



Dynamic Chiropractic™

An MPA Media Publication

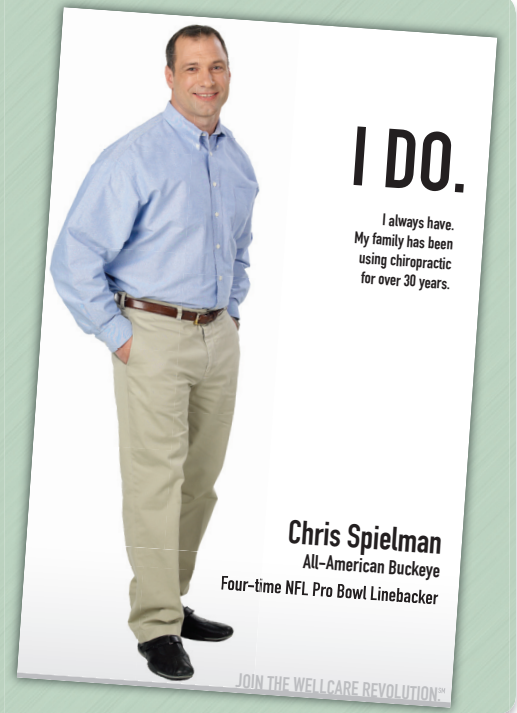
Volume 25, Number 8

Ohio State Chiropractic Association Launches “WellCare Revolution”

TV Spots Are First Step of Statewide Repositioning Campaign

The Ohio State Chiropractic Association (OSCA) has launched a statewide “WellCare Revolution” campaign featuring Ohio State University All-American and four-time National Football League Pro Bowl linebacker Chris Spielman, Olympic gold medalist and former OSU track-and-field star Butch Reynolds, and central Ohio family practitioner and chiropractic advocate Brad Herpolsheimer, MD. Circone + Associates, the advertising/marketing firm handling the campaign, emphasizes in the following article submitted on behalf of the OSCA, broadcast television spots featuring the three celebrity endorsers are just one component of a comprehensive repositioning effort designed to engender public trust in the chiropractic message.

Creepy, quirky, bogus, quacky, scary, kooky, overpriced, crack-and-pop, glorified massage – unfortunately, these are some of the words used by the general public in describing chiropractic. Add in a dash of ambulance chasing, a spoonful of insurance schmoozing, a cup or two of X-rays galore, (mix well) and finally, top it off with a hefty batch of mandatory visits (simmer and stir), and you may begin to understand why the general



public’s perception of chiropractic is boiling with distrust and brimming in disbelief; at least, most of the general public in the state of Ohio.

This brewing caldron of mistrust alerted an immediate disconnect for James “Woody” Woodward, the newly appointed executive director of the OSCA. Woodward, whose professional past includes such milestone successes as a shrewd lobbyist and a passionate pastor, quickly recognized a problem between a discipline that internally preaches a mantra of a self-healing, self-regulating natural care, while externally, the severed public spits and spews back at the profession’s unnatural, forcible and heavy-handed marketing approach.

“In Ohio, we want to face a simple fact: Our brand is broken,” said Woodward. “People aren’t buying the message when our actions promote the opposite. A colleague of mine once said, ‘Believe half of what they say and everything they do.’ Well, we’re not doing it. So, we’re changing it.”

Changing indeed, as Woodward immediately set his sights on Chris Spielman, a former Ohio State Buckeye All-American and four-time NFL Pro Bowl linebacker. In route to this celebrity endorsement, Spielman’s agent re-directed Woodward to the door of Circone + Associates, a Dublin, Ohio advertising

restoration, the masses are not buying chiropractic. Of course not – they’re being sold pain relief, and wellness is simply being “talked about.”

“No one is speaking the same language,” said Woodward. “The believers really believe; the non-believers really disbelieve, and the chiropractors are fighting among themselves about insurance coverage and premiums. It’s literally as if our DCs are speaking to their patients’ backs, or any pain that will listen, rather than truly turning that nonpatient on by turning them around and speaking to their hearts and minds.”

“We are asking our DCs to position their offerings as, ‘You can come in with pain, but you’ll leave with wellness,’” added Circone.

The Solution

“Stop talking. Care authentically. Do a great job. And let them [your patients] go,” urged OSCA Chairman of the Board Anthony Battaglia, DC. “This is

what we’re saying to our DCs. I knew years ago that the single most crucial barrier for our profession was twofold: our image and our inability to

face it down and change it. We’re facing it down now, and our statewide campaign will help change it.”

The facedown marketing solution of this “brand anatomy” became what the OSCA now titles a “WellCare Revolution” – an everyday alternative, vested care system, extending beyond the health and wellness confines of traditional health care. WellCare, as defined by the OSCA, is the combined investment of consistent complementary therapies for three primary occurrences: pre-health care and preventative lifestyle wellness, resolution of acute pain, and performance enhancement; all care episodes working to stabilize and sustain the body, mind and spirit. WellCare describes itself as habitual care maintaining the harmony of the body and the sanctity of the mind. Its characteristics embody preventative, stabilizing, self-directed health care, incorporating alternative health and wellness therapies.

One of the core drivers of WellCare is the inclusion of “chirotherapies,” a portfolio of modality and therapeutic applications, or a therapy mix, that act in unison with the overall chiropractic curriculum. Melding historical chiropractic methods with advanced modern therapies, chirotherapy is a way to

offer total patient care for health-healing relief, neural restoration, performance enrichment and wellness evolution – for every stage of a patient’s life.

With WellCare in place, Woodward and Circone took a page from Dr. Battaglia’s book and quietly crafted an approach whereby the industry, its chiropractors, and any of its representatives did not speak about their profession. Rather, knowing the brand was damaged, downright misunderstood and distrusted by the general public, they opted to seek out true ambassadors for their messaging. At the end of 2006, Woodward and Circone inked two-year deals with Chris Spielman, Butch Reynolds (Olympic gold medalist and strength and conditioning coach at Ohio State University) and Dr. Brad Herpolsheimer (a family physician practicing in Columbus, Ohio).

In order to imbue even more trust and to tie these ambassadors closer to the new chiropractic message, Woodward and Circone asked Spielman and Reynolds if the OSCA could help raise aware-

ness and money for their respective charities, The Stefanie Spielman Fund for Breast Cancer Research at Ohio State’s James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research

“Our brand is broken. People aren’t buying the message when our actions promote the opposite. A colleague of mine once said, ‘Believe half of what they say and everything they do.’ Well, we’re not doing it. So, we’re changing it.”

– James “Woody” Woodward, OSCA Executive Director

Institute, and the Butch Reynolds Care for Kids Foundation. Both parties eventually approved the partnership and at Woodward’s urging, the OSCA created the first ever WellCare Foundation, which will house both celebrities’ nonprofit fundraising efforts. Woodward plans to incorporate the charity’s collateral materials in a marketing kit reaching nearly every DC in Ohio.

With authentic trust from well-known statewide celebrities and accompanying charities in place, the final roadblock came down to a creative strategy. “A creative conundrum, really,” said Circone. “How do we turn distrust into trust in 30 seconds? How do you educate, ignorant pre-judgments, pre-beliefs regarding a particular profession? Easy: Establish trust, before they [the viewers] can establish judgment. Create a new construct that draws the viewer in before they make a buying decision. Capture their heart by suspending their mind.”

To this end, three separate broadcast TV spots were created (one for each celebrity endorser) with atypical emotive visuals accompanied by an original music score, all with a single cohesive feel, elevating the brand and inspiring trust. The spots illustrate quick cuts of an “everyman feel,” highlighting

mothers and daughters, a welder, a policeman, a pharmacist, a man running in the pouring rain, a proud farmer – all with simple images, a musicscape and one repeating phrase, “I Do,” appearing superimposed on the screen.

Only in the final 10 seconds, as each celebrity endorses the feelings of the people in their everyday community, do we understand the meaning of “I Do” (believe in chiropractic) and hear the word “chiropractic” for the first time. Each spot closes by sending viewers to wellcarerevolution.com to learn more about the benefits of chiropractic, while asking them to support specific nonprofit organizations in their community.

Once at the site, Web visitors can again watch the broadcast commercials, view additional true chiropractic stories from the various spokespersons, take a stress test, learn about the WellCare message and even find a specific DC, selectable by name, zip code and/or school. Charitable contributions are also accepted electronically.

Phase one of the statewide “I Do” campaign launched with March Madness (March 12th and 13th), airing on both the 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. editions of ESPN SportsCenter, as well as buys on The Fox News Channel and The Learning Channel, blanketing all Ohio demographic market areas (DMAs) and continuing through May 28. The media plan is designed to hit more than 98 percent of Ohio cable subscribers, or about 3.5 million households. Phase two is planned to commence in September 2007, with phase three following in 2008. After February viewings during a seven-city screening tour, Ohio chiropractors appear quite impressed with the commercials.

“This is what we’ve needed for 25 years,” said Gary Estadt, DC, vice president of external affairs for the OSCA. “We needed an image overhaul and the OSCA has put it out there for us. Now we have to live into and live up to it. We’re ready.” Reportedly, many districts, such as Cleveland, are so pleased with the “I Do” campaign that they are contributing supplemental media funding in their market for additional spots.

“The momentum is picking up,” said Woodward. “Last year at this time, we had 17 President’s Club Members (a premier OSCA perk-packed membership at a \$1,000 level commitment). Right now, we have 71. We’re getting there. The guys [DCs] in our area will have to step up in every way – in their care, their authenticity, their practicing philosophy and their follow through – and from there, we have a chance at trust.”

To ensure this chance at trust, Woodward and Circone have created a WellCare marketing kit that aids

all OSCA chiropractors in keeping the elevated brand promise that appears on TV consistent with the consumers’ perceptions once they arrive at a DC’s office. The kit includes a DVD loop, which incorporates the “I Do” commercial spots and true chiropractic stories by the celebrities, interspersed with various natural environments that depict WellCare. Additionally, accompanying large, horizontal, high-end retail signage supporting the “everyman feel” of the spots are numerous celebrity mini-posters for patient rooms. The kit also contains 50 elegantly designed first-visit “thank you” cards; a DC ambassador information card, aiding DCs in using the proper WellCare nomenclature; a WellCare Stress Test booklet and tutorial; and a WellCare brochure for DC and patient education.

“It’s one thing to get them [the public] there; it’s a whole other thing to keep them willfully wanting to come back – without fear based selling and pressure tactics,” said Circone. “We’re asking our DCs to stop selling and start inviting the consumer into their world, letting them discover the authentic value of this wonderful profession – so that the believers tell the rest of the nonbelieving world through our practicing persona of WellCare – empathy, engagement, empowerment.”

Presently, Woodward and Circone have various industry-related business partners looking to sponsor the kit and the additional planned phases of the TV campaign.

“Obviously, major corporations understand and are seeing the brand benefits of their company’s name near the likes of Spielman and Reynolds,” said Woodward. “Secondly, the spots are elevated, promoting a certain class level – and the media exposure is tremendous. Add branding rights to our marketing kit in nearly 1,000 [chiropractic] offices statewide and you’ve got yourself targeted exposure.”

“One thing is for sure,” said Judson Sprandel II, DC, president of the OSCA. “These spots are anything but ‘quirky,’ ‘creepy’ and ‘bogus.’ They are warm and inspire trust. They’re setting us on a track to truly succeed as caring and highly qualified healthcare providers.”

Editor’s note: For more information on the Ohio State Chiropractic Association and its WellCare Revolution, please visit www.oscachiro.com.