

4 Ideas Your Medical Device Company is Missing from its Marketing Strategy: Interview with Joe Hage, Chairman of the Medical Devices Group

Scott Nelson: Hello everyone, welcome to Medsider, home for ambitious medical device upstarts. This is Scott Nelson and for those of you who are new to the program, this is a show where I interview dynamic people that are doing interesting things in the medical device and medtech arena, and on today's program, we have Joe Hage. He is the Founder and CEO of Medical Marcom, which is a medical device marketing consultancy that specializes in marketing communications, marketing strategy, lead gen, web development, and social media. Joe is a Wharton MBA and a 20-year marketing professional. He's got a very interesting background, did some very cool things at a previous company before he started Medical Marcom. So, without further ado, welcome to the call, Joe.

Joe Hage: Thank you very much, Scott.

Scott Nelson: So, I want to definitely get into your background, especially some of the remarkable things that you were able to accomplish while at Cardiac Science. I also want to talk to you about what you're doing now with Medical Marcom, but you recently posted a Twitter doctor list that I thought was really interesting because I've never seen something like that available online. So, explain that. Let's start there.

Joe Hage: So, I keep an active blog and it's certainly a way that I attract traffic and attention to my brand and my selling proposition, and I created an Excel spreadsheet. It's downloadable and it's sortable. So, it's not like anything that I've seen elsewhere, because it required a lot of work and time to put together. And what I did was I looked at all doctors that are on Twitter that I could find in the US, and people can come to the website and download this spreadsheet and they can sort by the doctors' specialty and by their clout, that is, how much influence they have in the social media community, by how many tweets they typically do a day. It references their bio, their location.

It's a whole bunch of facts that I needed to go to a couple of different applications to pull together, and I think one of the reasons that it really seems to have hit a chord is how much work it took to put together. People don't have time for that kind of stuff. So, what I did was I made this accessible to people who give me their email information, so at the same time, I'm building a list of connections, potential prospects, maybe not. The beautiful thing about social media and about being in business for myself is I can try stuff. If it works, great. If it doesn't, also great. I learned something new and what I'm finding with this is I seem to have hit a chord. In the 48 hours since I've launched it, I've increased the size of my email subscription base by 20%.

Scott Nelson: Okay.

Joe Hage: To me that's a huge win. I'm really excited about it.

Scott Nelson: Right. That honestly doesn't overly surprise me because like I said just before, I've never seen a Twitter list of doctors, and so obviously with amazing content typically comes interest, and that's very cool. But what I'm curious though about this doctor Twitter list, did you see any trends since you put it together in terms of like, 5% of doctors heavily use Twitter while the rest of the 95% barely use it, that kind of stuff?

Joe Hage: Actually, among those that I found, most of them were somewhat active. I have a couple of dozen who have a handle and they hardly ever tweet, and they have absolutely no clout, and you can sort the list and see who they are. If you're instead interested in finding who's in the palliative care part of the industry, you can sort by specialty and just choose to follow those people. So, I think it's a convenient tool. If I may for your listeners, the implication for you is relating to lead generation.

Scott Nelson: Right.

Joe Hage: If you're in medical devices, in my experience, and I'll just quickly say that I was Director of Marketing Communications for a publicly-traded medical device company called Cardiac Science. We sold automated external defibrillators, cardiac monitoring, and rehabilitative equipment. Each lead could be worth thousands of dollars, so it was in our best interest to capture contact information whenever possible on the website.

That's really the selling proposition that I have for Medical Marcom. When people show up at your site, don't squander the chance of starting a dialogue with them. My doctor list, for example, gives me that opportunity. Somebody has to say, "Hi Joe, I was here." I don't know why they needed the list. I don't know how they're going to use the list.

Scott Nelson: Right.

Joe Hage: But I know who they are, and I look at, for example, their domain. So, if it's scott@yahoo.com, not so helpful. If it's scott@bostonscientific I can go look up "Scott, Boston Scientific," on LinkedIn, see what that person does, and poke around a bit, and I may have something that can be helpful for him.

Scott Nelson: Sure. Sure. The one thing that I thought of right away when I saw that you posted that Twitter list is a piece that I see most medical device companies missing out on, is that for those positions that are on Twitter, they tend to post, I'm not going to say personal things, but they tend to use Twitter as sort of an outlet into what they're thinking. You can get a different take on a physician that you may not have otherwise gotten if you see what they're posting on Twitter, and so that's an amazing tool that's engaged with a physician in a very unique way. So, that immediately was my first take on your Twitter list, and I think will be a great tool for anyone, really, in a sales and marketing capacity at a medical device or medtech company to download. So, they could just go to your website, right, to download that, medicalmarcom.com?

Joe Hage: Yup. I'll have an easy link. You'll be able to find it.

Scott Nelson: Got you. Okay. I'll make sure to post that link within the body of this post. Very cool. What I'd like to do now is learn a little bit more about your background. I'd like the audience to get a feel for what you accomplished prior to your work at Cardiac Science, and then some of the cool things you did there. Then we'll go into what you learned while at Cardiac Science and then what you've learned so far since founding Medical Marcom in terms of what most medical device/medtech companies miss in terms of online marketing, Internet marketing, etc. So, let's dig into your background a little bit. I don't want to go into too much detail, but can you give us a brief overview of what you did prior to...

Joe Hage: I will.

Scott Nelson: ...you know, your position at Cardiac Science?

Joe Hage: I will, and I desperately want to keep this interesting for your followers, so I'll be really short on the bio and you can go to Medical Marcom and you can read all about me.

Scott Nelson: Sure.

Joe Hage: But I'm a 20-year marketer, I grew up at Kraft Foods, and dial forward many, many years, my last position as I shared was Director of Marketing Communications for a medical device company, and I really want to applaud my supervisor there who brought me on with absolutely no medical experience. I had done nothing medical in my career, and he basically took a chance with me and was open to leveraging online contemporary marketing strategies, which can be applied to any field.

I think one of the reasons that I'm finding some nice early success with Medical Marcom is I'm catering to a niche that is woefully underserved. It seems to me, looking at medical sites in general, that it's almost like the Internet has passed them by. Yes, they have sites, but they aren't spending their effort behind using the media as effectively as they can. So, that's kind of my selling proposition. What I found at Cardiac Science, for example, the things that work so well, when we redid our website we increased page views by 253%. When we added multiple places on the site for lead generation, for people to actually get in touch we created in a 15-month period a sales pipeline worth in excess of \$7 million. These are big numbers...

Scott Nelson: Right.

Joe Hage: ...and when I'm evaluating a prospect, for example, one of the things I'll look for is, how easy do they make it for someone to raise their hand and indicate some interest in their product?

Scott Nelson: Repeat that. I think that's important.

Joe Hage: When I'm evaluating a prospect, and by prospect, when I'm looking at medical device companies that I think need help increasing their sales, I look to see how easy is it for me to leave my contact information. I'll expand on that because I do think it's an important point. If you have

to find a Contact Us page and it's not easily found either in your primary navigation and by that I mean the top five categories, easy places to click, you're making it too difficult.

If when you go to the Contact Us page the Contact Us page is about you and not them, you're missing out on an opportunity. For example, if I just want to find out about your stress machine, you don't have to ask me for my physical address. What does that have to do with I want information about your stress machine?

Scott Nelson: Sure.

Joe Hage: I don't want you to mail me anything. I don't need to tell you that I work for a hospital or I'm a primary care physician. I just want to know about it. So, let me give you my email address so you can send me something, and it's incumbent on you, the manufacturer or marketer, at that point, to make something fruitful from that email address on my website and I've done some testing to get me to this place. The only piece of information I ask for is your email address. I don't even ask what your first name is. I don't worry about, "Well, later on when I want to send you an email, I have to say, 'Dear Scott.'"

Scott Nelson: Sure.

Joe Hage: That's not so relevant, not to mention that you might say something silly in there because it's, you know, a field. If you don't give me a relevant email address, I can't send you the information that you want so you're inclined to give me something that you can get. You can unsubscribe later as well. But I make it very easy for you. Just tell me who you are and it's incumbent on me to write you back. I'm not talking about the exact target and all these other fancy applications that have an automatic response so that whenever somebody fills in the field they automatically get this campaign one after another after another after another. Each prospect for me is potentially worth tens of thousands of dollars. I can take the time to find out about Scott Nelson, do a little research 10 minutes' worth and write a relevant, personal timely email back to you.

Scott Nelson: So, let's stop there because I was going to ask you what the next step is to set up like an auto drip campaign, but you brought up a good point because this arena is so much different than traditional Internet marketing, because one lead, the lifetime value of a customer in maybe the Internet marketing world is 100 bucks, 200 bucks; I'm not entirely sure what that number is but the lifetime value of a customer in the device space could be worth thousands, tens of thousands, maybe sometimes even hundreds of thousands of dollars over the course of a two- to 10-year period of time. So, you're saying that once that customer enters just their simple email address, maybe that pools to a team that then has the capacity to write a very personalized email to that person, getting in touch with them, etc.? Is that kind of what you're getting at?

Joe Hage: Yes.

Scott Nelson: Okay. That's a great point. That's a great point, because like I said before, I was just going to ask you if you put that into some sort of auto-drip or autoresponder campaign, but you're saying no. That's a great idea. That's a great idea. Okay.

Joe Hage: I mean, to be sure, there is a role for autoresponder campaigns. I'm not saying no and there's nothing wrong with once they sign up they get a welcome email of some kind.

Scott Nelson: Right.

Joe Hage: But that's also not to say that it doesn't deserve a specific personal follow-up. Now, mine is a small shop. People expect to hear from me. That needn't be the case with a major company, but there's certainly nothing wrong with the Director of Vascular Sales for the Western Region to write back.

Scott Nelson: Sure.

Joe Hage: When I hear sometimes from clients and I have a funny story to share. Back a job or two ago, I wrote a campaign that helped retain clients, and what I wanted to do was to actually put the name of the head of the person of that group and that person's email and that person's phone, in fact, his cell phone, and he was like, "What, are you out of your mind? You're going to send my cell phone out to 20,000 people? I don't have time for this blank, blank, blank, blank."

Scott Nelson: Yeah.

Joe Hage: Now, let me ask you when was the last time you did call somebody because they put their phone number on the bottom of a piece of written mail? Now, that's rhetorical.

Scott Nelson: Yeah.

Joe Hage: You might say well, still a dozen phone calls, but what if these dozen phone calls are from prospects worth tens of thousands of dollars? Do you have time for that call? What's more is, if you think about, if I put the CEO of your company's cell phone number on a piece of paper and I distribute it to everyone, who will have the audacity to phone the CEO of a company on his cell phone without a really, really good reason? That really, really good reason is reason enough for that person to take the call. Otherwise, they completely shoot their credibility and any chance of doing whatever it is they wanted to do by nature of the phone call itself.

Scott Nelson: Got you.

Joe Hage: What's the point of this story? The point of the story is, show how incredibly accessible you are, and people will self-select who really needs to talk to you because everyone's busy. Don't be afraid of putting yourself out there.

Scott Nelson: Got you. That concept of almost making the CEO's cell phone available—and you're probably familiar with Robert Scoble, the big tech kind of...

Joe Hage: Of course.

Scott Nelson: ...guy that does interviews on tech startups and whatnot. He put his cell phone on his blog and encourages people to reach out to him. He does it for a reason because most people don't, they'd rather shoot an email. Of course, his inbox is probably just jam-packed, but no one actually takes the time to call him, which that's a fact to your point that a device company should operate over that mindset that they should open up things to the point where the CEO should readily provide his cell phone number...

Joe Hage: I'm not saying that's the right strategy for everybody.

Scott Nelson: Right.

Joe Hage: I don't imagine that Jeff Immelt wants personal calls from irate shareholders.

Scott Nelson: Right.

Joe Hage: I'm sure he's got a few of those. But I think you got the point I'm trying to make.

Scott Nelson: Sure. Sure. Yeah. I wanted to get into a few things about Cardiac Science, but while we're on this topic of these key things that almost most medtech and medical device companies are missing in terms of marketing, let's go into some other things. Do you care if we dive into that right now?

Joe Hage: Sure. Sure, sure.

Scott Nelson: Yeah, let's do that. So, maybe in your days at Cardiac Science and then in your times of founding Medical Marcom, what else are you seeing? What other big areas or trends that you see most medtech and medical device companies miss out on?

Joe Hage: I just had a conversation with a publicly-traded medical device company earlier this week and he said, "What's the first thing you would do for us?" He was kind of evaluating my services. I said, well, you know, I haven't spent the time doing the due diligence just yet, but I would say that the model for marketing really just about everywhere, especially in the B2B space, is turned on its head with search engines because people don't want to be marketed to. Instead, they'll find out information on their terms. The way that they do that is they enter their terms into a search engine, usually Google, and they say, I'm looking for vascular equipment, whatever. How do you rank?

The term SEO and search engine optimization sound like voodoo to people, like a made-up industry. I'm going to get people just sucking up my budget and what am I going to get for it? I really believe that it is the most important thing you can do to be where people are when they are looking for you. It's like if you want to have a jewelry place in Manhattan, diamonds, you'll want to be in the diamond district because that's where people are shopping. You can save a lot of money having your place in Queens, but you may not attract the kind of traffic that you want. We talked again about the lifetime value of a customer. What's each customer worth? Calculate

what you'd be willing to spend to acquire a customer and make sure that if somebody does click through, they go to a place that's relevant for what they're looking for. So, the right answer is not to send everyone to the homepage. If you're talking about stress machines, for example, make sure they land on your stress system category. Don't make them go looking around. Have something on that page that engages them, that gives them a reason to give their contact information and remember, too, that the barrier is high. People don't want emails. Emails are homework for people. So, you may be put in a guarantee, "I am not adding you to a list. I am not..." you know, all these things...

Scott Nelson: Sure.

Joe Hage: ...that it is one-to-one communication.

Scott Nelson: Okay.

Joe Hage: On Cardiac Science, we added a form. We called it a short form, and on most of the product pages, if not all of the product pages, and I don't have it in front of me, it was something like, "What's your name? What's your email? What are you looking for?" It's as open-ended as that. One of the early pieces of feedback I got was, "Well, Joe, we're not getting leads on this. Some of them just really want to talk to customer care." And I said, "Good. We're here for our customers. So, whatever it is that the customer is looking for, make it as easy for them as possible."

Scott Nelson: Sure. Okay.

Joe Hage: So, number one, don't dismiss the next person who says, "Oh, SEO is important." It's vitally important. Make sure that when somebody gets to your site, you have engaging content and a reason to offer your contact information. I mean, if you were to stop the interview right here, that would be my main message. Make sure that you can be found, and when you are found, make sure that you are relevant, engaging, approachable, and give the information that they're looking for, and give them a reason to tell you who they are.

Scott Nelson: I'm just jotting these notes down because it's actually really good stuff. So, SEO is important, or in other words, make sure you can be found, and then make sure your content on your site is relevant, engaging, approachable, and make sure you're giving, whether it's a customer or prospect, a reason to submit their information. Is that what you said?

Joe Hage: Yup. To just raise their hand and give their email address or call you or whatever.

Scott Nelson: Okay.

Joe Hage: I had a prospect call me yesterday and I said, "How did you find me?" And he said, "I typed in 'medical marketing' and I found that to be a terrific mess. There were things about making your practice better and all these things that were really irrelevant to me. So, I went, and I self-selected, and I narrowed my search criteria, and I called it 'medical device marketing,'" and I showed up on the first page. Now, I am not the number one medical device marketing result.

I'm lower down on the page. He said, "Well, I clicked on the ones above you first and quickly clicked off of them because they didn't seem to be what I was looking for. But when I showed up on your site, I watched the video about what you were saying and then I poked around some more, and I saw that you put in a little bit of humor here or there that made me feel that I could relate to you. Then I looked at your blog and I saw that you were keeping it up and keeping it refreshed and giving me relevant information, and then I decided I'll let you know who I am."

Scott Nelson: That's a great story because I'm thinking like if I'm looking this in the eye and I'm listening to you tell that story, and I'm thinking, well, Joe, you run your own business, a consultancy business, it's not the same. My counterpoint to that is why isn't that the same? That person is a customer for you, but what about a patient that's searching for a treatment for their swollen leg or their irregular heartbeat, or what about the doctor that's looking for a different way? Maybe their equipment in their office is getting old or in their lab at the hospital is getting old and they just do a random search for new equipment?" So, in a sense it's different but in reality, it's all the same. It's still customers and they're still looking. So, that's your point of making sure your information is relevant. It's the same thing, right?

Joe Hage: There's an application for just about any industry.

Scott Nelson: Right, right. That goes back to an earlier question I was going to ask you, is, you didn't have any medical experience when you were brought on at Cardiac Science, and I wanted to ask you this at some point but it kind of fits. Is that one of the reasons why they saw the different value in terms of marketing that you brought to the table to say, "We can teach him enough about the medical space. We just want the marketing engine behind Joe Hage?" Is that kind of what they were after?

Joe Hage: I think that's fair to say. Now, I was the Director of Marketing Communication. There was also a Director of Defibrillation and a Director of Cardiology. I never needed to be the subject matter expert.

Scott Nelson: Sure.

Joe Hage: And to this day, and I'm happy to offer to anyone who's listening. Yeah, I know a thing or two about medical devices and medicine and healthcare, and I talk about it a lot. But I know a lot of smart people much more specialized in this than I am. The value of working with me is the value of working with my Rolodex. Actually, I have to stop myself. I have an 18-year-old intern who looked at me and said, "What's a Rolodex?" Anyhow, it's my whole network, and a lot of my selling proposition is I don't do all of the work. I spent most of my career on the client's side just like you. I'm kind of like your VP of Marketing for hire, sort of.

Scott Nelson: Sure.

Joe Hage: Far less expensive than bringing someone on full-time.

Scott Nelson: Right.

Joe Hage: I interact and address all those issues that come with working with all those agencies with whom I've built a level of trust that my team, I literally consider to be extensions of myself. I would bring you to them and know that they are representing the Joe Hage Medical Marcom brand.

Scott Nelson: Got you.

Joe Hage: That's the kind of level of trust that I like to build up with my partners.

Scott Nelson: Okay. I wanted to make sure I asked you about that because that's interesting. I mean, Cardiac Science, publicly-traded company, bringing in someone as Director of Marketing Communication that doesn't have any medical background, I think that speaks to a lot of different things and I think it's definitely an interesting topic to talk about. So, that's why I wanted to ask you. But let's circle back around because we talked about the fact that SEO is relevant, making sure your customers can find you, making sure your content on your website is relevant, engaging, approachable, etc. What else? What else do you see? What other trends, what other big issues that you see medical device companies and medtech companies, life science companies are missing in terms of their marketing strategy?

Joe Hage: The next piece is really a lot of work, but it can pay great dividends. I can't quantify what they are, but you'll hear it anecdotally. People may well come to cardiacscience.com or vasculartechnologies.com or whatever it is. In the space, however, they're more likely potentially to read FierceHealthcare or, I don't know, MassDevice. They might be on that site.

Scott Nelson: Okay.

Joe Hage: So, are you where they are? Can you be shown as a subject matter expert in these fields in a decidedly not promotional way? If Dr. Smith writes a 1500-word article that is precisely on target for what doctors are looking for about some kind of technology and they find that Dr. Smith is the Clinical Specialist and Chief Medical Officer for some medical device company. They may well click through and find out how can I talk to this guy? If you get him on the phone, he may give you an introduction to let me get you with one of my product people or something. So, marketing yourself as a subject matter expert and giving relevant content on other media not only builds some inbound links to your site, which is great, but gives you a chance to be where they are when they're not necessarily shopping for you at that point. They're interested in the space.

Scott Nelson: Got you.

Joe Hage: So, they find you surreptitiously.

Scott Nelson: So, let me ask you to provide a little bit of an example about that. Let's just speak to like, a physician customer, for example. So if I'm a physician customer and I'm on massdevice.com checking out the latest news or whatnot, and I see a banner ad or one of the

ads like in the sidebar if Joe Hage/Medical Marcom was responsible for designing that little sidebar ad, what would you do that's maybe different than what other companies are doing now?

Joe Hage: I'm going to answer that question in a different way because...

Scott Nelson: Okay.

Joe Hage: ...what you've described is banner advertising. That's not demonstrating subject matter expertise.

Scott Nelson: Okay.

Joe Hage: Subject matter expertise I'd offer is when you're writing the content, the editorial itself...

Scott Nelson: Ah, okay. Okay.

Joe Hage: ...or when you post a video of particular interest. I mean, online advertising is just a promotional, "Hey, come and get my la-la-la-la!"

Scott Nelson: Gotcha. Okay, so you're saying that if you're the VP for hire for ABC Vascular Therapies, for example, you should be writing the actual content on sites like MedCity News or MassDevice or FierceHealthcare.

Joe Hage: For example, yes, but it wouldn't be me and it wouldn't be with my smiling face.

Scott Nelson: Okay.

Joe Hage: It would be you with your smiling face. It would be someone who is acutely knowledgeable about your space.

Scott Nelson: Sure. Okay.

Joe Hage: Now, can you find a ghostwriter for that? Presumably, but probably not to the degree that it fairly represents what your Chief Medical officer is thinking.

Scott Nelson: Right.

Joe Hage: And it's a time commitment. So, the Chief Medical Officer might say, "Yeah, that's cute, but I don't have time for that kind of thing." Well, it is a time commitment.

Scott Nelson: Got you. Okay.

Joe Hage: There are no two ways around that.

Scott Nelson: Sure. Yeah. I see. So, what's your response to someone saying, well, a physician that reads that sort of content on that... Let's just stick with the MassDevice.com example. If I'm

a physician customer that's reading that quasi-editorial, I'm going to say, well, that physician is paid for by XYZ company. They're paid as a consultant, so I'm going to think that's biased information. So, what's your response to that?

Joe Hage: I think it comes down to the content. I can't make a universal statement.

Scott Nelson: Sure.

Joe Hage: I think the content has to stand on its own merits, and if it does sniff of promotional, then that's exactly how it's going to be interpreted. I mean, the intention there has to be pure.

Scott Nelson: Okay.

Joe Hage: This is purely for your benefit. This is not for my benefit.

Scott Nelson: Okay.

Joe Hage: Any kind of promotional work that you might do is buried after the last sentence, "Dr. Smith is the Chief Medical Officer for such or such technologies," and a link to him, and then where you have that link to is an opportunity for you.

Scott Nelson: Sure.

Joe Hage: So, instead of linking to "Meet the Team" and see a picture of Dr. Smith, you can show, if you link on that, go to a page that shows Dr. Smith, short bio, three things that he's written, click on those, whatever, and then ask Dr. Smith a question or anything that has a reason for you to get in touch with him in an approachable way that you think Dr. Smith might actually get back to me. And then, Dr. Smith actually gets back to you.

Scott Nelson: Okay. That's awesome stuff, and the reason I asked that is that... I want to break that down a little bit more. So my first question, I mean, your answer came about because I asked the question, "What if the physician customer thinks that content is biased?" which is normal, but you're saying if the content is strictly focused on raising awareness about a certain disease state and maybe the available tools, and maybe emphasizing how your technology best fits that application, etc., but at the very most making it beneficial for that person to read, having that physician customer in mind when that content is created. That's what you mean by that, right?

Joe Hage: I would say that even if you go into, for example, "The Quinton Stress System is the best system on the market because..." you've gone too far.

Scott Nelson: Okay.

Joe Hage: There's no place for you to promote your product in an editorial like that.

Scott Nelson: Okay. Okay.

Joe Hage: I'm not going to write a copy with you on the fly, but maybe there's an opportunity to say, "We recently saw a case where..." and talk about the specifics of the case. Maybe there's a link there or something, I don't know.

Scott Nelson: Yeah.

Joe Hage: It's very situational.

Scott Nelson: Sure. Sure. I think that's a component that's missing, I think a lot. I do see it in some places, like in the vascular today, for example. I mean, that's in my world and that has a decent amount of that sort of content, but I think what's missing is that last component that you mentioned. So, the links that are provided in that article, they direct someone, not to the bostonscientific.com website. They're directing to some sort of page where the person who wrote that article, the doctor who wrote that article can almost provide some sort of direct feedback to that physician customer that may be interested in what they have to say.

Joe Hage: In fact, your timing couldn't be more immaculate. I spoke to the CEO of endovascular.org today and he has a tremendous product there. I recommend your listeners to go check it out. You can join for free. You don't have to be a physician and it is pure, unadulterated content. Anything that smacks of promotion is unwelcome. He's driving great numbers. As of today, and today is August 3rd, 2011, he has just under 16,000 members, and his Facebook page has in excess of 73,000 fans.

Scott Nelson: Wow.

Joe Hage: He started his Facebook page in January.

Scott Nelson: Oh, no kidding!

Joe Hage: That's phenomenal!

Scott Nelson: Especially in this world...

Joe Hage: And he is delivering something acutely interesting to that market and you're not getting hit with ads and all sorts of things.

Scott Nelson: Okay. So, that speaks to that idea of creating content that's inherently not biased towards a product and that provides, I guess, a gateway to some honest open communication. So, that's cool. So, anything else you want to add to that before we maybe jump to another point?

Joe Hage: I'm good.

Scott Nelson: Okay. Let's go to the next one. To sum up this last point, I think what you mentioned before becomes the subject matter expert in other forms of media. Okay, so that was kind of a summary of that point. So, let's move on to the next one.

Joe Hage: I'm sorry, is there a question there?

Scott Nelson: Let's move on to like another point, another thing that you see or another concept that you see that life science, medical technology, medical device companies are missing out on, missing out in terms of their marketing strategy.

Joe Hage: Okay, let's say, I'll give this third one and perhaps we'll wrap it there.

Scott Nelson: Okay.

Joe Hage: First we talked about being found. So, don't dismiss search engine optimization. Second, we talked about when people show up make sure you give them a reason to care and lead form or something of that nature. The third thing we talked about is being elsewhere like on MassDevice or other places to demonstrate your subject matter expertise. The last one I'd offer today would be to give people multiple ways to engage with you. So, I might not want to give you my email address, but I might well like your fan page, or I might follow you on Twitter, or I might go check out your YouTube videos or your SlideShare presentations or sign up for a webinar. Give lots of opportunities. Join your LinkedIn group, I don't know. There are lots of ways to have people raise their hands even part of the way and say, "This is interesting to me."

Scott Nelson: Okay.

Joe Hage: Then it's incumbent on you to do the homework to close and convert.

Scott Nelson: Okay. I mean, that's a fairly simple point, and I think you...

Joe Hage: And grossly overlooked.

Scott Nelson: Yeah. That's a great analogy. The customer is raising their hand almost halfway up. So, they want to provide some information but maybe not at this time, maybe later. You're providing other channels or other means for them to engage with you. That's a good point. Okay, cool. I know we're running short on time, and real quick, because I wanted to talk about some of those really remarkable things that you had done at Cardiac Science if we can right now. You don't have to speak to this in too much detail, but you mentioned earlier something where you increased the page views by, what, 253% I think it was?

Joe Hage: Yes, thanks.

Scott Nelson: Then I think another one that, in researching some of the things you had done at Cardiac Science, you generated 150,000 in incremental growth with a first-of-its-kind online promotion for 700 distributor reps.

Joe Hage: Yes.

Scott Nelson: Let's pick out maybe one or two of those things, like the webpage views. When you look back at how you did that, is there anything that stands out as to how you were able to increase page views by 253%?

Joe Hage: I think the greatest single element was the addition of relevant content.

Scott Nelson: Okay.

Joe Hage: Before I got there, there were a number of sites, one for each sub-brand, and they were largely ignored. We brought all of the products, all of the solutions, all of the services and support under one umbrella, under cardiacscience.com. We weren't afraid to blow up everything that we had. The only thing we kept was the URL and we started from scratch to build lots of relevant content around the products and each page you add is another page that Google can index for something relevant to find you on. So, for example, someone remotely interested in the field of defibrillation might be interested to know what Good Samaritan laws are in the US. So, we made sure that we wrote relevant context about Good Samaritan laws in the US so that if somebody were to look for that they would tangentially find us.

Scott Nelson: Got you. Okay. That makes sense. Let's go and end it there because I want to almost do an encore at some point with you.

Joe Hage: Bravo, bravo.

Scott Nelson: Because it seems like most of the time you spend on more so website online sort of marketing strategies but focused on maybe the physician customer, but I mean there's a whole new arena that's maybe becoming more important with online marketing towards actual patients because they're directing almost their healthcare to a greater degree. That probably will increase in the future, and so I'd almost like to do that at some point.

Joe Hage: You're right, it's a very, very rich topic.

Scott Nelson: No, go ahead. What did you say?

Joe Hage: It's a very rich topic that's well outside the scope of one interview, that's for sure.

Scott Nelson: Right, right. No doubt, no doubt. But I want to recap because some of the stuff you shared is amazing and I want to make sure everyone who's listening can almost take some of these points and almost just start thinking about it. Obviously, if they want more information, they want to engage with you, they certainly can, and I'd encourage them because not to brown-nose you Joe, but your stuff is incredibly impressive, and so if I were running a company I'd certainly bring you on as a VP of marketing for hire.

But let's recap real quick. Number one, SEO is important, in other words, making sure your customers can find you. Number two, make sure the content on your website is relevant, engaging, approachable, and maybe even most important, make sure you're providing a reason, maybe a remarkable reason, as to why your customers should be contacting you or engaging with

you. Then third, become, and I guess we were on four topics, but number three, become the subject matter expert in other forms of media, i.e. other websites like MassDevice, MedCity News, Fierce Media, etc. Then the fourth point, give people multiple ways to engage with you outside of just the phone. Examples include Twitter, LinkedIn groups, Facebook fan pages, etc.

Joe Hage: I'm really grateful to be your guest today and I'd like to close with one closing anecdote. After I launched the Twitter Docs, and this is just two days ago, somebody retweeted about it, and I made it very easy to retweet about it. So, anytime somebody tweets they find out who I am, and they have a link to the thing, and it just kind of becomes viral that way.

Scott Nelson: Got you.

Joe Hage: Somebody retweeted her advertisement about the list and said, "I don't think we should have to give our email address to get that." I chuckled to myself and I thought, okay if you go ahead and build a 500-roll list, you can do whatever you want with it. But I've spent the time to build it and these are the conditions.

Scott Nelson: Sure.

Joe Hage: These are the rules of the game that I set out. I wrote back to her and said, I include the email so I could get a sense of community of who's interested in this kind of content. You can immediately unsubscribe. This was public because she wasn't following me. And she wrote back publicly, "No, thanks." I thought to myself two things. One, this person would never buy a thing from me to be sure, so what have I really lost?

Scott Nelson: Sure.

Joe Hage: And two, I went to her Twitter page, I clicked on her weblink and I went to her place where she clearly listed what her email address was. So, I emailed her discreetly and I said, "I hope you don't mind me emailing you, here's the list." I gave her the list anyhow. I don't expect any business from her. It's just good karma.

Scott Nelson: Sure.

Joe Hage: It was me saying, look, I'm not going to be petty about this. If you want the list, here's the list. I don't care that much."

Scott Nelson: Yeah.

Joe Hage: But it was interesting to me that she broadcasted her displeasure about having to give any information for something that she would consider to be valuable. You're going to have some people like that. You will turn off some people when you say, hey, get in touch, get in touch, get in touch. But for those who do get in touch, go make your next million.

Scott Nelson: Sure. That anecdotal piece there reminds me of a quote I think from Seth Godin where he says that and I'm paraphrasing here because I can't remember his exact quote, but he

says basically when he's trying to be progressive or move something along, he wants to almost say something a little bit outlandish to the point where he knows he's going to offend 20% of the audience at the expense of moving this idea or moving this concept forward. So, I think maybe that kind of does speak to that point where there are going to be some people that are offended, but maybe that's a good sign. Maybe that means you're moving things forward, right?

Joe Hage: I encourage you to make Joe Hage/Seth Godin analogies anytime you like.

Scott Nelson: I think you have more hair than Seth, right?

Joe Hage: Fair enough, yes. That's one place that I beat Seth. Again, I'll stop by saying thank you so much, I'm grateful to be your guest. I enjoyed this very much.

Scott Nelson: No, absolutely. I did too, Joe. Lastly, where can folks that are listening...where's the best place they can connect with you, just go to Medical Marcom or where do you want to direct them to?

Joe Hage: Sure, medicalmarcom.com, or they can Google Joe Hage, H-A-G-E, and find my site, or just like I'm preaching, you can find me as Joe Hage on Twitter or Joe Hage on Facebook or Joe Hage online or whatever.

Scott Nelson: Got you. Got you. Very good. Medicalmarcom.com. It's just as it sounds, Medical, M-E-D-I-C-A-L, Marcom, M-A-R-C-O-M, dot com; medicalmarcom.com. So, very good. Thanks again, Joe. This was a great interview. I really enjoyed it.

Joe Hage: Thank you, Scott.

Scott Nelson: Alright, thanks everyone for listening. Take care.