COSMETIC PROCEDURES: MARKETING TO THE RIGHT AUDIENCES
THE DIFFERENT FACES OF COSMETIC SURGERY AUDIENCES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Patients in the growing cosmetic procedure market fall into three distinct categories: Revamps, Revitalizers, and Beauty-Seekers. Tapping into these groups, and capitalizing on a practice specialty or current trend, requires a customized campaign, tailored to their unique media habits, motivations and desired outcome.

BACKGROUND:

In the US, cosmetic procedures have been increasing for years; even the recession could not stop the steady growth. This rise has been driven by the soaring popularity of minimally-invasive procedures, such as botox and facial fillers. More and more patients are coming in for procedures that offer lower cost, less recovery time and less social stigma than surgery.
For those who are opting for surgery in the US, certain packages and procedures have become popular in recent years, as well.

As noted by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS), an increase in weight loss procedures has fueled a surge in body contouring. As more people (about 80 percent of whom are women) undergo these procedures, they are turning to plastic surgeons to lift and tighten areas that have been affected by the massive weight loss.¹,²

Meanwhile, as the age of motherhood rises, some new moms are opting for a “mommy makeover.” The main procedures involved in the mommy makeover are tummy tucks and breast lifts, which increased by five percent and three percent, respectively, between 2013 and 2014.\(^3\) According to an ASPS survey, 62 percent of mothers said they would consider a mommy make-over, if cost were not an issue.

In the Detroit DMA alone, cosmetic procedures have climbed 28 percent between 2010 and 2015. While available data does not differentiate between surgical and minimally-invasive procedures, according to Scarborough, in 2015 almost two percent of the market had received plastic surgery in the past three years.

Cosmetic surgery practices in this growing segment will want to align their marketing efforts to highlight a specialty or capitalize on a current trend, in order to differentiate themselves from the competition.

CHALLENGE:

While 90 percent of cosmetic patients are women, motivations, desired outcomes and life stages separate them into distinct groups. Media and messaging needs to reflect these differences.

Nearly half of all patients are between the ages of 40 to 54. While other age groups remained flat or grew modestly, procedures for this age group grew 22 percent between 2010 and 2014. These patients are interested in the widest variety of procedures, and make up the largest number of both minimally-invasive and surgical procedures. They are the Revamps. They can now afford to take care of features that have always bothered them, or they’re looking for a refresh. Some may even feel they need to look younger and more energetic in a competitive job market. With an average age of 42, expect many weight loss patients coming in for body contouring to fit in this category, as well.

The second largest age group for cosmetic procedures are 55 years of age and older. This group is all about turning back the clock: the Revitalizers. As the age of retirement increases, they may also seek to look younger and to remain competitive in the job market. Of the top five surgical procedures in this age group, all except liposuction are for facial rejuvenation. And with improvements in minimally-invasive procedures, many are opting for the needle over the knife.

Patients age 20 to 39 are the Beauty-Seekers. They desire enhancement or maintenance procedures. Surgically, their top procedures are breast augmentation, liposuction, nose reshaping, tummy tuck, and breast lift. The American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (AAFPRS) predicts an increase of women in this age group coming in for minimally-invasive procedures to stave off aging, as well. They are also the prime group for mommy makeovers.

SOLUTION:

The median household income for a cosmetic surgery patient in metro Detroit is about $67,000. While not meeting the definition of affluent, this is 30 percent higher than the median of the market and cosmetic procedures are aspirational goods. In addition, consider the relatively high cost of surgery and the desire to differentiate from low-quality, minimally-invasive practitioners. For these reasons, look to wealthier generational cohorts for consumer insights.

For Revitalizers, a relatively traditional approach is warranted – morning television, print and mailers in addition to digital. They are heavy newspaper readers, particularly of the Sunday paper. Take advantage of this with newspaper ads in health and lifestyle sections. Direct mail campaigns can also be very effective for this group. Don’t neglect digital, however. Although this group is more traditional in terms of media use, they are still online. Keep in mind that 77 percent of all online health seekers begin their session at a search engine, such as Google. Utilize a pay-per-click campaign containing search words linked to their most popular procedures, such as eyelid or facelift surgeries.

Reach the Revamps with a digital-heavy media mix. Morning talk shows are not the place to find them. Consider some limited print and heavy internet. A solid media strategy for all groups — especially this one — must contain search. Fifty-seven percent of patients look for information on plastic surgery online. Also, take advantage of their strong social networking presence and focus on this target through Facebook ads. Use parameters such as their age group, an income of $75,000 or more, an interest in healthcare and a recent purchase of beauty products. For body contouring specialists, select an interest in extreme weight loss.

Beauty-Seekers are 100 percent digital, and optimized for mobile. They do read newspapers — they just read them online. Consider banner, high impact or even native ads, aligned with relevant content. Capture their attention with digital video. A Facebook campaign is a no-brainer. Not only are they heavy users of social media, they’re more likely than other groups to click on Facebook ads. For mommy makeover packages, target the 25,000 expectant and new moms on Facebook in Michigan, with household incomes of $75,000 and up.

Finally, consider timing campaigns to coincide with tax return season when prospective patients — the Revamps, in particular — may have extra income to treat themselves. Also, look for milestones. Twenty-nine percent of women considering plastic surgery cite a major life event as a key motivator.

For example, 20-year high school reunions are more likely to occur in the summer months, when more than half of all school reunions take place.

CONCLUSION:

Marketing campaigns in the growing cosmetic procedure segment should center on practice specialties or capitalize on current trends by tapping into three distinct patient groups: Revamps, Revitalizers and Beauty-Seekers.

Revamps are attracted by digital-heavy, multi-platform campaigns that speak to their want of a midlife makeover. Revitalizers seeking rejuvenation are reached through traditional and strategic digital media, while Beauty-Seekers are 100% digital and mobile optimized. Grab their attention with relevant messaging and the right media mix.