

**RBMA**

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2025

# bulletin

RADIOLOGY BUSINESS MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION ■ VOLUME 60 ■ ISSUE 1



**Precision and Potential:**

**LEVERAGING  
INSIGHTS  
FOR GROWTH**

## MEASURING WHAT MATTERS: Demonstrating Marketing ROI in Smaller Radiology Practices

REFLECTIONS FROM RBMA'S SPARK FRIDAY FORUM

BY KIM KELLEY, FRBMA



Radiology marketers know all too well the challenge of demonstrating the impact of their work, especially in smaller practices. With fewer resources, smaller teams, and leadership that may not always see marketing as a revenue-generating function, proving marketing ROI can be an uphill battle. This very topic was the focus of a recent RBMA Spark Friday Forum, where marketing professionals from small radiology practices came together to share their struggles, successes, and ideas for better tracking marketing effectiveness.

The Friday Forums are designed as a space for open conversation among RBMA members, where marketers can discuss real-world challenges and strategies in a collaborative setting. This particular discussion reaffirmed what I already knew from my own experience—having started my radiology marketing career in a smaller practice and continuing to work with independent radiology groups today. While proving ROI in marketing isn't always straightforward, it is both possible and necessary to measure what matters.

### Marketing in Small Practices

In lean marketing departments, a single person often handles everything—from referral outreach to digital marketing. From my own experience, I learned firsthand how critical it is to justify marketing investment to leadership. Without clear, measurable results, marketing efforts are too often seen as an expense rather than a strategic driver of growth.

Smaller radiology practices, typically with 17 or fewer radiologists, face unique constraints. Budget limitations, time constraints, and the fact that marketing responsibilities often fall on one person—or a few team members juggling multiple roles—mean that tracking ROI needs to be practical, efficient, and clearly tied to business outcomes. The conversation during the Friday Forum reaffirmed many of these challenges, but it also highlighted solutions that can help marketers better advocate for their work.

## Tracking ROI: Making It Work for Small Practices

While there's no one-size-fits-all approach, successful small practice marketers focus on a few core principles to demonstrate the impact of their work. The key is to focus on tangible results rather than getting lost in a sea of metrics.



### 1. DEFINE THE RIGHT METRICS

Smaller practices don't need an exhaustive dashboard of analytics. Instead, the focus should be on metrics that tie directly to business objectives. This could mean tracking how many website visitors convert into scheduled appointments, monitoring new referral sources, or measuring patient retention rates after implementing a specific campaign.



### 2. MEASURE REFERRAL GROWTH AND SHIFTS IN PATIENT SOURCES

Many small radiology groups still rely heavily on referring physicians for patient volume, but the shift toward consumer-directed healthcare is undeniable. Tracking where new patients are coming from—whether through digital marketing, word-of-mouth, or direct referrals—helps practices understand which marketing strategies are working. The discussion in the Friday Forum emphasized that adding “How did you hear about us?” to patient intake forms is one of the simplest and most effective ways to collect this data.



### 3. COST-PER-ACQUISITION AND MARKETING EFFICIENCY

One of the most effective ways to justify marketing spend is to calculate cost-per-acquisition (CPA)—how much it costs to bring in each new patient. Comparing this number against revenue from those patients can help marketers demonstrate how marketing contributes to the bottom line. Small practices that allocate even modest budgets to paid digital advertising (Google Ads, Facebook, etc.) should ensure they are tracking conversions so that CPA calculations are based on actual results, not just clicks or impressions.



### 4. DIGITAL MARKETING: WEBSITE, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND SEO

A well-optimized digital presence can be a cost-effective marketing tool for small practices. During the Forum, many marketers agreed that having a strong Google Business Profile and a search-optimized website brings in organic patient leads without the need for large advertising budgets. Call tracking tools, online appointment scheduling, and landing pages specifically designed for campaigns can help practices connect the dots between digital efforts and new patient volume.



### 5. DEMONSTRATING SOFT ROI TO LEADERSHIP

Not every marketing effort translates directly to an increase in revenue. Brand awareness, patient education, and physician relationship-building all contribute to long-term success but can be harder to quantify. Educating leadership on soft ROI metrics—such as website traffic growth, social media engagement, and patient satisfaction surveys—helps paint a fuller picture of marketing's role in building a strong, sustainable practice.

## A Continuing Conversation

The RBMA Spark Friday Forum reinforced that tracking marketing ROI in small radiology practices remains a challenge, but it can be addressed with focused, strategic measurement. For those in small practices, the key takeaway is this: You don't need to track everything, but you do need to track what matters.

If you missed this discussion, stay tuned for future Spark Friday Forum topics. These sessions offer valuable insights, peer support, and the chance to learn how other marketers are navigating similar challenges. The conversation about marketing ROI—and how small practices can better prove their value—is far from over. I look forward to continuing the discussion and learning alongside this incredible community of radiology marketers.



**Kim Kelley**

Founder and Creative Director  
Ali'i Marketing by Design

Connect on LinkedIn