### What Vascular Surgery Needs To Do To Thrive: We Need Better Branding: Being An Independent Specialty Would Help In Many Ways

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#### Disclosures

- None relative to this presentation

#### Branding

A brand is something that marks your company or service as unique.

**Branding expresses your core message**

#### Vascular Surgery: How is our Brand doing?

#### Survey of lay public in Danbury, CT

**What is a vascular surgeon?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Ranges</th>
<th>Answer Corrected</th>
<th>“Is a Vein Doctor”</th>
<th>“Is a cardiologist”</th>
<th>Did Not Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-45 (n=22)</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-65 (n=19)</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;65 (n=13)</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What is a “cardiovascular” specialist?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Ranges</th>
<th>Answer Corrected</th>
<th>“Heart” Specialist</th>
<th>“Arteries, Veins, Circulation”</th>
<th>Did Not Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-45 (n=22)</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
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</tr>
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<td>80%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
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#### Survey – cont’d

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What kind of specialist takes care of:</th>
<th>Cardiologist</th>
<th>Vascular Surgeon</th>
<th>Did Not Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clogged arteries of the legs:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age Ranges</td>
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<td>5%</td>
<td>72%</td>
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<td>21%</td>
<td>58%</td>
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<td>&gt;65 (n=13)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clogged arteries of the heart:</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total (n=54)</td>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age Ranges</td>
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<td>11%</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;65 (n=13)</td>
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<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm:</td>
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<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age Ranges</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-45 (n=22)</td>
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<td>5%</td>
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<td>45-65 (n=19)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;65 (n=13)</td>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>23%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clogged arteries of the neck:</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>45-65 (n=19)</td>
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<td>42%</td>
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<td>23%</td>
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</table>
Venues for Marketing our Brand
Low tech to high tech

- Social Media
  - Facebook, Snapchat, Buzzfeed, Reddit

- Cell Phone and Mobile
  - iPads, Kindles, etc.
  - Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook

- Print
  - Periodical Advertising
  - Broadcast Advertising
  - Outdoor Advertising
  - Public Service Advertising
  - Product Placement Advertising

- Guerrilla Advertising
- Direct Mail Advertising
- Tear sheet
- Handout
- Point of Sale

They innovate – We can innovate too!

An Independent Board of Vascular Surgery
Frank J Veith SVS Presidential Address - 1996

ABVS established in 1996
Quick for independent vascular board... abandoned 2005

Darwin would predict that forces of evolution will result in the distinct recognition of our specialties, with our own recognized Specialty Board and related residency

“...That certainly would eliminate much conflict of interest and would probably be best for all concerned, especially for vascular patients.”

An Independent Board of Vascular Surgery has only one interest: Us

Meeting V2017 - Concerned Vascular Surgeons Issue: Is it time (again) for an Independent ABVS?

What is at stake?
- Compensation/reimbursement?
- Departmental and Service line leadership?
- Control of competing specialties?
- Public recognition of our specialty?
- Control of vascular training programs?

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Compensation/Reimbursement
Wasn’t once enough?

- CPT codes converted into relative value units (RVUs) by Hsiao and coworkers at Harvard in 1992.

- Vascular procedural RVUs determined by General Surgeons.
- Result: 8/9 lowest RVUs assigned to vascular operations.

What hasn’t changed:
- The ABS still represents several subspecialties including General Surgery.
- Conflicts of interest are likely to occur in the future.

An Independent Board of Vascular Surgery has only one interest:

Us

Departments of Vascular Surgery?
Elevated Level of Respect/Recognition

- General Surgical Dept of Surgery
  - VAs limited or no control of departmental priorities & budget which may impede the success of academic, employed and private practitioners.

- Independent Vascular Board
  - Separate departments of Vascular Surgery in larger hospitals.
  - Tickle down effect in smaller hospitals - recognition and respect (ask any cardiac surgeon).
Heart and Vascular Service Line Leadership

Elevated Level of Respect/Recognition

- Chairman of Vascular Surgery Dept
- greater influence in leadership selection process vs division chief

Alone in a sea of cardiologists!

Independent VS Board

Eliminate competition?

No. But...

- Practice guidelines and credentialing developed by the SVS and supported by the gravitas of an Vascular Surgery Dept/Independent Board of Vascular Surgery:
  - Greater acceptance by hospital credentialing committees
  - Apply to all interventionalists, no matter specialty of origin.
  - Also: we will have our own RRC

Outnumbered!

Residents/Fellows Trained/yr:
- Vascular Surgery – 173
- Interventional Cardiology – 247
- Interventional Radiology – 270

Must increase number of vascular surgeons to meet demand. In the meantime, other specialists are filling the void.

Conclusions

- We must spend more and do more to brand and market our specialty and we need to do it now!
- There are many reasons why an independent American Board of Vascular Surgery will benefit our specialty and all vascular surgeons. I can think of no reasons why it would not.

The Time is Now!