

## Rethink Pharmacy: Be Intentional in Your Marketing

Gone are the days that the doctor, dentist, lawyer, and pharmacist were simply just the known professionals in any given town. Competition is fierce and **you need to become intentional about promoting your pharmacy and its services.**

John Maxwell claims that the #1 Invaluable Law of Growth is the law of Intentionality. You must **become intentional in your approach to marketing.**

2014 SK&A data shows **there are over 61K pharmacies in America.** If you don't have competition in your community... it is coming. You need to create differentiation! You need to stand out in an increasingly crowded pharmacy marketplace!

How? **You need to RETHINK the way you promote** your pharmacy and its services in your community.

### How Do You Find – and then Attract – Your Ideal or “Dream” Patient?

Are all customers created equal?

**Who is your ideal patient or “dream” patient?** How would you describe them? Corporations spend millions of dollars with market research firms trying to identify and assign **key attributes** of an ideal customer. You must be able to describe yours.

To Do: →→→ List 3 key attributes that describe your dream patient.

50% of Americans have at least one **chronic illness** and those responsible for **over 80% of healthcare dollars** spent in the United States. Chronic diseases generally cannot be prevented by vaccines or medication, nor do they just disappear.

So, a patient that is taking medications for an illness that is cured AND is responsible for significant portions of the spend in America. **That sounds like an ideal patient.** Did you have a chronic disease?

Once you've identified your dream patient, how do you find your pharmacy?

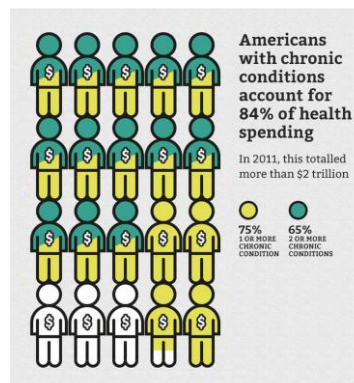
To Do: →→→ List 3 ways you can **identify your existing dream patients.**

1. Use your pharmacy management system and run reports by medications
2. Use a third party data company, like PrescribeWellness or Mevesi, that can provide data to identify dream patients
3. Have your pharmacy staff identify key patients

Once you've found your existing patients, how **do you find new patients in your community?**

To Do: →→→ List 3 ways you can find new dream patients:

1. Host a health event at the local community center or senior center



Americans are United States. or cured by

cannot be healthcare list patients

them within

2. Connect with your local doctors and inform them of the new services you are offering for patients with chronic disease (see below)
3. Purchase key words, like diabetes or arthritis, with online search engines such as Google, Bing and Yahoo

What services are important to your dream patient?

To Do: →→→ List 3 services you can offer to lure dream patients:

1. Host education classes where your dream patients can learn more about living with their chronic disease
2. Host small group sessions allowing patients the opportunity to learn from other patients with similar illnesses
3. Offer special “Healthy Heart” days or “Living with Diabetes” days where you offer one-on-one counseling, special pricing on appropriate products, and your free services (above)

### Create Messages That Resonate with your Dream Patient

When most pharmacy owners are asked the question, “What makes your pharmacy unique?” or “Why to your patients keep coming back?” the responses are similar:

- Personalized Care “We know people by name!”
- Customer Service “We deliver!”
- Community Presence “We’ve been serving the community for 50 years!”

Big-box chain pharmacies are aggressively attacking an independent pharmacy’s differentiators: **personalized care, customer service and community presence.**

Have you seen the Laura’s CVS television commercials drop Laura’s on to of the CVS exterior sign? Trying to demonstrate their approach to **personalized care.**



where they

happy and with

Have you heard the Walgreens slogan “At the corner of healthy”? Trying to demonstrate their **community presence** locations on key street corners.

DRUG STORES		U.S. MEASURED-MEDIA SPENDING		
RANK 2012	RETAILER	2012	2011	% CHG
1	Walgreens	\$283.4	\$217.3	30.5
2	CVS	105.1	91.5	14.9
3	Rite Aid	47.1	45.9	2.6

Big-box chain pharmacies will continue to **spend a lot of advertising dollars** in order to cast doubt in the patients’ minds about independent pharmacy. Walgreens spend \$36,000 per location in 2012, which was up 30% over the prior year. They will continue to try to convince viewers that their brands are better than they really are.

Continue to promote differentiators like personalized care, customer service and community presence. **Add to it!** Change your messages – your brand positioning – and **connect with your chronically ill patients (your dream patients) in a more meaningful way.** Speak their language. Lure them into your pharmacy. Be intentional.

How? **Your brand is everything...** the way you answer the phone, the way you welcome people that enter the pharmacy, your delivery vehicle, your delivery driver and their clothes, your pharmacy exterior, your website content, your associates (what they wear and what they say), your advertising, your services, and more.

**Start by offering services your dream patients want in their pharmacy.** Follow-up with an intentional advertising and marketing plan that promotes your key services. Get the word out.

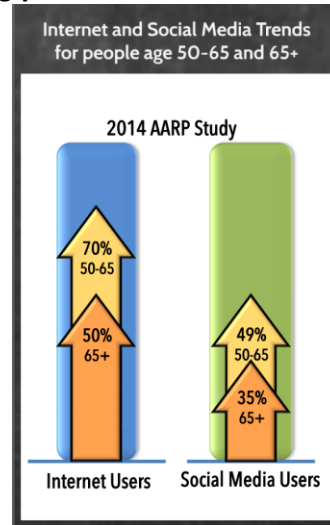
**Tell People in Your Community (Go Ahead and Brag)**

Now, you want to get tell your patients and your community about your new services. How should you get the word out? Here are **3 critical marketing vehicles that you must strongly consider:**

1. Web – If you haven't invested in a website, now is the time you think your seniors aren't using web, you are wrong. In a study, 50% of **seniors 65+ use the Internet multiple times** and 70% of adults ages 50-65 do the same.

Load your website with recommendations from patients. family and friends if you need to do so. **70% of consumers recommendations or reviews from other patients.**

In addition to having patient recommendations, you should health information on your website. **72% of Americans online for health information.**



to do so. If 2014 AARP each week

Start with trust

provide search

that in a

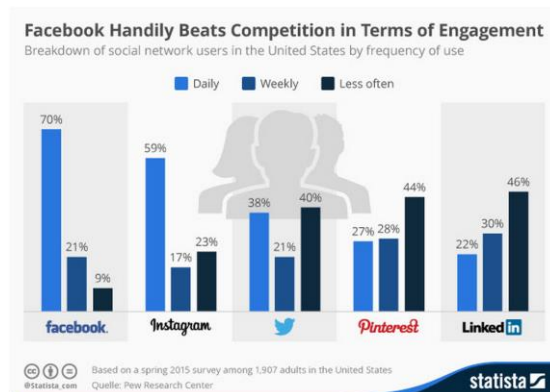
**FIVE MOST-VALUED SOURCES FOR HEALTH-CARE INFORMATION**  
By the percent of respondents who answered: "very much/somewhat."

	2011	2002
1. Doctors	69.9%	76.2%
2. Pharmacists	55.9%	52.9%
3. Nurses, physician assistants	55.1%	47.9%
4. Friends, spouse, other relatives	53.2%	55.9%
5. In-doctor's-office ads, brochures, pamphlets, wallboards	39.1%	47.4%

Source: Kantar Media's 2011 MARS OTC/DTC Study, 2011 versus 2002. Respondents were asked to indicate the value of certain sources for health-care information.

That coupled with the fact **in a recent study on valued sources for health care information, pharmacists were ranked second** with 56% of respondents saying they "very much/somewhat" valued Pharmacist for health care information. That was up 3% from 10 years prior. Doctors were down over 6%.

2. Social Media – Social Media is not going away. You need to build a Facebook page. According to a 2015 Pew Research Foundation report, **72% of online Americans are using Facebook.** This is 62% Americans. 70% of online Americans are Facebook daily. Your seniors are using it, the same AARP study, 35% of seniors 65+ social media multiple times each week and adults ages 50-65 do the same.



away.

of all using too. In use 50% of

Keep your social media social.

Speaking of recommendations, take advantage of the referrals sites that are out there, like Yelp and Angie's List Health. **Get your patients to post reviews on your services.**

3. Email – Your patients want to hear from one of the most trust occupations in America – You! **Make a concerted effort to capture email address from your patients.** Create a simple “opt in” form and focus on promoting patient health.

In a 2013 study by Millward Brown Digital, researchers found that 76% of consumers not only click through, but also conduct shopping from retailer emails. **Fewer than 8% of people said they “never” click through a retailer’s email** or go immediately to its site after reading an email.

Using email is **an inexpensive way to promote the pharmacy** especially the patient care services that you have for chronically ill patients.

#### **Independents are #1, so tell your patients about it!**

In a 2014 Consumer Reports Study of 33,000 consumers, independents and Health Mart independents were ranked #1. In a 2015 JD Power Consumer Satisfaction Study of nearly 15,000 consumers, independents and Good Neighbor Pharmacy independents were #1 – again (in the chain pharmacy division).

Start today. **RETHINK the way you market pharmacy and its services in your community.** Offer services that will attract your dream patient. Then, use the free marketing tools that are available to you in order to get the word out into your community.

#### **About the Author:**

Jay Williams has over 20 years of experience in helping businesses improve their go-to-market strategy and execute their marketing services. He has spent the last 15 years working directly with independent pharmacy owners and the businesses that support them.

Prior to starting Pharmacy Directions, Jay served as the Vice President of Retail Marketing for Cardinal Health. In this role, he was responsible for all marketing deliverables impacting independent pharmacies. He managed many of the company’s service offerings for independents, forged relationships with pharmacists and pharmacy owners serving on the company’s independent pharmacy advisory boards, and reinvigorated the company’s customer-facing trade show.

Earlier in his career, Jay held a similar role with the AmerisourceBergen. He implemented the company’s go-to-market strategy for independent pharmacies, revamped the company’s marketing tools & resources, and managed the company’s customer-facing trade show during the height of its success.

Jay earned a BSBA from Ohio Northern University and started his career working for an advertising agency in his hometown of Dublin, Ohio.