



Five reasons you don't use social media and 10 ways to get started

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Too many **PRACTICES** have **no social media campaign** at all. They depend on outdated ways of communicating with existing patients and attracting new ones. According to MySocialPractice, "Facebook is clearly one of the best platforms for community-driven, Inherent Marketing™." Whatever social medium you choose to employ, the first step is getting past the excuses.

Five reasons you do not already have a social media campaign

① You do not think the majority of your patients use social media. Wrong. Today, the over-50 crowd is the fastest growing demographic using social networks such as Facebook and Twitter.

② You think, "I can't allow Facebook in the workplace; no one will get anything done!" Wrong again. If you cannot trust staff members to spend their hours at your practice appropriately, you have hired the wrong people.

③ You tried making a Facebook page to advertise your practice, but no one ever "liked" it or commented on it. Wrong tactic. Facebook isn't about advertising; it is about communicating.

④ You are too busy. Wrong, wrong, wrong. Social media is about communication. Are you really too busy to communicate with your patients?

⑤ You do not feel competent. Wrong one last time. Either learn or hire someone to do a great job for you. Inaction is not an option.

10 ways to kick-start a social media campaign with Facebook

① Post a patient of the week. People like hearing other people's success stories. Showcase a patient who had a great visit in your office. This could be a child who sat still through his first visit, or a patient who finally received new

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implants and wants to show off the resulting smile.

② Ask a question. People will interact if you give them a chance to share their opinions. Create polls, too. They can be a key research tool. You can get valuable input while collecting real time data.

③ Offer an incentive. Announce that everyone who "likes" your page this week will be entered in a drawing for a prize. This can be an ongoing way to attract new viewers to your page.

④ Encourage participation. Ask for input on your office techniques, comfort, and customer care. Remember, people love to tell you what you are doing wrong as much as what you are doing right. Respond to any issues promptly and professionally.

⑤ Talk about your community involvement. Post a picture of your staff participating in a local charity event or drive. If you help raise money for a cause, publicize your dedication and contribution.

⑥ Recognize a staff member. Celebrate your employee of the month and give that person tickets to a local attraction or dinner at a local restaurant.

⑦ Show before-and-after photos of your star patients for different procedures. Educate the public and show them that they, too, can experience great results. Be available to answer questions from readers.

⑧ Cheer your practice members on in unrelated events. Does your hygienist bowl in a league? Show up to support her and then post her scores.

⑨ Create videos. These can include informational videos starring yourself, testimonials starring your patients, or interviews starring other "experts" in the community.

⑩ Network. "Like" other providers' Facebook pages. This does not have to be your competition, just other professionals. "Like" your vendors, patients' companies, etc.

Facebook is a remarkably simple form of social media when you stop looking at it as an advertising gambit and start treating it as a basic communication tool. Then it is as easy as talking about all the things you discuss daily in your practice.

For more great ideas, visit MySocialPractice.com. **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.