy owners who will have fragrances throughout their pharmacy to give an aspect of either vanilla tones or lavender or something where it's an entire experience. We know of pharmacy designers out there who are now designing pharmacies to stop looking like the black and white, very cold, very medical driven environments, but making them extremely warm. The lighting in your pharmacy is important. The types of products that your customers and patients are being approached with as soon as they walk in that door.

Todd Eury: Then there's the aspect ... That's of course that physical, and that could be a show in and of itself, but you and I, Nicolle, we're really the digital marketers. We're the ones that are concentrating on branding of what your pharmacy business, what you as a pharmacy owner, how are you advocating that through Facebook, through social media, through your website, through the brochures that you hand out, through your business card. How are you taking those elements? How are those elements of aka marketing impacting the reputation of your business? What impression that your customers, your prospects, your brand new customers, your physicians, your specialist in your community, what type of impression that that builds?

Todd Eury: What I want to hear from Nicolle is, and what I want to really hear about and talk to you about, marketing in 2020. What are we going to do differently as pharmacy owners today, assuming that we have the basics, assuming that you have a great looking website that is indexed properly, that your SEO, your search engine-

Nicolle McClure: That's a big assumption there, Todd, but we'll let that go.

Todd Eury: Let it go, that we have some assumptions already taken care of because that's a show too. What advancements or what new things are you looking to develop for pharmacy owners?

Nicolle McClure: A couple of things come to mind. Video has been around for a year or two and continues to grow in popularity. Doing videos on your Facebook page and any social media website, things like that, can be very powerful. Whether it's a quick video on a service or the pharmacist just saying, "Hey, we launched this new

product. Come and check it out", and you do a span shot of the OTC area, because what that lets you do is you connect with that potential customer.

Nicolle McClure: As you touched on before, people are making a decision/impression about your pharmacy before they even step in the door. They're on social media. They're on Google looking at your reviews. They're just doing a Google search on you and seeing what comes back. That's why it's so, so important to just have those basics done of up to date website, a social media page, platforms that are up to date, using your Google business page, things like that.

Nicolle McClure: But what video lets you do is it makes that connection. They see the pharmacist, they see their face, they see their interaction, things like that. Video is also great for explaining services. If I say compliance packaging or a packaging program to the average consumer, a lot of them may kind of grasp what it is but not specifically, but if I'm able to go into a pharmacy and take a quick video of either a self packaging blister pack or a machine that's automating and putting it together, that gives a great visual for people.

Nicolle McClure: The videos don't have to be super sophisticated. We teach our clients it's just taking that step to get out there and make that short video and post it. Video is still definitely out there.

Nicolle McClure: I would say geo-fencing. I talked about it on my last podcast, where you can virtually fence a business, a local business, around a pharmacy. It can be a competitor, a doctor's office, any type of business, maybe a pet store if you're trying to promote vet compounding, things like that. Basically, what it does is when somebody walks into that virtual fence, it serves up an ad, your ad for the pharmacy, on about 40,000 different apps that people have. It's pretty much every app out there except for Facebook or Instagram since they have their own platform.

Nicolle McClure: The great thing about geo-fences is it's instantaneous, but then it also will serve that ad multiple times up to 30 days to that customer. You're getting those multiple impressions, but I know pharmacists are ... One reason that they really struggle with marketing is that ROI, that data, and that's something sometimes that's hard to give, but with geo-fencing, we get instant results where we can see how many people were shown your ad, how many people actually clicked on it. Then we also put a fence around the pharmacy itself so we can see how many of those people came in to the pharmacy after seeing your ad. We can really drill down those numbers, which is great.

Nicolle McClure: Then I would say probably the new upcoming thing for 2020 and will continue to evolve is voice search. I just saw an article last week that people using their cell phones, all the home devices, Alexa, Google Nest, Google Home, things like that, to talk about, find out information. If your website is not up to date to where it can be pulled as a result for voice search, you're going to start getting lost in the

shuffle. Making sure on the backend that your website is structured properly and your sentences or whatnot is something that's definitely going to become important in 2020 and beyond.

Todd Eury: I think that when we talk about video, I think there's three categories of video when it comes to owning a pharmacy and using video to advocate, promote, and to deliver great information to your community. Number one, personalized videos, the ones that are being done with your iPhone or your droid or something where you're recording something. It's very personalized, it's gritty, it's very sincere. People love sincerity. Then maybe you upload that or post that to Facebook.

Todd Eury: Number two, a highly produced video that you would use almost like an advertisement. I'm not saying necessarily TV advertisement because that's super expensive, but you do a professional video that you put on your website. It's your intro. Then you put it on YouTube and then you kind of blast it through social media.

Todd Eury: Then number three is that video element where you're in the community, maybe you're asking questions about what do you know about diabetes or what do you know about hypertension or something and an element of on the spot so that you can gather, kind of chime in to an element or to a subject. Everybody likes to see themselves participate in stuff like that.

Todd Eury: I think that video could go so much further than where it is today, just from creativity. I don't think there's a lot of money that you have to spend to even do this, but I absolutely agree with you that video needs to be pushed and needs to be used by the most creative of pharmacy owners out there.

Nicolle McClure: Yeah, definitely agree. Kind of breaking it up that way is a great way to explain it. It's easy to have a video created professionally and something that you can use. That's a service that we offer our clients, but there's various platforms out there. It's something that you can use across multiple arenas for a long time.

Nicolle McClure: Again, we've seen great results with video. If you compare, like on Facebook for example, the number of people that interact or like a video compared to just a text and a graphic is pretty staggering. Definitely encourage people to do one. Even if it's once a month and it's more of that grittier type video that you say, it's better than nothing.

Todd Eury: Absolutely. And consistency, by the way.

Nicolle McClure: Right.

Todd Eury: The number one indicator for my success, for the success of the Pharmacy Podcast Network, a hundred, feels like a hundred, years ago, it's been 11 years

for us coming up in March of 2020, very close to you and your 10 years, what our success and my success and this network's success and the 44 contributing hosts to 33 stations has been is consistency. It's not been quality, even though our quality has definitely improved. Episode one through 200 is just embarrassing, but it's the consistency.

Todd Eury: I've been doing podcasting for 11 years, a minimum of one per week. We're up to five per week now. We're driving content out to our potential listeners that now can go to Google and you can put in Pharmacy Podcast hypertension, Pharmacy Podcast pharmacogenomics, Pharmacy Podcast ... You can put in almost any keyword under the element of pharmacy and bring up an episode about the subject or touching on the subject, and that is so important. If you are thinking of delivering content to your community that's going to set you aside from the big box pharmacies, that's going to stand you away from other pharmacy providers that you might be competing with, and also elevating your expertise in healthcare as a healthcare provider, I think this all is kind of mixed into why it's so important to leverage video specifically.

Nicolle McClure: Right. 100%. Consistency with marketing is so important. A lot of times we'll hear people only want to do marketing when a competitor closed or there's some type of opportunity or the pharmacy has been experiencing sales that went down for the last year and now they're in a panic mode to try to reverse that ship. It's so hard. It's much harder to market in that situation than by just having a consistent message because the average consumer gets bombarded with messaging throughout the day. Just think about as a listener out there as you're driving to work and on your phone and everything and think about how many messages you see. You have to be able to break through that clutter, and one thing that helps do that is consistency.

Nicolle McClure: If I consistently hear from a pharmacy about something, they're going to be more top of mind when I do have that need as opposed to the pharmacy down the street that just advertises or does any marketing a few times a year. Even if it's just something little, always doing a post or a video on your Facebook page or being involved locally in the community, things like that, it has to be something that's done on an ongoing basis.

Todd Eury: When I think of a pharmacy owner and the stress on them, the fact that the payment structure of how they build and sustain and grow their business is based on something that we need broken and rebuilt, which is the PBM and how DIR fees are impacting and having to be an employer and worry about your employees. there's so many aspects to the business. What's your advice to a pharmacy owner to being able to be consistent with social media, to be consistent with video? If you measure the time that it would take them to do it or giving it to a tech, a technician, or another pharmacist and you might be worried that it's not done correctly, is there like an ROI calculator that you can

measure marketing outsourced to an organization like GRX Marketing versus doing it yourself?

Nicolle McClure: I think you can just look at ... We have compared looking at pharmacies that do market on a consistent basis compared to those that don't and how their sales differ. As far as as tracking results, we try to do that with everything we can through social media views and website and whatnot and just that personal type marketing that we would do to patients specifically. I think just looking at if you're a pharmacy owner, and most pharmacists I think would struggle with putting a consistent marketing plan together.

Nicolle McClure: Consistency means getting a message out there weekly at a minimum. You take that then by 12 months, but then you also have to be able to stay on top of any opportunities that come up, such as a competitor closing or something like that. What are you going to do in that situation? Easily could spend 10 to 12 hours a month on marketing.

Nicolle McClure: Then you look at, "How much am I going to pay a tech to do that, or how much can I take away a time from a technician when they are tasked with so many other things throughout the day just at the pharmacy?" Then thinking about that, I think you can really see the value of, "Okay. Let me work with this expert in pharmacy", because for us specifically that's all we do. We don't get involved in helping with car sales or real estate or something like that. Pharmacy is our bread and butter. We know it backwards and forwards. Being able to take that off their plate and show that ROI I think has been very good.

Todd Eury: You and I will be attending the PDS 2020 conference coming up in February. I'm excited about that. It's one of my most favorite conferences to go to because of-

Nicolle McClure: Agreed.

Todd Eury: ... pure energy that's there with the pharmacy owners and the content that's there. You guys are going. Share with our listeners a little bit about your involvement in partnership with PDS and why you think that's an investment that a pharmacy owner should make.

Nicolle McClure: Yeah. I agree with you. I love the conference. There's that energy there. I think something that separates PDS member is just they get the need to have these solutions at their fingertips. They understand that they can't do it all and they need partners within the industry to help them get things done, and they're willing to make a change. They understand that they can't just make money filling prescriptions anymore. I think a lot of pharmacy owners understand that, but these guys that attend PDS as members have already made that shift and they're looking for other services to bring into the pharmacy that can help grow their business. They're looking to make those decisions as far as, "What can I

add to my arsenal to help my pharmacy grow?" I think it's just a great platform for people to get together and share ideas but also look for those solutions.

Todd Eury: In the show notes, I'm going to put a link that the listener, if you want to attend that, there's a code that they can use, GRX, and they get a percentage off their registration fee. We're excited that you're going to be there, Nicolle, GRX Marketing's going to be there, that we're going to be there covering the conference. If you want to meet up at the conference, please look for us. I'll be floating around with a backpack and some microphones. You guys, I look like a Ghostbuster actually-

Nicolle McClure: You do actually. That's a great analogy.

Todd Eury: I should build a Ghostbuster backpack and just a PBM Buster backpack.

Nicolle McClure: Yeah, yeah.

Todd Eury: So anything ... Before we close up, I'm so excited about GRX Marketing. You guys are an amazing force. I love your team, the wonder women, and what you've done, your own marketing. You definitely practice what you preach. You have some really interesting and fun ads. The way that you deliver messaging, as well as your booth itself at these conferences, is phenomenal. I'm just excited. I want to give you kind of the last word, but I also want to say congratulations to you and the team.

Nicolle McClure: Thank you. I appreciate that so much. Thank you to you. You have been one of our longtime partners, so I appreciate just you taking a chance on us. When we first started, nobody knew who we were or what we were about. It was great to have those out there that understood what we were doing and that voice. Kudos and thank you to you Todd as well.

Todd Eury: You're welcome. It makes me feel old. You know that?

Nicolle McClure: Yeah. You and me both, man.

Todd Eury: When you have partners for 10 years-

Nicolle McClure: Yeah. Right?

Todd Eury: ... you think, "Wait a second. How old am I?"

Nicolle McClure: Yeah. We'll just leave that for people to decide. I'll just finish it with we're excited for this year. We've got some great things planned for the year. We're doing some giveaways on our social media platform. I invite everyone listening to check us out on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to follow us and watch for

things to come out throughout the year. We'll still be just offering great services to independent pharmacy owners everywhere. You can also-

Todd Eury: Thank you so much, Nicolle. What you've done for pharmacy, I appreciate that. We will be at the conference. We'll see you there. We're excited to be at the PDS conference. If you would have any questions for Nicolle, you'll have show notes down at the bottom to be able to send out a request for more information, but you can go to pharmacymarketing.com as well.

Todd Eury: You know what? We always thank you for listening to the Pharmacy Podcast.

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