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Practice Building Through Social Media

We all acknowledge that the profession of Chiropractic is a healing art. And we Christian Chiropractors easily see the powerful platform we have from which to sow spiritual seed. But soon after receiving our diploma and license to practice, we find another facet of practicing in our profession. It's not one for which we are overly equipped to face in school. It's not one we relish as doctors. And it's not one that mixes easily with the honorable title of "doctor." *But it's still necessary.*

Practicing in the healing arts is a profession - and a business. While we would like to think that, since we selflessly offer help, compassion, healing, and our high skills in the healing arts, our doors should just magically stay open. The lights should stay on, the rent should pay itself, and the staff should volunteer their time - all without the mundane need to handle money and pay bills.

But it's not the case. The practice does need to deal with budgeting, paying bills, and cash flow. There is no way around it.

And one of the key pieces of this business aspect of our profession is the constant need to attract new patients. There are many ways to do this. Historically, screenings, fairs, Yellow Page ads, talks, fliers, dinners, giveaways, and direct mail could do the job. But the culture has changed, and those practices work less effectively, or not at all. Some have become too cost prohibitive. And some of them may be unethical - or even illegal.

In our highly technological culture, one of the new ways to promote our practices and to attract new patients is to use social media. There are many types of these - Instagram, FaceBook, Pintrest, and LinkedIn are a few of them.

Perhaps the most effective one, and easiest to use currently is FaceBook. It's much more than a time-wasting, electronic gossip tool (*though it certainly can be that.*) It's a way to get your name and message in front of literally thousands of people - for free.

The learning curve is steep at first, but there are ways to learn - either by researching topics on YouTube, asking a younger person for help, or hiring on line experts.

The gist is to sign up for a personal FaceBook account, populate it with your picture and a few data pieces, and then from there, build a page for your practice. Then you can post pictures, post comments, post videos that teach about your practice and invite people into your office. You can even post live videos of you talking 'off the cuff' about Chiropractic, your office, your staff, and more - right from your smart phone.

You can also post advertisements - for a cost. There is a bit of expertise for this, so get some help before spending money on ads. FaceBook has strict rules about what you can say on their ads, and they can reject your ad, leaving you

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Social Media, continued,

to figure out what you did wrong. Again, get some experienced help before diving into this. But the tool allows you to get your message, and your offer, in front of thousands of pre-selected people for pennies.

You can also "Boost" posts - that means that you pay FaceBook to get your posts in front of more people. This is simple to do, but I understand that it is less effective than doing an actual advertisement on Facebook.

The process of marketing your practice on FaceBook is fun, interactive, and productive. Start studying it. Research it by searching for tutorial videos on YouTube.com, and dive in. You'll enjoy it, and your practice will have fresh breath and energy injected.

Dr. Charles "Chuck" Roost is a 1980 graduate of Palmer Chiropractic College and a CCA member since 1989. He currently serves as our Missions Committee Chairperson. Dr. Roost practices in Lansing, Michigan.