



PRACTICE

SOCIAL MEDIA

Kristie Nation

Which social strategy is best for your dental practice?

GETTING STARTED ON SOCIAL MEDIA is something you need to do for your practice, but how do you decide which platform is the right one for you? Do you really need to invest in strategies for every platform out there—or will one or two be enough?

It's better to concentrate on doing social media well on whatever platform(s) you choose than to spread your energy by trying to cover every potential base. Quality is key, not quantity. The platform you choose will have some effect on what the content you create looks like, but your content's quality will be the deciding factor when it comes to results.

KNOW THAT ALGORITHMS AREN'T EVERYTHING

When Twitter and Instagram announced they'd be shifting their content display from a reverse chronological lineup to an algorithm based on relevancy, the public outcry was fierce.¹ However, the change didn't really affect the timeline much in the end, and users can choose how they want their content presented (although, as with Facebook, this setting can be difficult to track down).²

Changing algorithms and the shift to pay-to-play on social media platforms shouldn't be reasons to leave the platforms or give up. The goal is still the same: If people are going to see only 30% of what comes across their feeds, your content needs to be in that 30%.³

MAKE GOOD CONTENT VERSUS GREAT CONTENT

The main thing that defines a content's greatness? Uniqueness. If your practice is simply copycatting the practice in the next town over or regurgitating the same dry facts from the same authoritative but ultimately boring sources, you aren't giving viewers any reason to pay attention to you. Even if the content is good, it holds no special appeal.

Good content gets skimmed and forgotten. Great content puts a personal spin on familiar topics and creates a fresh way of looking at information. Great content gets read, reread, liked, commented on, and shared.

Storytelling remains the best way to get people interested in what you have to say.⁴ But everyone has heard the story of the little boy who fell down the well. Be the one who tells the story from the well's perspective—with pictures instead of text and a tie-in to a trending topic. Create content that is not just good but amazing, boost it when appropriate, and track results so you can figure out what works and what doesn't.

FOLLOW THE SIX "BE" RULES

When it comes to social media content, following a few basic rules will help you stay in the cream layer of the churn of content:

1. **Be engaging.** Make sure each piece you share has bait (real, interesting stuff—not clickbait) to reel the viewer in, and that it tastes good enough that your audience will share it.
2. **Be relevant.** Paying attention to trends and hashtags can help here, but don't go overboard. It's better to use one succinct "says-it-all" hashtag than 30 generic ones.
3. **Be active.** When you choose a platform as your practice's primary form of social interaction, use it to its fullest advantage. Pay attention to algorithm changes, explore every type of posting and boosting option, and track your results meticulously.
4. **Be in control.** Direct traffic from social media toward sources you can guarantee will be helpful and relevant. Ensure that the content your audience finds at those sources is just as fascinating as the content that drove them there in the first place.
5. **Be personal.** While professionalism is important, humanizing your profile can go a long way toward making those all-important connections with your audience.
6. **Be passionate.** It's not enough to be good at what you do. You need to love it. Show how invested you are by getting real with your viewers.

Algorithms aren't the answer to everything, but they aren't the ultimate roadblock. Be great (not just good), and social media will pay off. It's designed that way! **DE**

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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 mydentalcmo@gmail.com or (877) 746-4410.