

Promoting the Practice With Bylines

ONCE a month, Dr. David K. Emerson, a physician in Omaha, sends out letters containing health tips or the schedules for immunization shots. He hopes his patients will clip tidbits from the letters and paste them on their refrigerators or in some other highly visible spot, where they could serve as a "reminder" to call him for regular checkups as well as just when they are ill.

Dr. Emerson is one of many physicians who are uncomfortable with the hard-sell of advertising, but feel quite good about building a practice through newsletters. "Newsletters let them maintain their professionalism," said Mrs. Dahl of St. Joseph Hospital.

Doctors are not alone in feeling that way. Accountants and lawyers also are sending newsletters to particular audiences. Williams, Young, the accounting firm, prepares a monthly six-page newsletter that includes special banking supplements. Many bankers are responding exactly as Williams, Young had hoped. David Locke, the president of McFarland State Bank in McFarland, Wis., says that the insert "has a lot of information germane to the community

banking industry and was one reason I hired Williams, Young."

But other recipients of promotional newsletters say they feel inundated. Tom Woodward, a senior vice president of employee relations at Pandick Inc. in New York, says he receives far more labor law newsletters than he can read. "My assistant reads them and highlights the areas that are important," he said.

To avoid such ennui on the part of potential clients, some professional firms are trying to give their publications a special look. Pannell Kerr Forster, for one, is now printing a glossy magazine called Panorama, a 40- to 60-page publication that contains articles written by partners at the firm.

"We've tried to take the element of stuffiness out of it," said Mr. Kaiser. For a recent issue on estate planning, which offered tips on keeping the Internal Revenue Service "out of your backyard ... and back pocket," the firm commissioned Charles Addams, the cartoonist of the macabre, to draw the cover. He came up with a family in a castle surrounded by a moat, the drawbridge up, and

I.R.S. agents trying to get in.

Professionals are also writing more for independent magazines and newspapers, in order to have their names associated with expertise in their areas. Leonard L. Rivkin, a Garden City, L.I., attorney with Rivkin, Radler, Dunne & Bayh, has gone that route one better: He has been hired by Leader

Publications to edit Hazardous Waste and Toxic Torts: Law and Strategy, a monthly newsletter. The newsletter goes for \$165 a year; Mr. Rivkin does the work gratis, content with the publicity. He is not certain how many clients it has brought in. But he does say that "many clients have said that they've seen it." ■

