

Experience tops outcome

Our in-clinic success expert sheds light on the biggest challenges and opportunities facing our industry.

What do you see as the greatest challenge and the greatest opportunity currently facing hearing healthcare professionals?

Fifteen years ago, it was a popular belief in our industry that if we simply improved our product offering and undertook more targeted marketing campaigns, new prospects would flood in. Yet the average age of a first-time user remains the same, and people still take about 7 years to try amplification. This entrenched reluctance - and an emerging new kind of patient - is our challenge, but it's also our opportunity.

In every other retail and medical health care sector, the number-one topic today isn't patient outcome, but patient experience. "Healthy agers" are more comfortable searching for direction, solutions and knowledge outside the traditional channel. They come to us with a good dose of scepticism and demand more on every level. Bottom line: they control the purchase process more than ever.

To succeed, we must understand that the previously dependent patient has become the in-control consumer. The opportunity this presents happens almost exclusively in-clinic. Here we can transform patient scepticism into trust, sharpen our focus on patient delight at every stage of the journey (not only through product excellence but the entire experience) and nurture long-term patient retention. Doing these things really well turns patients into loyal, vocal advocates, who become the conduits to sustainable, long-term practice growth.

What practical guidance can you offer hearing health professionals about providing a great patient experience?

Smart consumerism is the new way of the world. Today's patients are very informed and involved, and when we embrace this fact we have a better mindset for creating an exceptional patient experience. We must begin by understanding the patient experience as a cumulative, often emotional, experience that starts with first impressions, grows into trusting relationships, and endures with continuous care.

There are many things we can do to enhance this cumulative experience – far too many to fully explore in this venue, but here are just a few to consider: let patients play an active role in their hearing healthcare decisions; understand they aren't simply seeking the best hearing aid or the best deal, and want more than to be ferried through a methodical process; learn how to



conduct an effective discovery conversation; take advantage of new technology - engage patients using interactive apps, make it easier for them to self-schedule appointments online, and integrate digital marketing strategies that spark ongoing, two-way and group conversations.

For more ideas and discussions about enhancing the patient experience, visit our blog <http://unitron.com/unitron/us/en/professional/practice-support/blog.html>

How is Unitron positioning itself as a leader in the hearing health field?

Consumers are demanding differentiation beyond product features and benefits. We know that product leadership is a combination of how a hearing instrument sounds, with how it feels and looks in/on the ear and in the hand, and we are delivering award-winning innovation in all these areas. However, we know that today it takes more than product excellence to win people over.

We're showing leadership with game-changing in-clinic solutions like our Flex:trial and upgrade program. Flex quickly builds trust with patients, and helps them feel comfortable with the idea of wearing hearing instruments. Our patient insights provides both evidence-based and emotional data that can make Flex evaluations even more compelling. It encompasses Log It All, an industry-first solution that provides clear insights into your patient's actual listening experience so that in-clinic conversations can be based on lifestyle, technology and evidence rather than best guesses. Patient Ratings let you see exactly how your patients were feeling about specific listening experiences during their trial. Combining these solutions is a one-two punch, yielding actionable insight, actively engaging patients and building confidence in clinician counseling and patient decision making.

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