

CASE STUDY

MEDEXPRESS

NEW MARKETS, NEW STRATEGIES, NEW FRIENDS

MEDEXPRESS NEW MARKET STRATEGY



SITUATION ANALYSIS

At the end of 2016, MedExpress Urgent Care was preparing for accelerated growth as a new portfolio company of Optum, a UnitedHealth Group company. With a focus on genuine, caring and friendly interactions with the patients, families and communities it serves, MedExpress requested the help of WordWrite to provide strategic, community-based awareness that supported the company's anticipated growth in all its current and new markets through new center openings (DeNovo – Latin term meaning, 'from the beginning').



GOALS

In 2017, WordWrite Communications created and executed a strategic PR and media relations campaign for MedExpress Urgent Care to achieve three goals:

GOAL 1: Complement and enhance the announcement of new center openings (DeNovos)

GOAL 2: Position MedExpress physicians and health staff as experts in non-emergent care and seasonal conditions

GOAL 3: Achieve more media hits in more markets by engaging news media more frequently

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STRATEGIES

Our **pre- and post-DeNovo campaign** was simple. We assisted MedExpress with securing consumer health media coverage in three focus areas, specifically 4-8 weeks prior to a center opening and 10-12 weeks following a center opening.

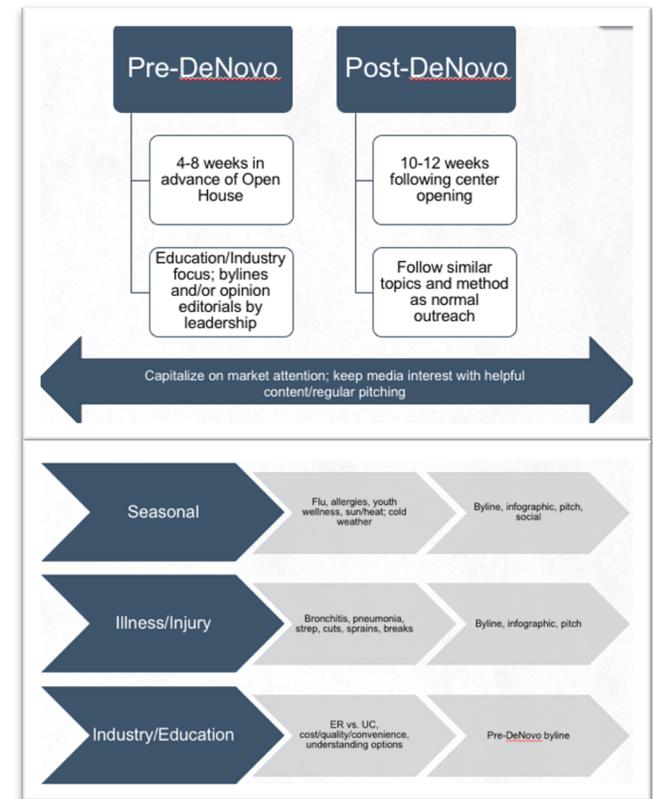
- ⇒ Seasonal
- ⇒ Illness and injury
- ⇒ Industry education

Pre-DeNovo strategy

⇒ Every week, MedExpress circulated an internal DeNovo schedule with dates for upcoming center openings. At the beginning of each quarter, we pulled the markets scheduled to have a center opening. About 4-8 weeks prior to the center opening, we shared an educational byline with local newspapers, magazines, bloggers and news websites.

Post-DeNovo strategy

⇒ In the post-DeNovo strategy, we continued communication with media in new center markets 10-12 weeks following a center opening in order to keep the conversation going. Previously, media outreach focused on center openings with no real method or strategy for follow up. This meant some markets did not hear from the PR team for a year or more.



We followed **five steps** to execute our proactive PR strategy:

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EXECUTION

Step 1: Brainstormed consumer health topics

- ⇒ Before the start of each quarter, we brainstormed timely consumer health topics for the upcoming season.

Step 2: Organized our top potential topics into a weekly pitching schedule

- ⇒ Given our budget, we distributed a pitch or byline to the media on a weekly basis which we organized into quarterly PR calendars.

Step 3: Selected markets using our custom-made market tracker

- ⇒ Working with more than 200 markets in 17 states and a constantly evolving and changing DeNovo schedule, we created a custom-made "market tracker".

Step 4: Updated and organized master media lists

- ⇒ We created master media lists organized by state. These lists were very extensive, detailing contact information and personalized notes for specific reporters at daily newspapers, community newspapers, business publications, broadcast media and local bloggers.

Step 5: Groomed relationships with reporters

- ⇒ Every time we pitched, we personalized it. Over time, we learned that with personalized, consistent pitching, reporters became familiar with MedExpress and its topics of expertise and soon began reaching out to us to include MedExpress as a source in their stories.

WV sees 10 percent increase in flu cases at MedExpress centers

A Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report Prepared by the Influenza Division
Weekly Influenza Activity Estimates Reported by State and Territorial Epidemiologists*

Week Ending Dec 30, 2017 - Week 52



CDC

This weekly map from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows widespread flu activity across the nation.

SHARE ARTICLE



By Carrie Hodousek in News | January 11, 2018 at 11:25AM

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — There has been a 10 percent rise in the number of flu cases over the last two weeks at MedExpress centers in West Virginia.

"We are definitely in the midst of peak flu season," said Jane Trombetta, RN, vice president of Quality at MedExpress.

Out the 18 states MedExpress serves, West Virginia had the second highest amount of flu cases reported this season.

Health officials say we're in a flu epidemic. The virus is widespread in the state and across the nation, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



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RESULTS

By the end of 2017, we tripled media hits to **60 placements across 40 MedExpress markets, including 6 national stories**. Overall, the company celebrated the following year-end metrics:

Social Amplification (posting earned media hits to social account)

- ⇒ During the month of December, MedExpress surpassed its social amplification goal of 3,500 for a total social amplification of 15,325.

DeNovo Media Coverage

- ⇒ At the end of December, MedExpress had secured media coverage for 92% (46 out of 50) of the 2017 DeNovo openings.

Overall 2017 PR Goal

- ⇒ MedExpress received 1,980 total media hits through the end of December, successfully surpassing the year-end PR goal of 1,755 media hits.

We believe we were able to achieve these results because of **two** reasons:

- ⇒ After regularly pitching in the same markets, we established and maintained relationships with reporters. While some of our initial pitches were ignored, producers and journalists soon came to recognize MedExpress as the “go to” source for several consumer health and seasonal topics.
- ⇒ Pitches that incorporated MedExpress data and insights from medical experts were the most successful. For example, when we pitched ticks/Lyme disease in August and flu in December, we inserted specific percentages showing the number of increased patient visits compared to 2016.

