



Synching your Web site with your social media presence

For more on this topic, go to www.dentaleconomics.com and search using the following key words: *social media, Web site, visibility, input, impressions, Facebook Wall, Kristie Nation.*

You have **TWO** great **RESOURCES** at your disposal when it comes to **visibility**. One is your practice's Web site, the other is your social media presence. Potential patients may look at one, the other, or both of these when deciding whether or not your practice is where they want to be. Your goal is to ensure that you grab their attention and gain their trust no matter where they initially seek information about you.

Your practice's Web site defines what you offer

Your Web site has approximately 50 milliseconds to make a first impression on a viewer, so the site's design and layout should be ultra professional. Seventy-five percent of Web users say they base their first impressions of how credible a company is on the visual appeal of the company's Web site. So hire a professional to ensure your first impression is a lasting one.

Nearly as many Web users also say they will not stay on a site that is not easy to navigate. So make sure that key information (including contact information such as your physical and e-mail addresses and phone and fax numbers) are easy to find. Keep language professional but friendly and easy to read. Avoid pushy sales copy and overdone testimonials. Concentrate on showing visitors what you can offer them to solve their problems.

Your social media presence defines how you deliver

Your Facebook page lets you show potential patients how you deliver on the promises your Web site makes. You still need a description of your services and easy-to-access contact information, but your social media focus should be on creating a more personal bond with the viewer.

The Facebook Wall provides a direct line of communication and allows not only an opportunity for you to pro-

mote your practice, but for others to chime in and increase your impact on the community.

You can post messages and information that you think will benefit viewers while they can ask questions and respond to your posts. Here are just a few things you can do with your Facebook Wall:

- **Emphasize what you are doing to make your practice better.** Whether you continue your education by attending a conference, seminar, or class, learn a new technique or acquire a new piece of specialized equipment, mention it on your Wall, and point out how it is relevant to your patients.

- **Ask for input from patients.** What do they think would make your practice better? They might come up with something you have not thought of in regard to patient comfort or care. Make sure you respond to any who share their ideas with you.

- **Recognize your client base.** Consider a patient of the day, week, or month depending on the size of your practice. You can post photos (with permission) along with a testimonial from the patient about your practice.

- **Share information.** Tips are always welcome, as are nuggets of information about the latest advances in the field. You can post a message, link to a great resource, or even create a short video that lets you talk directly to viewers.

- **Encourage those who are "on the fence."** Have all members of your staff contribute posts if possible — the more smiling faces a viewer can associate with your practice, the more comfortable they will be with taking that first step.

- **Promote your practice (but subtly).** Do not use your Facebook Wall exclusively for advertising. Viewers will quickly tire of the constant barrage. Provide information about special services and promotions sparingly, and direct them to your main Web site for more information.

Together, your Web site and Facebook page can create a loop that draws patients in and keeps them interested. Encourage Web site visitors to keep up with you on Facebook, and use your Wall to educate, inform, and invite new patients to your practice. **DE**

Kristie Nation is the founder and CEO of myDentalCMO, a marketing consulting firm that provides strategic marketing "treatment plans" exclusively for dental practices. The firm was founded with a mission to prevent dentists from wasting countless dollars marketing their practices ineffectively. She can be reached at kristie@mydentalcmo.com or (888) 557-6443.

Your goal is to ensure that you grab their attention and gain their trust no matter where they initially seek information about you.