PHP TRANSCRIPTS: <u>Module 1</u>

– The MESSAGE –
The Smart Start

» Veterinarian Marketing Formula

This formula is all about how we increase the monthly new clients who are actually booking an appointment at your practice. There are two components to that number.

The number of prospects/potential clients evaluating your practice multiplied by *the conversion rate of those potential clients into active clients*. We can increase either the first part of this formula or the second part. Which one do you think is the best one to focus on in the beginning? Go ahead and write your answer down right now.

Now, let's work through the formula together. If we want to increase the number of potential clients, this will require us to increase our advertising spend, increase our practice's visibility and be in front of more potential people. On the other hand, if we want to increase our conversion rate, we just have to change the perception of our practice, which can essentially be done for free.

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Let's take a look at the impact of both of these options in a typical month. Let's say that 500 potential clients are evaluating your practice every month, and your conversion rate is 10%. This means that you are receiving 50 new clients through the door, each and every month. Now, look what happens when you increase your conversion rate to 30%. Your new client number has jumped from 50 to 150, and this was all done essentially for free.

I hope you can now see that the conversion rate is the most important component of this formula, particularly in the beginning, because no matter how much money you spend to increase your visibility, if you're not converting those potential clients into active clients, you're never going to be successful. We're going to work to optimize that conversion rate so that whatever you spend on future marketing will ultimately be converting those prospects into active clients at a higher rate.

So how do we improve conversion rate? Your conversion rate is greatly based on the perception of your practice by your clients, because **the perception becomes the reality**. Our potential clients cannot evaluate the quality of our medicine (they do not have that expertise) so all they really have to go on is what they can see from our outward appearance (and this is essentially your online presence).

A great way to explain how perception can truly affect reality is through recounting the

example of the General Electric MRI and the engineer behind its design (Doug Dietz).

Mr. Dietz was very proud of what he had accomplished with his creation, but on one occasion, while visiting a hospital, he noticed how terrified all of the children appeared when they had to go into the MRI. Upon investigating the situation, he came to learn that approximately 80% of children needed sedation just to be able to go into the machine. This realization profoundly affected him, so he set out on a mission to change the perception of the MRI for children. He created an adventure - retrained the staff, and redid the visual aspects of the MRI, and the impact was significant. The sedation rate dropped from 80% to 10%. And more importantly, while he was once waiting for a child to come out of the MRI, he saw a child run out, give her mom a big hug, and say "Mommy, can we come back tomorrow?"

These incredible results were all just based on perception alone. When the children went into the machine, they were told "Be very quiet, because the pirates might come and get you. You might hear cannon fire in the distance, but that's all the more reason to stay still." What this means for us as veterinarians is that we have to accept that it's not just what our practice does, but that it's the perception of what we do that is of extreme importance. Therefore, we have to craft a message that is going to be optimal for our potential clients to understand and with which to engage. This will be what motivates them to take action and join your practice.

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So, if we can transform the perception of your practice and bolster your conversion rate, not only are you going to be able to increase the new clients coming through the door, but you're also going to be able to increase the compliance of your current clients. This outcome is all based on your creating a compelling and inspirational message. If you can get this right, creating not just a good, but a great message, you can then duplicate that message on all of your marketing materials. However, if the message is uninspiring, and we just gloss over this part of the entire sequence, then you will end up duplicating a lackluster message, and undermining the success of your practice.

» Let's look at the 3 principles of client attraction.

1. **Think like your client.** All too often, as veterinarians, we forget to take off the veterinary hat. We emphasize what we do and the features of what we do instead of trying to understand the problems and frustrations of the client, and the benefits that we bring to the table. One of the most important things that our clients are looking for is the compassionate element. In all of your marketing materials, if you're not thinking like your clients, or feeling like your clients, you are ultimately going to miss the mark in delivering the experience for which they're looking. We must always reflect, and be seen through the psyche of our clients in order for us to truly understand what they're looking for, so that we can deliver exactly that experience.

2. **"Start with why."** This concept, which was first conceived by Simon Sinek, suggests that all inspirational leaders and very successful companies communicate in exactly the opposite way to how the rest of us tend to communicate. And just how *do* we naturally communicate? Well, we generally say *what* we do, and then, very rarely, we venture into *how* we're different. Yet, almost never do we actually say *why* we do what we do. The inspired leaders and businesses start with *why*, and we have to do the same.

   For example, let's take Apple. One of their flagship products was the iPod, a mobile device utilized to store a large library of music files that you could play at any time. Apple, however, wasn't the first to enter this market. In fact, there was another company prior to them that had a similar storage device. They marketed the product as '5GB of music', and guess what - nobody bought it. On the other hand, Apple came out with the iPod and proclaimed, "14,000 songs in your pocket", and suddenly, everyone got it. This is because people want to be able to listen to music anytime, anywhere, and don't especially understand – or care –that this is akin to 5GB of music. People do not buy what you do; they buy *why* you do it. Therefore, as veterinarians, we have to make sure that we're sharing that *why*.

   For us, the *why*, or that inspirational element, is empathy driven. If we really emphasize this compassionate component, and inspire that pet-owner/veterinarian bond, we will increase our compliance and our client retention. Using the *Start with Why* framework, we're going to create what's called a BIOLERPLATE, and this will serve as your inspirational message that you're going to use over and over again.

3. **Use emotional motivators.** These are psychological triggers you can use to motivate your potential clients to take action and join your practice.

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The '5 Cs' of emotional motivation.

1. **Community** - If we can show that your practice is involved in the community, this will increase trust and make your practice a more attractive place to visit. A great way to accomplish the community aspect is through Facebook. Let's take the example of a dentist. If one dentist had over 1,000 Facebook fans, and another dental practice had only 20 or no presence at all, all other things being equal, which one would you choose? You would likely choose the one with 1,000 fans. Build your community, and showcase that community on your website. A great way to do this is with a Facebook widget. This will show how many fans you have, and all of their faces.

2. **Consensus** (social proof) - Saying how good we are only goes so far before people stop listening. Instead, what you need to do is to get your clients to speak for you. We do this through using testimonials. Testimonials should be placed anywhere a customer is evaluating your potential practice. The main area is on your website, as well as across any social media accounts you may have. Another impressive piece of social proof is to cite the number of clients that are visiting your practice. Rather than saying, "Come to ABC Vet Clinic. We're so great, because we do XYZ", instead say, "Come and join the 5,000 pet owners who call ABC Vet Clinic their trusted veterinarian."

3. **Compassion Connection** - People bond with those who have a familiarity to them, and to those with whom they can relate. We need to make sure that any opportunity to be like your clients is showcased. By emphasizing your personal compassion for your work, which is, of course, treating animals, we are then able to create a powerful connection. This same compassionate element is what drives your clients to come to you as their veterinarian.

4. **Care**– We, as veterinarians, tend to focus on a list of features, rather than the actual care and benefit our clients and patients will be receiving.If we want to communicate about dentistry, instead of describing what we do and why it's so important from our perspective, we need to figure out the patient issues, and explain how the dentistry will benefit their pet. For example, we could focus on the element of bad breath, which is a problem that clients know their pet has. If we can solve that problem, we can bring the benefit and care of alleviatingbad breath, explain all the other extra health bonuses that come with dentistry, and then be able to help motivate clients toward the dentistry service.

5. **Call to action** - It has been shown that a call to action, or simply saying what you want people to do, has a significant impact on their doing it. Therefore, our websites should have phrases like, "Call us today", "Reserve your appointment" or"Call us now!" Use anything that will motivate people to actually pick up the phone and call. For example, I recently registered for a webinar. At the end of the registration process, it said, "Mark this event on your calendar now." Quite honestly, I would have missed that step if I wasn't prompted to do so, and I probably would have never attended the webinar. If we don't tell people exactly what we want them to do, we are then reliant on them to be self motivated enough to take the action. Many will simply not do it, and then they'll go back into Dr. Google.

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» Let's look at the 3-step action plan.

1. **Search like your client.** Veterinarians tend to think in terms of quality and integrity. This, however, creates a disconnect because our clients are thinking in terms of compassion and service. So we have to remove the vet hat, and see through the eyes of our clients. To do this, we have to go online. Go to Google, and type in "veterinarian [your area]", and see what comes up. Hopefully, you'll see your own website. Click your website link, and write down your first impressions. How easy is it for you to go to the "Contact Us" page, the "About Us" page, and what is your general feeling? You want a 10 out of 10 experience, but don't worry - if you're not there yet, we're going to be working on that in the very next module.

2. ***Start with Why* boilerplate.** The term *boilerplate* comes from the end the 19th century. It was a single piece of metal that would duplicate and stamp out the same message over and over again in the printing press. We're going to do the same thing in your practice using the *Start with Why* framework. You're going to create a 2 to 3 sentence inspirational, compelling, perfect message that you are then going to be able to duplicate on all your marketing materials. This is going to replace the frustrating process having to think of something great to say at the end of everything you write about your practice. Inevitably, the latter would be imperfect, creating a message that would be an overall letdown, and that would undermine the importance of the document that you had just written. With the boilerplate, you can just copy and paste and your message will be perfect every time.

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*Let's walk through the framework, and create a rough draft right now.

On your piece of paper, I'd like you to write down the word 'WHY'. Below that, write 1-3 sentences about why you do what you do. Why do you get up in the morning to come to work? Why are you a veterinary professional? What was the moment that changed your entire life forever inspiring you to dedicate it to the health and wellbeing of pets? Write those answers down now.

Now write down in capital letters 'HOW'. How is your practice different from the others in the area? What do you do differently? What are you most proud of in your practice? Write 1-3 sentences in the next 30 seconds right now.

Finally, write down the word 'WHAT'. Jot down a few bullet points about what your practice does. We usually overemphasize this point, let's not spend too much time on the WHAT.

Now you have your framework for your boilerplate. You're now going to take these 3 components, and combine them into a single paragraph. I've also included a *Start with Why* boilerplate worksheet. You can use this to finalize your rough draft, as well as share it with

other members within your practice. You'll often be surprised at what comes out. It's always positive, and there are different perspectives from the members of your practice about what they most value about your clinic. Go ahead, and do that if you have the time.

3. **Create emotional motivators.** What is the key element that you should do first? It is of course the most popular page on a veterinary website, and can you guess what that is? It's the "About Us" page. Over and over again, the same pattern exists. What happens is that potential clients go to a veterinarian's website, and then they immediately go to the "About Us" page. Only if they can make that personal connection there, will they move on to the "Contact Us" or "Services" page. This means that you have to emphasize the inspirational, compelling elements on your "About Us" page if you want to be able to make that connection, and earn the right to serve that client

» Let's look at the 7 key client- bonding questions:

1. **What are your personal origins?** This allows you to connect with the people in your geographic area.
2. **What is your position within the clinic?** Who are you, and what do you do?
3. **Why did you become a veterinary professional?** This is the key element. The more that you open up here, the more you'll be able to bond with your clients. Really focus on when you were inspired to become a veterinary professional. If you can dive into this detail, it will be exactly what your clients really want to know. Again, start with and focus on the *why*.
4. **How did you become a veterinary professional?** This is going to help with the story telling element.
5. **What is your role as a veterinary professional?** What do you like to do? What are your passions within the profession itself?
6. **Who is in your family, and what are their interests?** Include your pets here too. Name your pets and describe their quirky personalities - that is exactly what our clients love to read. We love to write about it too.
7. **What are your personal interests and achievements?** The more you can write here, the more you can make a possible connection with your clients. For example, during a recent lecture I put up my veterinary bio for everyone to see. After the lecture, a veterinarian from the audience came up to me and said, "I can't believe that we're so much alike. I'm also a pilot, a sailor, a martial artist and a scuba diver." Instantly, we formed a friendship. I want the same phenomenon to be happening in your practice 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, so that you are bonding with all the clients that are reading your "About Us" page.

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» Let's look at the most common mistakes you should avoid.

1. **Don't be superficially compassionate.** I was recently with one of my consulting clients, and I asked her to describe the *why* behind her practice. She said, "We all love our work, and we work hard to make sure all the pets that come to see us live long, happy and healthy lives." That was okay, but it wasn't really inspirational, so I asked her, "Why are you a veterinarian? Tell me why you get up every morning and drive to work. Tell me why you opened up your practice – and she said: "I feel a huge bond with animals, and the overwhelming urge to take them out of pain. My clients become so much more than that - they become friends; they become family." I was silenced. I was truly moved by *why* she became a veterinarian, and I even felt the urge as a pet owner, to choose her as my veterinarian. So, make sure you try to open with the *why*, with the inspirational element as much as possible, because the more you open up, the more you will be able to connect with your clients.

2. **Don't use a large, single block of text.** Make sure that you break that text up, because you want to be able to engage your clients as much as possible. A trick that I use is to bold the first few words in each paragraph. That helps the eye travel along the multiple paragraphs and improves that engagement.

3. **Don't offer a laundry list of features rather than emphasizing the benefits.** If you look on your website, and you are just saying exactly what you do, then remove that list, and instead replace each of those features with the benefit to the client. This shows potential clients that you care about the benefit for them. They'll reward you for that effort by choosing you as their veterinarian.

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