Back Pain SmartSite Marketing Plan - Sample

A marketing plan provides a written description of the marketing opportunities, objectives, strategies, tactics and priorities to achieve growth and financial goals for clinical services. Having a plan is essential to communicating with internal audiences about marketing activities, resources and budget commitments to effectively build business. It also serves as a roadmap for how marketing initiatives will be implemented, monitored and controlled. The following is an example of a plan to position and promote your Back Pain SmartSite as an essential volume-building marketing tool for your spine surgery program.

Note: this sample marketing plan assumes back pain surgery is housed in the orthopedics service line, although in many hospitals these cases can also be housed in a neuroscience service line.

Marketing Situation

At [Hospital Name], orthopedics has historically been a profit-leading service line. Orthopedic discharges represent x% of all inpatient cases and provide an overall contribution margin of x. Additionally, x% of our ambulatory volumes are for orthopedic cases, contributing an additional $xx to the bottom line. We currently have x% of the inpatient market share for orthopedics. Volume projections indicate overall demand is increasing. We can expect an annual growth rate of x% over the next 5 years.

Over the past decade, orthopedic volume growth has been driven by the aging population, improvements in technology, and expansion of minimally invasive surgical techniques. Spinal fusions alone have grown over 100% from 2000-2012. [Hospital Name's] back surgery volume growth of x% over the past decade mirrors the national trend.

In the past few years, however, the overall rate of growth for elective orthopedics procedures in our market has slowed due to the economic recession. Slow to moderate growth will likely remain as long as unemployment remains high and consumers experience financial uncertainty. [Hospital Name] also faces specific challenges to growing back surgery due to mixed clinical evidence for its appropriateness and efficacy, and increasingly stringent payer requirements for pre-approval for the costly back procedures.

In being vigilant to ensure quality, institutions need to carefully craft their back pain programs to make every effort to first apply protocols and care pathways to manage back pain patients conservatively--through pain management or physical therapy--and to incorporate surgery only in a

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smaller subset of patients. Still, back surgeries are forecasted to be an area of profitable growth on both the inpatient and hospital outpatient side, and [Hospital Name] would be well served to cultivate the back pain product line given the volume and profit potential.

With these competitive challenges, a comprehensive and targeted marketing and sales effort that demonstrates the service differentiators of [Hospital Name's] orthopedic program will be required to maintain our market position in and continue on our growth trajectory.

Marketing Solution

Our new online Back Pain SmartSite will boost the overall performance of our orthopedic marketing and sales strategies by attracting consumers early in their consideration and decision processes for back pain surgery and connecting those patients to our doctors and orthopedic services.

This service will set us apart from the competition by:

- Providing a convenient, accessible and easy-to-navigate back pain resource center
- Engaging consumers through free assessments that provide customized recommendations
- Linking back pain surgery prospects to our surgeons and other pain management services

Marketing Goals

- Position [Hospital Name] as the preferred brand for back pain surgery in our service area
- Maintain our position as the market share leader in the primary market
- Grow our position in the secondary market

Marketing Objectives

- Increase back pain surgery volumes (be specific – by what volume or percentage metric?)
- Increase online visits to our website (be specific – by what volume or percentage metric?)
- Increase conversions of online visitors to information seminars and physician appointments (by what percent?)

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Target Audiences

- Patient populations
  - Given the nature of spine procedures, almost half of all surgeries are done in patients aged 45-64. Baby boomers are a primary target, as are older Gen Xers.
- Referring physicians
  - Primary care physicians in primary and secondary markets
  - Emergency physicians, chiropractors, surgeons and other physicians
- [Hospital Name] employees and volunteers
  - [Hospital Name's] '000 employees and volunteers are connected to thousands of people and organizations across the service area. They are a built-in word of marketing force and advocacy group for back surgery to help family, friends and neighbors suffering from back pain.
- [Hospital Name]'s Past and Current Patients
  - The internal CRM system is the best resource for targeting past and current patients who may have orthopedic services needs.

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Marketing Strategies and Actions

[Hospital Name] will employ a multi-channel marketing promotions strategy to drive consumers to the Back Pain SmartSite, connect consumers to our information sessions and physicians, and convert those that are eligible for surgery.

Actions	Tools
Promote the launch of the Back Pain SmartSite to target audiences, emphasizing the assessments and customized reports as differentiating features: • Use internal CRM to identify specific past and current patients who may need orthopedic services • Target news media, health and medical bloggers; invite on-line "tours" of the site • Announce the new site in the employee newsletter; provide links on the Intranet • Announce the new site in the community and donor newsletters • Use social media channels to announce the new program	• Press release • External newsletter article • Internal newsletter article • Blog announcement • Facebook announcement • Twitter announcement
Increase target segment awareness and trial of the SmartSite, emphasizing the free on-line assessment to incentivize traffic from consumers with back pain considering corrective surgery: • Promote through traditional multi-media channels (e.g. print, outdoor, and direct mail) • Reach target customer markets through on-line advertising • Reach and engage consumers through social media marketing • Profile back pain surgery success stories • Identify high-impact locations for POS promotions (e.g. waiting rooms)	• Print ad • Outdoor poster • Direct mail postcard • Wall poster • Brochure/rack card • Banner ads • Social media promotions
Promote the SmartSite to target physicians in the primary and secondary markets, positioning the SmartSite as an additional tool to assist physicians in counseling patients on back pain management and surgery options: • Mail or email announcements about the launch of the SmartSite • Train physician sales and referral development liaisons on the site's functions • Provide patient fact sheets, wall posters and rack cards for physician waiting rooms • Hold an information luncheon for physician office managers and clinical staff; invite former back pain surgery patients to tell their "story"	• Letters to physicians • Wall poster • Brochure/rack card • Patient fact sheet

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Success Measures

Metric	Measures	Baseline	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Financial	Net operating revenue from back pain surgery				
	Contribution margin/EBIDA				
Strategic	Back pain surgery market share index				
	Brand position				
	Overall preference for back pain surgery				
	Overall preference for back pain surgery (obese patients)				
	Likelihood to recommend/patients				
Marketing/Sales	Back pain surgery volumes/IP				
	Back pain surgery volumes/OP				
	SmartSite visitors				
	SmartSite assessments completed				
	SmartSite information session registration conversions				
	SmartSite doctor's appointment conversions				
	Projected return on marketing investment				

Monitoring and Control

Results from the back pain surgery marketing strategy will be monitored on a quarterly basis. Trended data will be shared with clinical, administrative, physicians and service line leaders, and provide a platform for discussion adjustments to the ongoing marketing strategy. We will closely monitor new competitive developments and advise accordingly.

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Action Planning Template

Marketing Initiative: (Fill in name)
Marketing Objective:
Marketing Tactic:
Desired Outcome:
Responsibility assigned to:
Target Completion Date:

#	Action Steps	Start	End	Assigned to	Resources/Budget	Status
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						

Other instructions or comments:

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