

## **Don't Bet Your Business on "Ideas-by-Osmosis"**

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My dad owned his pharmacy for 30 years and over that period, the business had its downs and ups. The first 20 years were kind of so-so (maybe why I never got a new bicycle as a kid), but the last 10 years were pretty darn good (lucky for my younger sisters). I can tell you: Those more successful last 10 years looked a lot more fun than the first 20 years were.

So what made the difference?

Well, for one, we moved across the street into a new location that looked like the Taj Mahal compared to the previous building. Second, he added additional pharmacists with fresh ideas and perspectives that helped energize the business. Those new ideas came from their experiences working at other pharmacies, reading about coming trends in trade publications (such as America's Pharmacist), and swapping ownership experiences with former pharmacy school pals. It took a while to collect and vet all of those new ideas. And, even then, the business sometimes had to feel its way through. Things usually turned out okay, but it would have been so much easier if there had been a one-stop shop to learn from the mistakes and successes of other pharmacy owners and to also help sort out what trends are coming down the pike.

Turns out, that one-stop shop does exist. The NCPA Annual Convention, Oct. 14-18, in Orlando, Fla., is that place. The content is made by pharmacy owners and the meeting is for pharmacy owners who want to be successful.

There are a lot of worthy pharmacy meetings where pharmacy owners can choose to spend their time, but the NCPA Annual Convention should be on your "can't miss this one" list. Programming is one reason why. It's your one-stop shop for connections, ideas, and solutions.

The programs are broken into three dimensions, which I would describe as follows:

- The Expanding Opportunities Dimension: (new trends that are here or coming that could be your next big niche area)
- The Back Office Dimension: (business management hints, tips, and secrets that could maybe add 25-100 basis points to your bottom line)
- The Front End Dimension: (paying attention to the often neglected part of the business where the sales are lower, but the margins are higher, and don't involve PBMs)

The right information at the right time to the right person can help you make or save thousands of dollars and at the NCPA Annual Convention, it's the right information and the right time. If you, one of your business partners, or one of your staff are the right person, the NCPA Annual Convention in October is for you.

Dealing with PBM-created prescription processing hassles requires the use of a certain part of your brain (and adrenal cortex), but it's important to flex your brain's creative muscles as well. The NCPA Annual Convention in October does that with fresh perspective presentations from exciting keynote speakers that relate to your business. One of the keynotes will be delivered by Dr. Zubin Damania, MD. You may not have heard of Stanford medical school trained Dr. Damania—yet—but you are guaranteed to never forget where you were the first time you heard him speak! Dr. Damania has an alias called ZDoggMD. He raps, sings, and sizzles music parodies like a hip "Weird Al" Yankovic, then settles down to share his vision for the future of health care. You don't want to miss him.

My dad used a form of "good idea osmosis" to help propel his business to greater heights. He told me that he always wanted to get to an NCPA Annual Convention but could never break away from the pharmacy. He finally got to his first NCPA Annual Convention a few years ago—after he had retired.

I hope to see you a bit sooner than that. How about at NCPA's Annual Convention in October?