Graphic Design and its Strategic Value

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All businesses, including health care practices, face a number of challenges when considering how best to manage aspects outside their core business (such as marketing or other activities). One such aspect is the question of how to present a polished and professional image. While inside knowledge and expertise about the specific business or practice, and accompanying market research, is a great place to start, there eventually comes a need to create some kind of visual representation. It is at this point that hiring a graphic designer may be the best next step.

Professional graphic designers are trained in several aspects of developing materials and can offer multiple solutions to this question. These individuals not only have working knowledge of standards in design, such as software applications, the use of type and images, and techniques and principles of arranging information; they also carry knowledge of marketing strategies and techniques, the interpretation of information, and the various uses of effectively designed marketing materials.

Expertise such as this carries associated cost, of course. But there is a value-added proposition to consider. Even the simplest types of professional marketing and design services can add up to an eighty percent increase in the success of any business. Communication with clients or patients often involves providing information, obtaining their responses and educating them as to services, changes in the way things happen, and future plans. By engaging a professional to assist with these efforts, it becomes possible to make more impact, and possibly influence the decision-making process.

Another reason to explore graphic design services is the simple fact of competition. In order to be effective, businesses need to be able to distinguish themselves from others in the same field, so professionally designed materials are required, if not crucial. Beginning with the image of the company in the form of a logo and web site, effective design can also reach into other materials such as presentations, brochures, social media sites, even office forms and communications.

While there are pre-packaged kits available to accomplish this, when using templates and other pre-designed materials, one runs the risk of duplicating the materials of another company. Custom-designed materials, in addition to avoiding this possibility, also provide a specific company with its own distinct personality and image, and the opportunity to present its unique value proposition to its audience.

The American Institute of Graphic Arts provides well-documented evidence that good design serves not only to humanize information and to provide a means of reaching clients, but also serves as a resource for innovative thinking, and for developing creative solutions on a more widespread basis. Designers often play a crucial role in the strategic planning for any business - ranging from branding a well-designed logo to creating a well-structured identity that employees can support and maintain.

The expense of graphic design may seem a luxury at first, but evidence suggests that well-designed graphics effectively counter the expense that can occur in trying to rise above the noise in other ways. Professional quality, while not inexpensive, is a

worthwhile investment in the long run, given its intention of creating not just attractive but effective solutions, as well as solutions that take into account not only the best visual solution, but have also considered the business's unique values and approach to providing services.

Much additional information is available on how to find the appropriate design provider, and in how to evaluate a current marketing program. These subjects will be the addressed in future articles.

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