



# 2019 Orthopedic Marketing Trends eBook

Are You Missing Out?



# Looking Ahead...

## **The priorities of the healthcare industry are not the same as the patients it serves—that will change in 2019.**

Changes to regulations, technology, patient goals, and digital marketing, are transforming how orthopedic surgeons across the US manage patient outcomes and drive success at their hospitals and practices.

## **What does this eBook provide?**

This eBook provides actionable marketing advice for solo practitioners, group orthopedic practices, and healthcare decision makers.

## **The goal of this eBook?**

To help orthopedic practices and their marketing teams make sense of these changes, and guide them toward building the infrastructure required to stay relevant and appealing to today's patients.



# The Changing Face of Orthopedic Marketing

## Orthopedic marketing teams must use content to build trust and create resonance

From the growing demand for inbound content marketing (both written and video content), to shifting patient expectations, the changes taking place are focused on helping people at every leg of the patient experience.

## Orthopedic practices must adapt to shifting demographics

Shifting demographics are forcing orthopedic marketing teams to take a long, hard look at who they should be marketing to, and what services they should be marketing.

## Technology is simplifying the healthcare experience

Patients now expect simplicity and convenience to be a part of the healthcare experience. To that end, orthopedic practices must make a concerted effort to adopt technologies and resources that deliver on all aspects of the patient experience.



# Orthopedic Marketing Teams Must Use Content to...

Build Trust and Create Resonance

## Why?

Today's patients have more choices than ever before when it comes to picking an orthopedic healthcare provider. Unfortunately, most orthopedic practices are still marketing as if their prospective patients are not empowered buyers—and that's a critical mistake.

# 1

## #1 - Traditional medical advertising is becoming less effective

Orthopedic consumers are saturated with advertising that doesn't deliver any value, and that's a problem.

As a result, traditional ad placements (TV, radio, print, etc.) don't work as well as they used to—a trend that will become more pronounced in 2019.

## 2

**#2 - Americans are skeptical of their healthcare system and spoiled by retail**

In 1966, 75% of patients trusted their healthcare provider—today, that number is down to 33%.

Why the 42% decline?

Part of it has to do with politics.

Part of it has to do with out-of-control costs.

But part of it also has to do with the way hospitals, health networks, and even practitioners treat their patients.

Retail companies have set the bar extraordinarily high when it comes to providing a better experience for their customers.

Companies like Amazon are known for making the customer experience fast, fun, and painless (67% of Americans say they have “quite a lot” or “a great deal” of trust in Amazon).

Compare that to the typical experience of the healthcare consumer—an experience laden with confusing pricing, surprise bills, battles with insurance companies, and long wait times—and it’s even easier to see why orthopedic practices need to rethink the way they market themselves.

## 3

**#3 - Patients are worried about opioids**

Twenty years ago, patients didn’t care about an opioid prescription—that’s not the case today. The opioid crisis has patients extremely concerned about the future of pain management, and orthopedic practices are on the front lines of this pharmaceutical epidemic. In the years ahead, many patients will want alternative pain-management options from their orthopedic physicians.

# The Solution?

## A Seamless, Patient-Focused Marketing Experience

In 2019, orthopedic practices should establish trust and resonance through a foundation of patient-centric content that helps people find answers to key health questions, no matter where they are in their medical journey.

### Create content that people want to read, watch, and share

Healthcare organizations like The Mayo Clinic and WebMD are oft chastised by practitioners for the rise of **cyberchondria**—a term that describes how the Internet is fueling the rise of hypochondria. Instead of outwardly trusting (and taking) the advice of their orthopedic doctors, patients are increasingly skeptical of suggested treatments because of what they've read online.

Having said that, such criticisms aren't entirely fair—digital resources like The Mayo Clinic and WebMD also provide real value by producing a lot of fantastic content that people can use to improve their health.

Helping people begin their journey toward better health is one of the most overlooked aspects of marketing for orthopedic practices, and orthopedic practices willing to take the time to invest in the production of quality content in 2019 will see improved new patient acquisition.

### Examples of great content

**Three Rivers Orthopedic Associates** created a highly-information blog page, to bring important information to patients of greater Pittsburgh through articles like this one. By creating this kind of practical, everyday content, the orthopedists not only improve their ability to get found in search engines—they also improve their authority and expertise in the eyes of the community.

**The Orthopedic Institute** at Holy Cross Hospital, uses interactive content in the form of a free, online chat, to build relationships in the community, and offer people a valuable resource that can be tapped for orthopedic information at any time.

**The Playbook** from the **Hospital for Special Surgery** shares uplifting stories of patients overcoming their health issues, and well as critical, health-related information that new and long-time orthopedic patients can use to make informed decisions about their health.

## Market with native ads and sponsored content

Average click-through rates on Google's display network are an anemic 0.35%, and by some accounts, over half of paid impressions aren't actually *seen* by anybody. It's time to leave display behind and look to other advertising methods to attract patients.

Rather than advertising a specific hospital or facility, try promoting and sponsoring content instead.

A combination of native advertising (advertising positioned in social media feeds to appear like user-generated content) and sponsored content (content ads which recommend content to prospective patients) is a powerful approach to improving the resonance of any healthcare network in any community.

## Examples of great native ads

**Anne Arundel's Medical Center "Stachie Facebook Contest"** asked participants to don fake mustaches and post them on the center's Facebook page. The company also marketed the contest using Facebook's native advertising platform. The campaign provided a huge boost to traffic to the medical center's website for men's health.

#AAMCstachie CONTEST

\$50 gift cards for Dollar Shave Club awarded each week!

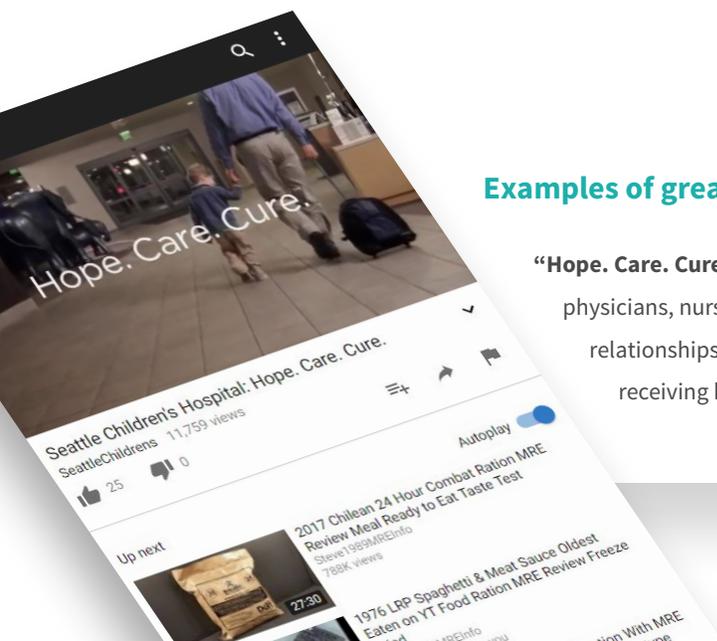
Step 1. Take a stachie. A stachie is a selfie with a mustache, real or fake.

Step 2. Post your stachie with #AAMCstachie at [facebook.com/AnneArundelMedicalCenter](https://facebook.com/AnneArundelMedicalCenter).

Step 3. Check in weekly, every post is a chance to win a \$50 gift card for Dollar Shave Club.

## Examples of great sponsored content

**"Hope. Care. Cure."** By **Seattle Children's Hospital** is a video ad features patients, families, physicians, nurses, researchers, and others, as they overcome their health struggles and build relationships with the hospital. The hospital then posted the ad on channels such as YouTube, receiving high praise from the community and even winning a national ad award.



### Use analytics to track winners and cut the dead weight

Orthopedic practices can create all the content in the world, but if it doesn't resonate with patients it's pretty useless. Analytics are how healthcare marketers test and evaluate their content's performance to find out what's working and what isn't.

Orthopedic practices looking to invest in content development would be wise to use heatmaps to "watch" how potential patients interact with their blogs, articles, videos, etc.

Heatmaps make it clear where people are clicking and how long they're lingering on specific pieces of content, giving decision makers a deeper understanding of patient interests and needs, which leads to the production of more relevant content in the future.

### Don't shy away from the opioid conversation

Whether it's baby boomers with inoperable conditions or millennials looking to stay away from pills, orthopedic clinics must be prepared to offer—and market—their alternate pain-management options, from steroid shots and cortisone injections, to physical therapy and low-grade anti-inflammatories.

When it comes to communicating a commitment to mitigating the abuse of opioids, orthopedic clinics would be wise to talk openly with their communities.

Physicians willing to participate in the conversation will be more effective at winning trust with potential patients, and more able to position themselves (and their practices) as a positive force for change.



# Orthopedic Practices Must Adapt to Shifting Demographics

## Why?

Put away those scalpels and prescription pads—orthopedic surgeons will need to revisit the way they prescribe, treat, and manage the health of a changing patient pool. From aging boomers to millennials wanting more options from their orthopedic doctors, **2019 will be a watershed year.**

## #1 — Millennials want more options

As early as 2019, millennials could surpass baby boomers as the largest generation of people living in America, and Millennials expect different things than their older counterparts.

For one thing, they expect orthopedic providers non-invasive treatment options long before recommending surgery. They also expect orthopedic clinics to have modern, easy-to-use websites, online scheduling, and online payment portals.

## #2 — Boomers and Gen Xers will need orthopedic care like never before

Boomers and Gen Xers aren't getting any younger, and neither are their joints. As such, orthopedic practices would be wise to start marketing their joint-replacement and joint-rejuvenation services to these two generational demographics.

Remember—by 2030 the number of Americans over the age of 65 will double, and it's hard not to imagine the number of joint-replacement surgeries needed by 2030 will double as well.

# The Solution?

## Embrace the Uniqueness of Each Patient

Higher demand for orthopedic care will keep clinics and hospitals busy—but it's the clinics and hospitals who deliver a superior patient experience that will enjoy the most success.

### **Millennials crave value and authenticity**

Millennials want orthopedic clinics to provide more value (e.g. the convenience of online scheduling) and choice (e.g. non-surgical methods of pain reduction).

They also want orthopedic clinics to exhibit more socially-conscious perspectives that engage local communities through events and volunteer work.

Why is delivering on these expectations important?—because Millennials have a tendency to be cynics and skeptics when it comes to the healthcare industry. Disarming them takes effort.

### **Appeal to Boomers and Gen Xers by emphasizing preventative care**

Boomers and Gen Xers don't want to go under the knife, but they don't want to make radical lifestyle adjustments either (e.g. start using a cane) when it comes to caring for their joints.

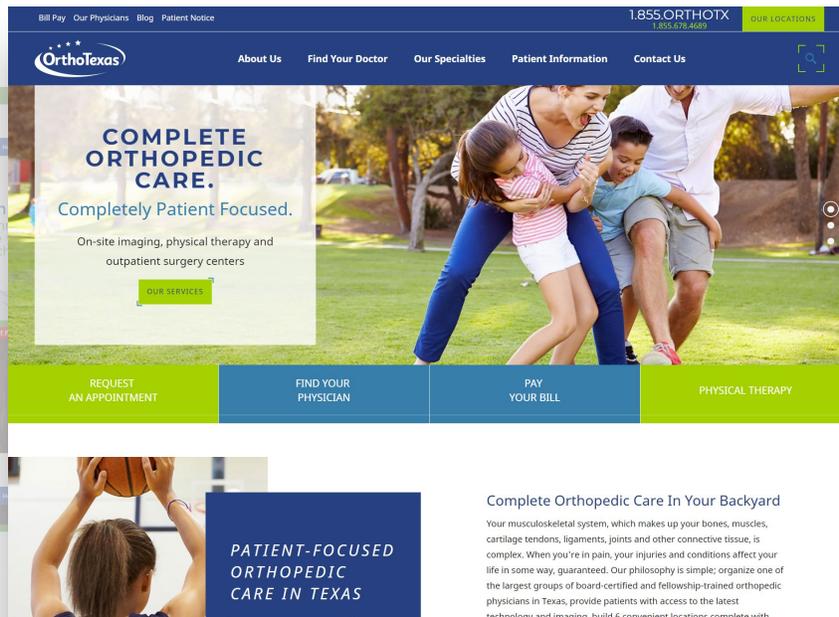
As such, orthopedic clinics and physicians should emphasize the importance of preventative care in their marketing. By making preventative care a running theme in all marketing, advertising, and content development, orthopedic clinics will be more effective at building trust and asserting authority in the eyes of Boomers and Gen Xers.



# Helping Orthopedic Practices Make Sense of Modern Marketing

With lead generation becoming more specialized and marketing funnels getting larger and larger, outsourcing these services can provide huge benefits to orthopedic practices and give them a head start in attracting new patients in 2019 and beyond.

Content marketing, native advertising, and the open embrace of analytics will help orthopedic practices win the hearts and minds of new patients. By giving patients more of what they want (information, facilitated scheduling and payment options, transparency, and better in-clinic experiences), orthopedic practices can make themselves unforgettable in the eyes of patients.



# We Can Help

Scorpion helps orthopedic practices make sense of modern marketing. We work with solo-practitioners, orthopedic group practices, and larger hospitals employing multiple orthopedic surgeons. Regardless of your budget or the size of your marketing team, we can help you win new patients in 2019 and beyond.

Call Scorpion at **866.622.5648** or visit **[ScorpionHealthcare.com](http://ScorpionHealthcare.com)**

