

PATIENT-FOCUS OF THE 21ST CENTURY

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Dr. Leonard H. "Bones" McCoy is a character in the American science fiction franchise Star Trek. McCoy was most famously portrayed by actor DeForest Kelley in the original Star Trek series from 1966 to 1969."

IMAGINE A WORLD WITH NO PATIENTS!

If there are no patients, then there would be no need for hospitals either. However, for now at least, this scenario can only happen in space movies. Will it ever change? Maybe one day...

Today, in real world, patients are real- all over the globe including all of us.

Today, hospitals and medical staff are the most important and crucial part of our lives because being healthy is the ultimate richness of being able to live well.

In such an important market segment we call healthcare, how come, suppliers for this market still develop strategies that are very traditional in spite of the fact the patients are very different people now and can access to any information anywhere and anytime.

*Patients are the pivotal center of
healthcare...*

They are also the first touch point on the global value chain that create demand for healthcare sector. Every other point has to fulfill the demand in the best way possible- basically saving lives...healing...etc.

Hospitals need doctors and other medical staff to operate and fulfill the demand, and the medical staff needs medical devices to perform the medical procedures to assure the best possible result for the patients.

Today, the hospitals are evaluated based on the patient outcomes.

Today, the patients have vast knowledge of procedures because of the information on the web globally.

Today, due to changed patient profile there is a global market called health tourism where patients, themselves, search and make a decision on where to go.

Even with these major changes during the last 10 years, medical device manufacturers have stayed behind sticking to traditional marketing methods even though the digital marketing costs are less than traditional channels when promoted globally.



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So why the reluctance to truly communicate on the digital platform (not just on social media) but everything else that is possible digitally?

The traditional channel of trade shows will soon be a thing of the past. Or...they will be on a digital platform as virtual trade shows that are already in place. Virtual trade shows have come a long way in the past five years. Today, they're more widely accepted as valid marketing tools, and their speed and interactivity have kept pace with typical Web applications.

Most show organizers offer exhibitors an online booth with the ability to post collateral, videos, white papers, demos, etc. Some shows also offer the opportunity for live chat with attendees, and there should always be some kind of lead-capture ability.

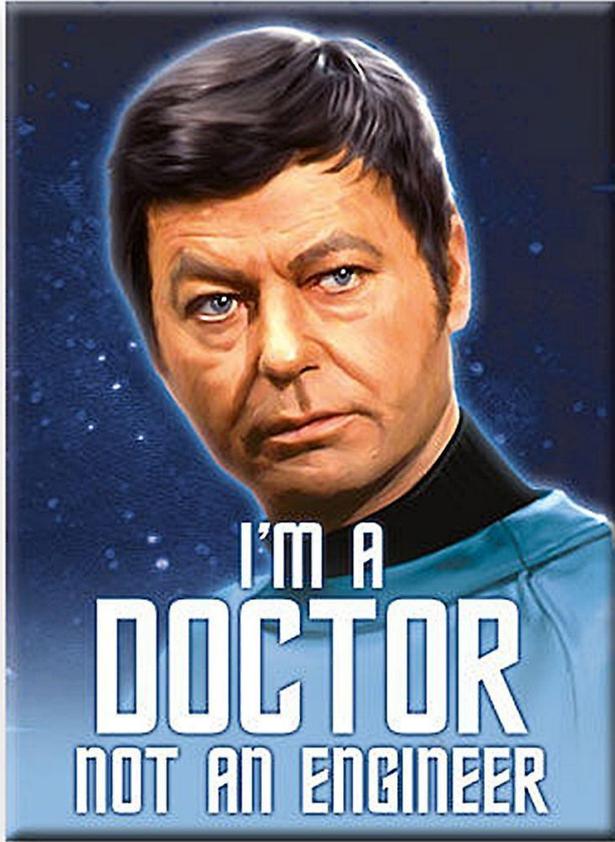
The success of digital marketing depends on the “content”.

This is the time of “content marketing”. How do we put words and sentences together? How do we tell a story that will stay in the minds for a long time? How do medical device manufacturers go beyond explaining just the products and its specs and start talking about value proposals- basically showing the benefits to the end-user, (to doctors about the benefits to the patient). It requires research, strong skills in communication, creative thinking and a lot of effort.

It is a known fact that the doctors search the web when they look for certain solutions. Yes, they will look at the medical details but if within the content, they feel that the benefits focus strongly on the patient’s well-being, they will remember it.

Marketers can no longer make it effective by applying overused words such as “quality”, “the best”, or “one of a kind”...

Patients are the customers of the hospitals and the doctors who are both direct customers of a medical device manufacturer. This means as marketers for medical device manufacturers (all B2B) we need to focus on customers' customers with a great content that can reflect not only the technical specifications but also the actual effect on the outcome.



Because the only reason why they purchase the devices is because of the well-being of the patients.

Even in an industry where most devices are sold globally through distributors, marketers should not just leave it with the distributors only but communicate to the end users as well to add value so the distributors can compete on value and not just on price.

As the technologies are speedily changing the healthcare system, maybe one-day, digital devices and a pill will take care of everything as the Star Trek doctor does for a patient that needs kidney dialysis (he then asks..."dialysis? what is this? Middle ages?")

As Star Trek Dr. McCoy also says, “I am a doctor not a mechanical engineer”.
