

SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE

Beyond the One-Size-Fits-All Marketing Approach

Practices can borrow strategies across corporate and independent models to strengthen their brand.

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Corporate: Consistency at Scale

Corporate-owned practices typically have the budget, brand guidelines, and centralized systems that independents often lack. A recognizable brand logo and voice, a cohesive website and social media strategy, a consistent review-response process, and a marketing team that isn't also answering phones are real advantages. Clients moving to a new city can find a familiar name and know roughly what to expect.

The trade-off is that consistency can flatten personality. Corporate marketing sometimes reads as though it could apply to any clinic in the network, because in a sense it can. When every location shares the same email templates and social captions, clients feel as though they're engaging with a brand, not talking to their veterinarian. Having a large, well-planned strategy and approval process may mean that the quick video or photo of the people in the clinic doesn't make it to the feed. Marketing teams out of the office might have to rely on stock photos and imagery that, while polished, don't tell the real story of the care on the ground.

Independent: Voice and Agility

Independent practices win on the opposite front. A single-doctor or small-group practice can post about the technician's rescue dog, respond to a local news story right away, share a post to congratulate the local high school team on their win, or change strategy without waiting for approval from a marketing department three states away. That agility, paired with a genuinely local voice, builds trust that's hard to manufacture at scale.

The cost is capacity. Independent owners are often the marketing department, the medical director, the surgeon, and the person approving invoices, all before lunch. Budgets are tighter, and consistency — posting on schedule, following up on every review, keeping the website current — tends to be the

first thing that slips when the schedule gets busy.

Single-Location Versus Multisite: The Other Axis

Ownership structure isn't the only variable. Footprint matters just as much, and it doesn't map neatly onto corporate or independent. A single-location independent practice can lean fully into hyper-local marketing. The team knows every regular client by name, and the marketing can reflect that directly. A growing independent group with three or four locations starts to face some of the same challenges corporate practices know well, like maintaining a consistent voice while giving each location room to be genuinely local.

For multisite practices, whether corporate or an independent group that's scaled, the practical marketing questions are similar:

- Does each location have its own, fully optimized Google Business Profile, or is one location dominating search visibility for the whole group?
- Is content genuinely localized, mentioning nearby neighborhoods, local events, and location-specific staff, or is it a copy-and-paste template with the city name swapped out?
- Are reviews being monitored and responded to at every location, not just the flagship?

Taking the Best of Both

The most effective practices, regardless of ownership, tend to borrow across these lines.

Independent practices can build corporate-style consistency without corporate overhead. Adopt a team approach whenever possible, and:

- Create a content calendar and standard operating procedures.
- Outsource video editing or graphics when necessary.
- Build a systematized plan for handling online reviews.



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- Create a brand voice guide to ensure consistency across platforms.
- Write a review-response template that leaves room for customization.

None of that requires a big budget, just a system and an understanding that it's hard to do that when you're running a business, seeing patients, and doing the other 834 things on the to-do list. These small changes go a long way toward the kind of reliability clients associate with bigger brands.

Corporate and multisite practices can build independent-style local trust by giving individual locations real room to show up as themselves. They don't need to abandon their systems. They need to build flexibility into them:

- Let each clinic's social account post about its own team and community involvement and share its own photos and videos.
- Ensure local SEO work happens location by location instead of centrally.
- Empower location managers to respond to reviews in their own voice rather than a scripted one.

The Real Question

The structure of a practice — corporate or independent, single-site or multisite — sets the starting conditions. It doesn't determine the outcome. A corporate multisite group willing to decentralize its voice can feel every bit as local as a single independent clinic. An independent practice willing to build repeatable systems can be every bit as consistent as a corporate brand.

The question worth asking isn't "corporate or independent" or "one location or many." Instead, ask: Does this practice's marketing sound like the people actually walking through the door, and is it dependable enough that clients know what to expect every time they interact with it? Practices that can answer yes to both are the ones winning, regardless of who owns the sign out front. **TVB**

WHERE TO START

For practices trying to figure out which side of this to shore up first, a quick audit helps:

- Pull up the practice's Google Business Profile (or every location's profile, if there are more than one) and check when it was last updated.
- Scroll the practice's social media and ask honestly whether a client could tell this account apart from a competitor's without seeing the name.
- Read the last 10 client reviews and note whether responses sound like a person or a form letter.