

Market Insights drives brand strategy

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Opportunity

Augusta University Health (AU Health) is an academic medical center based in Augusta, Georgia. Their world-class healthcare network offers the most comprehensive primary, specialty, and subspecialty care in the area. Despite its regional preeminence, however, AU Health was recently forced to confront a problem of self-definition.

As a broader organization, AU Health has changed its name four times in the last five years. The relatively rapid shifting in brand names left consumers feeling confused. After the most recent iteration, AU Health's marketing team observed a significant decrease in consumer awareness about what AU Health stood for, and what it had to offer.

The AU Health team needed to determine why its brand presence was slipping, and figure out what they could do to reverse it.

Approach

AU Health turned to NRC Health's Market Insights. The nation's largest healthcare consumer database, Market Insights gives organizations access to respondents in over 310,000 households, across more than 300 markets. By using Market Insights' customized On-Demand surveys, healthcare leaders come away with a much sharper understanding of their customers.

To assess AU Health's position in their market, the team conducted three different customized On-Demand surveys.

Outcome

The first of AU Health's On-Demand surveys focused on consumer awareness of academic health systems in the region, to see how AU Health stood in relation to its local competitors. They discovered a good deal of confusion among consumers. Only one-third of respondents, in fact, even knew of AU Health or its affiliated



Market Insights is a customer- intelligence tool that gathers insights from over 300,000 households—the largest consumer-health database in the country.

"Market Insights is how we can gauge consumer perceptions and reactions, and how we at AU Health can take action with our marketing campaigns."

— **Brianne Clark**, Sr. Marketing Analyst, AU Health

organizations. A majority of respondents admitted they did not know AU Health was affiliated with the Georgia Cancer Center, and only 47% of respondents were aware of their Children's Hospital.

To solve this problem, AU Health needed to devise an advertising strategy that would solidify the organization in the public's mind. This was no simple task. The organization had to balance two messaging priorities: differentiating itself from nearby competition, and clarifying AU Health's own service line.

Using NRC Health's Market Insights data, however, AU Health was able to continuously test its messaging, crafting and honing it until it resonated with Augusta-area consumers. After months of development, results were promising: 91% of all respondents reported that the ads effectively communicated their message, and that they found nothing confusing about them; 77% of respondents recognized the AU Health logo and understood what the organization represented. Perhaps most dramatically, after seeing the ads, 84% of respondents reported a stronger overall positive regard for AU Health.

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With this data in hand, AU Health could proceed confidently in debuting its new campaign. What's more, data from these Market Insights surveys proved especially useful for internal decision-making. Hard data made it much easier for the marketing team to secure buy-in from the C-suite, and get their approval for the new campaign's launch.

Once AU Health was ready to release their new advertising, they again enlisted Market Insights to measure its real impact on the market. Thanks to its well-honed advertising campaign, the new On-Demand surveys found, AU Health's overall market awareness increased to 64%. Similarly, awareness of AU Health's Children's Hospital leapt by 13%, and their overall NPS score jumped 44.4 points.

Even better, this awareness translated into improved patient volumes. AU Health's market-tested messaging drove web traffic to increase by 6,000 new users per month, and online appointments to increase by over 100 users every month.

Looking to the future

After this return on their investment, AU Health's marketing team has found a permanent role for Market Insights in their work. Going forward, AU Health's leaders will continue to find enduring value in the understanding that Market Insights empowers.

"NRC Health's Market Insights is the barometer that can show AU Health executives that the money spent is worth it, and can help prove the ROI of the marketing dollars AU Health is spending."

—**Brianne Clark**, Sr. Marketing Analyst, AU Health

"NRC Health helps us understand our consumers, and that really helps us get to that next level."

—**Aubrey Hinkson**, AVP of Marketing, AU Health

"At AU Health, we've now made it so that with every new creative that we do, we have ad testing completed through NRC Health. There is no more question of whether we have the time or the resources to do it—it is just a part of our process. Those consumer insights drive our creative strategy."

—**Aubrey Hinkson**, AVP of Marketing, AU Health

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