



Sales Tips

Every vertical has its own quirks, its own idiosyncrasies. The more you understand what makes each business special, the better you can sell to it. Use this guide, in conjunction with the product sell sheet also provided, to better understand the challenges and opportunities in the healthcare industry. You'll be better able to offer solutions that make a difference while helping customers manage more efficiently and market more effectively.

Industry Insight

- Uses technology for patient records, medical services, communication between departments and consultations for patient care, etc.
- Automates admitting, surgical scheduling, statements, insurance filings, billing, payroll, patient records, etc.
- Averages 15 to 1,000 (permanent) employees
- Convenience is important often due to the size of the hospital and number of departments – be the local medical marketing specialist
- Uses a wide variety of patient educational materials and donor communication
- Trust and credibility are key to building the relationship
- Inventory control is a challenge – offer just-in-time ordering, smaller order quantities more frequently
- Custom products are important (e.g., forms, checks, stationery, greeting cards, marketing and donor materials, promotional products, etc.)
- Offer inventory management and systems for organizing records and materials
- Focus on the ease of patient use
- May use preferred vendors who are members of affiliated associations - vendors may need to qualify to be on the vendor list
- Often have a Nurses Day, Hospital Week, etc. Look for how they celebrate these observances and reward staff and find commonly purchased item
- Bundle products and service offerings to help reduce overall costs
- Hospitals today are working on improving their image (e.g., the in-room meal service as well as general services throughout the hospital)
- Prepare to support any hospice affiliation – many of the same items are used

MARKET INCLUDES

- Chiropractic
- Physical Therapists
- Medical-General Practice
- Nursing/Rest Homes
- Hospitals
- Clinics
- Medical Labs
- Eye Care
- Pharmacies
- Surgeons/Surgical Centers
- Sports Medicine

MARKET IMAGE

- Professionalism, service and accuracy are critical to maintain and develop a good reputation
- Competence, stability and long-term working and patient relationships
- Prestige can be achieved through successful research and teaching areas, trauma services, specialty care
- Credibility and community service are helpful

How This Market Grows

- Diversity of services/specialties offered
- Consolidations/mergers/acquisitions
- Patient referrals/Insurance referrals
- Tends to use many internal educational/marketing pieces for patients and clinic work
- Affiliations with large universities and research facilities/laboratories
- Offers/affiliations with hospice care
- Reputation and services can change insurance company affiliations
- Community awareness (e.g., health fairs)
- Personal assistance/solutions and adding service offerings
- Affiliations with cure/prevention or disease research programs
- Medical groups within the hospital
- Educational programs for the community

Peak Buying Periods

- Quarterly – hospitals review their spending patterns regularly throughout the year
- First quarter – medical codes change every year, and many forms are updated to meet new insurance, federal or state regulations
- The size of the hospital and community access may increase buying frequency

Probing Questions

- What system or process do you currently use for admitting patients?
- How do you attract new doctors to practice here?
- How do you currently keep the community informed of the advancements made at the hospital?
- How are you cultivating donor support? Do you use a marketing campaign – current, monthly, quarterly?
- Do you provide any community services on a regular basis (e.g., Inoculations, clinics, etc.)?
- Is there a teaching program at this hospital? If so, what do you offer and are you affiliated with a university in the area?
- How can we help you improve patient information and education?
- Does your hospital participate in any research studies?
- How do you currently follow up with patients after they leave the hospital?
- Are you affiliated with any local rehab/physical therapy centers?
- What type of admitting forms do you use most often?
- How do you currently manage payroll?
- How do you thank or recognize staff and volunteers?
- Do you use paper files? If so, how do you manage your filing space?
- With whom do you prefer I work? What about other departments?
- What departments within the hospital are responsible for ordering printed materials?

DEPARTMENTS

- Admitting
- Community Outreach
- Medical Staff (e.g., nurses, techs, PT/OT, radiology)
- Patient Care Administrator/Manager
- Practice Management
- Chief of Staff and Boards
- Rehab Center – long-term recovery
- Pharmacy
- Nutrition (e.g., cafeteria, patient meals, etc.)
- Human Resources
- Training
- Accounting and Billing
- Marketing/PR (e.g., health fairs, walks/runs, doctor conferences, etc.)
- Gift Shop
- Physician Services
- Specializations (e.g., cancer center, maternity, etc.)
- Volunteer Services
- Foundation (e.g., donor information, fundraising, etc.)
- Purchasing
- For smaller walk-in clinics – Office Manager

Probing Questions (continued)

- How do you encourage volunteer services within and for the hospital? Do you offer training for volunteer candidates?
- Do you provide hospice support as a service?
- How many beds do you have in your hospital?
- Are you planning to expand your hospital or community exposure this year?
- Is your hospital affiliated with other clinics or mobile services in the area?
- Are you a primary center to natural disaster services?

Sales Approach

- Contacts: Purchasing, Admitting, Patient Care and Training
- Present yourself as a professional solutions provider
- Be flexible – offer solutions that are collaborative and benefit different areas of the hospital
- Do your homework – How long has the hospital been in the community? What, if any, is their specialty? Are they connected to a rehabilitation center? Are they affiliated with an outside medical group?
- Work with each department and understand the sensitivity to appointment times, locations, number of approvers, initial contacts
- Listen carefully to their patient positioning statement – this will help you target their needs
- Be aware of the entire hospital – some of the services may be contacted directly (e.g., gift shops, cafeteria, etc.)
- Understand the hospital's goals for the community
- For existing accounts, be sure you know what is being ordered today – stress the convenience of a single-source approach and batch ordering
- Be certain you understand how they're educating their patients (e.g., inpatient needs, release information, home care follow-up, outpatient needs, advancements in care, expansion of services, etc.)
- Understand the needs and language of the hospital and industry
- Be proactive with each buyer
- Out service and out work competitors

Hospital Etiquette

Dos:

- Always check in with Materials Management or Vendor Services
- Wash your hands whenever leaving a clinical area
- Adhere to any local masking requirements

Don'ts:

- Use your cell phone while walking through the hospital
- Take pictures anywhere without permission
- Touch anything unnecessarily
- Enter any unauthorized areas

BUSINESS CONSIDERATIONS

- Private, community, emergency room, and/or clinics
- Teaching or research hospital
- Filing – HIPAA compliance
- Number of employees, medical and administration staff
- HMO/PPO – headquarters office
- Community involvement
- Safety

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