



CASE STUDY:

Build awareness with ghostwritten physician blogs

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Inova Health System (Inova) wanted to start a physician blog series as a way to share their doctors' expertise. Finding time to write blog posts was almost impossible for the physicians, and coordinating doctors, topics, posts and timing became a challenge for Inova's marketing team.

Aha Media Group (Aha Media) developed a content marketing strategy to ghostwrite Inova's physicians' blog posts. After implementing the new blogging strategy, Inova increased awareness, demonstrated by media outlets reaching out to their physicians independently. The web team also saw a strong uptick in traffic and search rankings.

Part of Inova's blogging success comes from Aha Media's ability to produce content quickly. In fact, within a week after the late-night television host Jimmy Kimmel revealed his son's congenital heart defect, the Inova team published a ghostwritten blog [tying the news to their approach to treating pediatric heart conditions](#).

THE CHALLENGE

Hospital marketers appreciate physicians who want to contribute their voices to publications. Blogging is an excellent way for hospitals to capitalize on doctors' interest in sharing their innovations, research and points-of-view.

However, for many doctors, writing is not an area of expertise. Their blog posts are information-rich, but often filled with complex medical jargon. And it can be difficult for doctors to find the time to meet editorial deadlines.

Inova was already producing physician-authored blog posts before engaging Aha Media, but their efforts were sporadic and inconsistent.

The goal of their blogging strategy was to frame their physician experts as trusted voices about:

- New research
- Timely news topics
- Improvements to patient care
- Health-related happenings outside of Inova

ABOUT THE CLIENT

Who they are: Hospital

Industry: Healthcare

Number of employees: 16,000

In business since: 1956

Headquarters: Falls Church, VA



AHA MEDIA'S APPROACH

Aha Media's main goal was to make it as easy as possible for the physicians to share their subject matter expertise. Ghostwriting the blogs was the perfect solution.

Every month, the Inova marketing and Aha Media teams work together to select and prioritize 5-10 blog topics for the following month. The teams base selection criteria on producing a mix of timely and evergreen blogs.

The Inova marketing team identifies the doctors to interview as subject matter experts. Then, the Aha Media team takes over managing the editorial process. A writer interviews the stakeholders and uses their expert insights to craft compelling content. The writer works directly with the physician on medical review and copy approval.

The Inova marketing team publishes the blogs in [Inova's Newsroom](#) and shares them on social media. They also link each blog to the author's physician profile, showcasing their thought leadership along with their credentials.



We wanted to make our talented physicians the stars: the content authors. Hiring writers to interview our physicians and ghostwrite the blogs, based on Aha's recommendation, was the way for us to do that.

To write for a consumer audience is very different than writing for peers. So, making these blogs consumer friendly was critically important, and that is expertise that Aha definitely brought to the table.

— ROB BIRGFELD, CHIEF DIGITAL MARKETING OFFICER AT INOVA HEALTH SYSTEM

THE RESULTS

This process took the editorial pressure off of the Inova marketing team, so they could focus on publishing, distributing and measuring the success of the content. It's a formula that's driven real results, including:

- **Increased physician engagement:** Doctors from all departments in the health system now approach the marketing team and ask if they can author blogs.
- **Better search results:** Inova has seen a steady rise in organic search traffic, with blogs staying relevant in search for up to 6 months after a blog's publication.
- **Increased media exposure:** Inova has also seen unexpected gains in earned media. Because blog posts are listed on physicians' profiles, reporters regularly reach out to Inova doctors to participate in their stories.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Working with a professional content firm ensures that physician blogs hit all the right notes: engaging, empathetic and consumer friendly. Those factors help boost readability and findability, ensuring your blog content will show up in search results.
- Asking stakeholders to do a quick 15-minute phone interview makes it easy to schedule interviews quickly. That means you can talk to stakeholders about time-sensitive topics, like the Jimmy Kimmel spotlight, and publish while the news is still relevant.
- Establishing your physicians as trusted experts in the community leads to an increase in earned media requests from news outlets.

ABOUT AHA MEDIA

Aha Media has a broad range of content expertise. See more of Aha Media's [case studies](#) and the [work](#) we are proud to share.

GET IN TOUCH

Looking for a custom content solution that suits your business objectives and audience's needs? Reach out for a consultation at hello@ahamedia.com.