



A Proven
Method to
Increase
Appointments
And Optimize
Your Bottom Line

Dexcomm
ANSWERING AND COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES
YOUR VOICE. HEARD.

'Business is great but I could be busier.'

If this sounds a bit familiar, you are not alone.

Advertising tactics that worked in the past to make the phones ring are not as effective in today's internet centric, high velocity marketplace. As a busy physician, taking on additional responsibilities for marketing and contact management are not high on the to-do list. However, as operating costs increase, competition from alternate providers intensifies and profit margins shrink, the role of securing new patients and to responsibly optimizing revenue per patient is critically important. As the economy improves and overall spending on aesthetic medical services increases, it will attract new competitors and encourage existing competitors to expand service offerings while amplifying their advertising messages. It is more important than ever that every point of contact with a patient and potential patient is optimized.

The aging population and an increasingly favorable public perception of plastic surgery have been driving forces behind the recent rise in industry demand. In addition, cosmetic surgery is no longer reserved for the wealthy or famous. Elective medical financing for cosmetic procedures is readily available for patients at almost any budget level.



In the next five years it is estimated that revenue for Aesthetic Medical Services will continue to increase at an average rate of 3.1% per year to \$16.5 billion.¹

Despite the improving economy, the industry is hampered by rising external competition. Competition has been especially prevalent with medical spas and nontraditional providers, which offer nonsurgical procedures that make up an increasing portion of industry demand. While surgical procedures have long been the mainstay of cosmetic surgery, it is the noninvasive arena where growth in demand will be strongest. This intense competition will drive an increase in acquisition based marketing strategies, which are characterized by promotional prices and incentives. Ironically this has created a new breed of informed and promiscuous consumers. With \$16.5 billion at stake and competitors swimming around you, it is critically important to maximize your patients' and prospective patients' experience at every touchpoint. Fortunately or unfortunately, there are several points of contact before and after the patient consultation in your office. If you are like so many other businesses—you are receiving contacts by phone, email, social media, and possibly web forms.

Is your staff prepared to manage these contacts in a manner that is aligned with your reputation, meets their needs, and is consistent with every contact? If you think it sounds like a nice thing to say, but it doesn't really mean much, think again—each impression can make or break your patients' opinion of your practice and if they don't like the impression given, guess what?

They'll move on to do business with your competitors.

¹IBIS World US Specialized Industry Reports, Plastic and Cosmetic Surgery. 'Lift and Tuck Revenue Will Continue to Rise, but Competition From Med Spas Will Threaten Growth.' August 2016. Author: Dimitry Diment

Your Practice Is On Trial Before They Even Meet You.

Every customer touchpoint is a test of the entire practice and your promise of care. All the advertising, online development, networking, and referrals are challenged when a patient or prospective patient and your staff make a connection. That one experience is the culmination of the time, money and materials that you invested in building a profitable relationship. It could result in a long-term profitable relationship or the outcome of that touchpoint could become memorable for all the wrong reasons. When your practice goes on trial, it comes in the form of phone calls, emails, and web forms. This is your opportunity to deliver the kind of experience that transcends the ordinary and differentiates your practice. Like it or not, consciously or not, patients evaluate their healthcare relationship every time they touch your practice. Learning to manage the experience every time the phone rings or inbox chimes is an essential skill to maintain and build business.

The only thing worse than a mishandled call or email is the one that is missed. When it comes to emails and website inquiries, the expected response times have accelerated from four hours in 2014 to less than an hour in 2016. The wide use of smartphones and the influence of tech affluent millennials is pushing that expectancy to shorter intervals.

This sounds like a huge burden to place on the shoulders of your receptionist and it is. Managing the patient's experience is not about abdicating it to the front line staff. A patient or prospective patient's experience at every touchpoint is a value proposition that needs to be managed consistently to be optimized.

It is reported that 1 in 5 business calls are abandoned before answered. Of those answered, 7 out of 10 callers are put on hold; the average hold time is 38 seconds. Contact Center studies show that more than half of the callers placed on hold will abandon within 15 seconds of being put on hold. A widely reported metric for a call abandonment rate for calls placed on hold is between 5-8%.

How to Improve your customer's experience.

It was not so long ago that the way in which you perceived your practice and the expectation for how contacts between a patient and your staff engaged were completely disconnected. But that is changing fast! There are five criteria that provide a foundation for positive, sustainable customer contact management. It is important that these criteria are considered as it relates to every touchpoint and that the entire staff shares a single vision on what these criteria means to your practice and your patients. A differentiated experience must reflect a comprehensive understanding of the patient's needs, the ability to anticipate needs that have not been articulated, consistency, patient appreciation, and to deliver more than what is expected. It is a very unique challenge to seamlessly integrate these directives, but they are truly indicative of the customer contact experience being a real priority.

THE FIVE CRITERIA

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1. UNDERSTAND THE NEED

In today's internet centric marketplace, understanding a patient's needs transcends a list of Frequently Asked Questions. Consumer trends for researching healthcare and making purchase decisions are fueled by access to internet resources. It is not unusual that during the research phase, a potential patient will reach out via email, web form, and even on social media to ask a specific question. As depicted in the chart below, with the increased availability of smartphones and tablets, the allocation of time using devices to access content and advertising media has shifted and will continue to shift dramatically. There are fewer and fewer consumers using a desktop computer on their desk at work. With the portability of smart devices, the time of day that is used for these tasks has expanded to time slots outside of the traditional work day.



2**2. ANTICIPATE NEEDS**

The proliferation of information and ease of access to it via technology is changing the dynamics between front line office staff and the patient. It is not unusual that a patient believes that they know the exact service or procedure needed to achieve their goals. It takes a motivated, trained staff to listen for or inquire to the patient's goals. In understanding a patient's age, lifestyle, and goals—there can be a more accurate assessment of services or procedures to achieve their desired results and maintain a smooth daily schedule. This will significantly improve the booking process and ultimately the patient's experience. Technology and WebMD should never replace judgement and customer care principles at any level.

3**3. BE CONSISTENT**

Your patient and prospective patients are not interested in the complexities of managing your staff, juggling tasks, or trying to cover a growing number of communication channels. All they are interested in is their own experience. It is disastrous to any touchpoint if they believe the quality of that contact is subject to a roll of the dice or the staff person who responds. Consistency requires being able to address the unique needs or questions of each contact in a timely, predictable manner that is consistent with the reputation or image of your practice. Consistency does not rule out the possibility that some staff members are better than others with these types of contacts but a commitment to consistency will mitigate a complacency that exists today.

4**4. KEEP PATIENTS FIRST**

Every communication and interaction is a chance to make patients feel valued, so make the most of every personal and digital opportunity. Develop ways to turn every message and moment with the patient into an intimate point of contact that makes them feel special. Spending a few minutes in casual conversation with each patient can form meaningful bonds that build connections. The more you know about your customers the more value they can deliver, in the form of referrals and repeat business. Gaining a reputation for great customer service is going to get you word-of-mouth attention that again can help build a loyal customer base.

5**5. GIVE MORE**

It's no coincidence that a number of companies delivering an unmatched customer experience are among the elite. A leader in the field, Amazon, knows their customer's preferences, offers multiple delivery service options and proactively suggests products. These messages are clearly and consistently communicated to their employees and customers. Rather than focusing a great deal of attention to devising processes to serve the average patient, invest time determining who are your best customer segments and identify ways to create an exceptional experience for them.

How to Improve your customer's experience.

If at this point you are wondering how you can provide a distinct customer contact experience in a consistent way while maintaining operations within your practice with virtually the same staff you have in place, the answer is maybe you shouldn't. Your staff is with you for a reason; we trust that you've built a team that is great at managing patients in the office, effective at booking appointments, handles billing well and/or is exceptional at managing you.

However, as we mentioned earlier: 1 in 5 incoming calls are going unanswered because they drop off before answered. This means you are missing up to 20% of your potential revenue generating leads.

Let's try to quantify the lost opportunity. If your office staff records 175 callers per month, this means that an additional 35 callers went unanswered. According to research 34% of those callers will never ring back, that's 12 callers. If you were able to capture those 12 callers and book 70% for a consultation, that's 8 prospects. With confidence in your ability to develop a trusting relationship during the consult, we estimate that 50% schedule a procedure or service. If we conservatively calculate lost revenue using an average patient revenue of \$2,295 per opportunity this sums to \$9,180 for the month. This conservative figure does not account for missed opportunities with email, web form or social media leads.

The missed-opportunity cost of customer contact management could be more than you can ignore. Perhaps upgrading the patient's experience to a professional contact center is the most economical solution.

Congratulations, you have grown so big that your existing staff cannot handle all of the incoming contacts and their other office duties.

Some important things to consider in an outsourced contact center partner:

- Can your contact center communicate with your customers effectively? Think about language, dialect, customs and accent barriers. In one study, customer service representatives who were not perceived as speaking clearly only resolved customer issues 45% of the time.
- How much training is available in aesthetic terminology and processes specific to your practice and procedures?
- How seamlessly will they onboard your practice to their operation?
- What technology and processes do they use to intelligently route calls? What network protection measures are in place?
- How transparent are they with quality assurance measures, training certifications and key performance indicators?

The best customer experiences are delivered when the customer contact center is completely embedded with your practice's goals, messages, and processes. Your patient experiences can only be as good as the people who are placed on the end of every telephone call, email or web form. They have the unique opportunity to strengthen your relationships every time a patient or prospective patient reaches out.

As the economy improves, aesthetic services will continue to become more mainstream and with elective medical financing available for almost every budget the prospective audience expands. This will surely lead to the competitive landscape becoming more aggressive. Ubiquitous access to online resources has changed the way consumers seek

information and referrals. Mobile technology is shifting the time of inquiries and the expectations for response. To optimize the balance of resources and cost, it is imperative that Aesthetic Medicine practitioners look for strong partners to build an exceptional customer relationship process that provides consistently exceptional service at every touchpoint.



About Dexcomm

Our story: Dexcomm was founded in November of 1954. It began with a few ladies at switchboards lined up in two rows and a handful of local customers. Although the switchboards are long gone, due to our ability to adapt and embrace new trends in the ever changing technologically driven world—we now serve customers in over 40 states.

Our Values: If you are ever privy to have a seat at one of our orientation meetings, then you will hear from Dexcomm's owner Jamey Hopper, "If you can't have compassionate, professional concern for our customers, clients, and coworkers, then you can't work here." It's not just a statement that we put up on our website for those who are browsing or potential customers to read. These are the values that our company members must agree to live by.

Our Staff: We have a motto—we hire for fit and train for skill. You can train someone to use a computer system or improve skills that they already have. The ability to treat people compassionately, however, is something that is innate—these are the people that we choose to hire. Due to this, anyone contacting our company to reach yours will be treated with understanding and respect, no matter the circumstance.

Our Training: In order to put our best foot forward for our customers and their callers, we have developed proprietary training programs structured by a curriculum expert. We train all of our operators for a minimum of four weeks before they are allowed to engage with any callers. Anyone answering calls for clients in the medical Industry must also attend and pass a series of courses developed and taught by our three Registered Nurses on staff. These certifications are based on our decades of experience with call answering and customer service, and each of our operators undergoes continuing HIPAA compliance education with our compliance attorney. Calls are intelligently routed based on the level of training that the operator on duty has received.

How We Operate: Believing that we should continuously improve the service we provide—we have put into place a stringent internal Quality Assurance process. We have staff members strictly devoted to listening to calls and grading our operators on their call handling abilities. With these measures in place, we can continue to ensure that your caller is in fact receiving the highest quality service.

Industry Expert Satisfaction: Our client service ratings have earned us the ATSI award of excellence for the past 14 consecutive years in addition to the CAM-X award of excellence, which we have received over the last 9 years consecutively.

We have three simple questions for you:

1. Are you prepared to increase the efficiency of your office staff, eliminate missed calls, and ensure that all contacts are handled consistently?
2. Are you ready to have a reputation for providing consistently exceptional customer service?
3. What is your lost revenue and impact to profit margin for not finding a Contact Center partner as strong as Dexcomm?

***For the optimal answers,
contact Dexcomm at info@dexcomm.com
or call us at 337.236.8300***

