

4 Ways to Use Quality as a Brand Differentiator

Quality is quickly becoming more important to customers than price when considering a purchase. In fact, a recent study found that [53 percent](#) of customers polled rated quality higher than price (38 percent) as a deciding factor when buying a product or service. And this can be a game changer for smaller pharmacies.

When it comes to a pharmacy, quality can be largely observed independent of prescription pricing. And, with customers paying more attention to quality, this is where your independent pharmacy can shine.

How to Use Quality to Define Your Brand

One of the keys to using quality as a differentiator is to be measurably different than your competitors. You want to stand out as the better overall option. Some ways to accomplish this are:

1. ***Craft marketing messages that speak to (not at) your customers.***

It's all about them and what your services, advice, and products can do for them. They are the star, make them feel like it!

2. ***Cater to your market.*** For example, if your clientele is largely diabetic, stock shelves with products they would use and create services and programs that target their medical challenges.

3. ***Train staff to provide exemplary customer service.*** Don't just process your customer's prescription and send them on their way. Chain pharmacies might rely on a larger volume that requires moving customers along quickly, but this provides you with an edge, allowing you to give more personalized, one-on-one service to set your pharmacy apart from the volume-focused giants. Some easy ways to do this are:

- Greet patients as quickly as possible - usually within a minute of entering the pharmacy, but then
- Let patients browse in peace until they're ready to interact or ask questions
- Always try to be friendly and composed, even when a patient is not
- Be able to answer questions about common OTC products and front-end items, and be knowledgeable about the store layout and where items are stocked



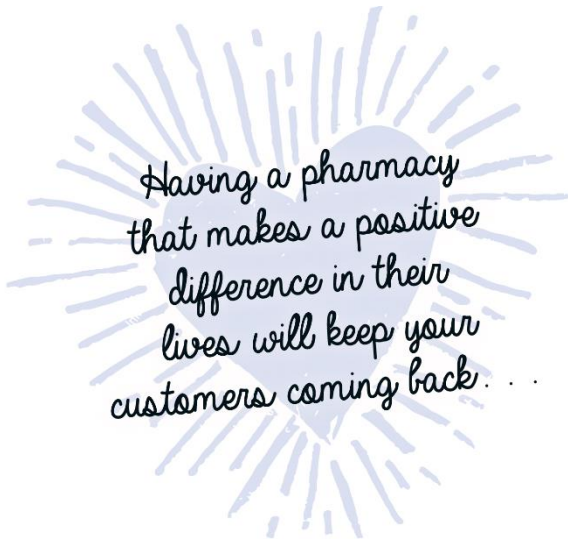
4. ***Make your pharmacy a part of the community.*** Quality goes beyond in-store services and products. Local independent pharmacies are integral players in their communities. Be that player. Show your customers that you're there for more than just their personal needs, but the needs of their neighbors as well. For instance:

- Participate in local events as often as possible
- Sponsor a little league team
- Create a "checkout-charity" for your front end – choose a local charity or fund that needs help and place a box or container for collection. These cost little-to-nothing to set up and show your customers that you're supporting the community
- Create a "local products" end-cap and keep it stocked with local offerings
- Build goodwill and name recognition by volunteering at the local food pantry or sponsoring an after-school program

Closing Thoughts

The best foundation to build brand differentiation in your community may very well lie not only in the quality of goods your pharmacy offers, but in its services and community outreach.

Having a pharmacy that makes a positive difference in their lives will keep customers coming back, despite lower prices offered by giant drug stores – and that return business will keep your independent pharmacy relevant and profitable.



When it comes to remaining competitive and profitable, there's a lot to consider. A sound understanding of community outreach, marketing, and ever-changing technological advances can be key to maintaining a profitable pharmacy for you, and a necessary community asset for your customers.

If you're not a Keystone member yet, join us. If you are a member, make sure you're leveraging your benefits and maximizing your pharmacy's success. You can contact Keystone via email info@kpparx.com or by phone 215-464-9892.