

PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

Since the publication of the third edition of *Marketing Health Services* five years ago, the world of healthcare has changed significantly—and with it, the practice of healthcare marketing. At that time, healthcare had just entered the era of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the most significant healthcare reform in decades. Since then, the healthcare arena has seen the emergence of value-based reimbursement, with all that implies. Simultaneously, population health management has come to the fore, with its emphasis on community health rather than individual patient care. All of these developments have served to turn the healthcare system on its head.

At the same time, the role of marketing has changed in response, demonstrating once again its indispensability during the uncertain times between the implementation of new rules and processes and the rush to adopt compliant strategies and adjust existing practices. In each case, the paradigm shifts in healthcare marketing have offered an opportunity to adapt to a changing environment.

This book, like the first three editions, enumerates the forces that are changing the healthcare environment and challenging the healthcare establishment. It chronicles the evolution of healthcare marketing—from a field purely associated with advertising and promotion to one that counts research, education, and strategy formulation as major responsibilities.

Since the 1970s when marketing was first introduced into healthcare, the field has gone through a series of highs and lows. The acceptance of marketing as a legitimate activity by healthcare organizations in the 1980s represented a milestone. At that time, healthcare organizations began to establish marketing departments, set marketing budgets, create new positions dedicated to marketing functions, and adopt marketing concepts and methods from other industries while realizing that the marketing of healthcare was much different from the marketing of other goods and services.

Through the 1990s and 2000s, healthcare marketing continued to prove itself a legitimate organizational function. More full-service marketing departments were being established in-house, and a cadre of professional marketers was elevated to the board room as partners in administration.

Sophisticated and healthcare-specific marketing techniques were developed and implemented. This proliferation of marketers dedicated to the business of healthcare imparted several lessons that still resonate today. First, marketing is so much broader than mass media advertising. Second, understanding the market in which the business operates, the customers who live in that market area, and those customers' needs, wants, behaviors and motivations is critical. Third, marketing should drive the strategic direction of the organization and not vice versa, as was historically the case.

Although healthcare marketing has adopted concepts and methods from other industries, it continues to be distinguished from the marketing that takes place in other sectors. Its methods must be unique and appropriate for healthcare products and their consumers—not a copy of the prevailing techniques used in other industries. This book walks readers through the traditional and contemporary approaches that healthcare marketers rely on and that enable healthcare organizations to rise above current trends and turmoil to position themselves for the future healthcare environment.

Instructor Resources

This book's instructor resources include an instructor's manual, updated and enhanced PowerPoint slides, answers to selected case study questions, and a test bank.

For the most up-to-date information about this book and its instructor resources, go to ache.org/HAP and search for the book's order code (2404).

This book's instructor resources are available to instructors who adopt this book for use in their course. For access information, please email hapbooks@ache.org.