Turn $6,000 into $85,000?

By Tamara Hobbs, Creative Director, Yourtown Direct

“I’m happy to pay $6,000 for an exchange of $85,000…”

That’s what one of our clients, Dr. Shawn Murray of Johnstown, Colo., had to say when we were following up on ROI (return on investment) on his postcard marketing campaign.

He went on to say: “Let me also mention the indirect benefit of postcards. I happen to know that I have gotten about 10 referrals from patients who started treatment because their friends who got the postcard started in treatment, then told them about us. And then consider the chain of them referring their friends and so forth.”

That is the lifespan of a quality postcard marketing campaign. When executed properly, it can be the driving force behind the growth of your orthodontic practice. But therein lies the secret: It must be executed properly. That consists of several key factors:

• A strong offer: After all, we see the value of that first initial response — they get treatment, they tell friends and so on.
• Visual impact: Balance of images and text presented on a high-quality card that doesn’t just get lost in the shuffle.
• A targeted mailing list: This is built around the needs of your practice.
• Timely repetition: In marketing, all the experts agree that repetition is key.
• Personal connection: Once prospective patients respond, make sure they feel welcome and heard.

That will give them the confidence they need to start treatment. This goes from the moment they make the first call to finishing treatment, and must be emphasized amongst your staff every step of the way. This is where the word-of-mouth marketing takes over.

Now, with all of that considered, let’s focus on the fact that in any successful marketing effort, repetition is key. That is what drives ROI more than any other factor. You have to build a presence in the marketplace. You have to build your brand.

There is too much competition out there to dabble in marketing. You need a plan. It doesn’t have to be complicated; it just has to be consistent. Otherwise it falls by the way of general image advertising, and there is little ROI in that unless you have an enormous budget to shout your name from every rooftop.

But for most orthodontists who are, in fact, small-business owners, ROI is key to your success, and that means you must focus on repetition. Although there are many variables, such as economic conditions, design, offer and mailing list demographics to name a few, the one thing we see is that the clients who do repeat mailings continue to mail with us year after year because they have come to experience that postcard marketing works.

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They begin to experience first-hand why so many agree there is no better way to get the attention of your target demographic than by postcard marketing.