

WHAT I DID DURING MY COVID-19 QUARANTINE

Experts learned lessons you can apply in practice.

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Shelter-in-place orders are being lifted in many states, and while the coronavirus pandemic is far from behind us, we asked experts to share what they learned or did during the mandatory shutdown and how or if it will change their practice management advice, style, or strategies going forward. Here's what they had to say.



ZOOMING IN

I have had a virtual team for almost a decade, with occasional meetings and events. It has enabled me to keep our expenses reasonable, which allowed us to work with many innovative start-ups as well as doctors early in practice. But it can be isolating at times, and I miss my domestic and international travel. We recently converted our weekly touch-base calls to Zoom calls so we can actually see each other, and it has been great. I think this has brought us even

closer together and has enhanced our interpersonal relationships. Texts and calls can't replace the ability to look in someone's eyes and have a more meaningful conversation. It has also been good practice for me to get the hang of Zoom as I have been doing so many webinars. We are all in on Zoom calls and will continue to do them even when we're able to travel freely again. I do think a lot of us have learned to do things differently during this period of social distancing that will stick.

WENDY LEWIS

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“WHAT I LEARNED IS THAT DURING DIFFICULT TIMES LIKE COVID, CUSTOMER SERVICE HAS TO BE AT ITS HIGHEST LEVEL. TOP CUSTOMER SERVICE INCLUDES REGULARLY AND PRECISELY UPDATED INFORMATION ON THE WEBSITE SO THAT PATIENTS (AND CLIENTS) CAN EASILY ACCESS THE INFORMATION THEY NEED AND AVAILABILITY VIA PHONE (OR TEXT) FOR THOSE WHO HAVE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS.”

—DAVID EVANS, PhD, MBA



VIP STATUS MATTERS

During COVID, I had the unique opportunity to travel multiple times using a number of airlines and rental car services. What I learned is that during difficult times like COVID,

customer service has to be at its highest level. Top customer service includes regularly and precisely updated information on the website so that patients (and clients) can easily access the information they need and availability via phone (or text) for those who have specific questions. I flew one high-touch airline on a first-class ticket and tried to use my elevated status at the rental car company to pick up a vehicle. There was essentially no information on either website about how COVID would affect the air travel or rental car pick-up.

When I called to ensure I understood the various COVID-related issues of flying and renting a car, both companies put me on hold for a very long time. Why should I be on hold for this long when virtually no one is flying or renting cars? I should be first in line. I grew tired of companies telling me to bear with them and making me experience long delays and providing insufficient information.

I changed airlines and rental car companies on my second trip due to my dissatisfaction. The response was a little better, but it still left a very bad taste in my mouth about how I rated as a consumer with these companies.

The same philosophy applies to your practices. Patients expect to be able to obtain accurate and timely information from your website, and when they call, someone should answer in prompt fashion. The cost in lost branding and customer loyalty for your practice greatly outweighs the cost of keeping sufficient staff on hand to answer the phones and to keep your website updated. At Ceatus Media Group we extended our hours of phone access and kept a full staff of web developers working to make necessary web updates for our clients.

DAVID EVANS, PhD, MBA

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CONTENT CREATION TAKES CENTER STAGE

Some companies experienced an incredible lull during quarantine. However, we were busier than ever.

We spent an incredible amount of hours working with clients who were applying for and navigating the Paycheck

Protection Program, altering their marketing tactics and regrouping on their human resources issues, including but not limited to layoffs, rehiring team members, and the legal issues surrounding all of the above.

However, we spent just as much time creating content for both our medical practice clients and non-clients. Practices have needed assistance more than ever before, and we recognized the economic situations they were put in. So, we focused on the following:

Video and blog creation. We have been and continue to create both blogs and video content about how practices can best handle COVID-19. We've learned the fine art of repurposing content: Record a video, place it on our blog, promote it on our social media channels and in our e-newsletter content. You can find all of this at ShorrSolutions.com/blog

Creating our own podcast called Shorr Solutions: The Podcast. This had been on our to-do list for a long time. In each episode, Mara has open, honest conversations and interviews with industry veterans, both parties sharing their tips and tricks. We're pretty proud of this, and have gained great traction as it's being shared across the industry. (We're proud to have had *Modern Aesthetics*® magazine's Denise Mann as a guest.) We talk about everything from how to pitch press during a crisis to the issues surrounding telemedicine and how to safely reopen your practice.

Participating in countless webinars and podcast recordings. We even have plans to create our own webinar series. This has been another way to continue to get information out to as many people as possible as quickly as possible, especially with COVID-19 news changing daily. Ultimately, the name of the game has been content creation!" ■

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