



PRACTICE

SOCIAL MEDIA

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The social connection to your dental practice's digital marketing plan

SOCIAL MEDIA isn't a standalone solution for online dental practice marketing. Social media should be part of a comprehensive digital marketing strategy, and it doesn't have to be expensive. Expecting to watch your practice take off after you begin using social media is unrealistic, but you can make it a big part of your overall marketing program's success.

THE BIGGEST MISTAKE DENTISTS MAKE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

When dental practices first dip a toe into the social media pond, the biggest error they tend to make is using social media like a billboard. Billboards scream "look at me" and are flashed past in an instant. Social media is designed to be interactive, creating lasting connections with current and potential patients and inviting conversation.

SEO AND SMM

Social media is most effective when combined with your practice's other online marketing efforts—specifically SEO. Using Google and Facebook together can increase the effectiveness of each platform, broadening your online reach and making your practice more findable, more approachable, and perceived as more trustworthy.

START AT THE BEGINNING

Optimizing your Facebook and Twitter posts for target keywords in the same way you would optimize your website is step one.¹ Use your practice name, your dentists' names, or geotargeted keywords such as Louisville, Kentucky, pediatric dentist, or dental implants in Columbus, Ohio.

SHARE GREAT CONTENT

The secret to starting conversation on social media is to share great content. Content without a visual component is harder to remember and relate to, so consider posting plenty of rich visuals in the form of images or videos that tell a story. Visual content is the number one engagement driver on social media at this time.²

BUILD LINKS WITH SOCIAL MEDIA TO BOOST SEO

Creating inbound links to your social accounts and posts by sharing great content is one half of the equation. Creating outbound links from social media to your website by sharing authoritative content is the other. Social media is

the best way to create a steady stream of active links that show Google your content is engaging your audience.³

IS YOUR ONLINE AD SPENDING ALL FOR GOOGLE? SHOW FACEBOOK SOME LOVE

Using Google ads and Facebook ads together is a strong, SEO-driven way to put your practice in front of more patients who are looking for a dental home. Do keyword research for both platforms independently, and then compare and combine your lists for maximum effect.⁴

INTEGRATE FACEBOOK ADS WITH CONTENT MARKETING

Use your fantastic original content to boost the power of your Facebook ads, and split test with content created solely for marketing to microtargeted audiences to gauge the effects. You'll find out how patients respond differently than potential patients, and you'll pull in an audience of patients who didn't even know they were looking for a new dental home—at low cost.⁵

USE THE FACEBOOK PIXEL FOR TRACKING

Understanding where your website visitors come from and how they react when they view your practice's site is important. The Facebook Pixel can tell you everything—from what ad or post the user clicked to get to your site, to what path they take through your website and even whether the visit resulted in a specific desired action, such as booking an appointment or asking for a consultation.⁶

MEASURE YOUR SUCCESS

Social media marketing is next to useless without metrics. Define your goals, assign value to each kind of action, and monitor the results using Google Analytics. You'll be able to attribute traffic to specific sources, sort by platform, recognize conversion-producing content, attribute new patient acquisitions to specific referring posts, and more.⁷

Understanding how social media works in tandem with SEO and aligning your efforts can positively impact your results across the board without significantly increasing your total ad spending. Use Facebook, Twitter, your website, and your practice blog together to create and disseminate great content, and you'll reap rewards far greater than those you'd get if you isolated and managed each platform on its own. Social media

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may not be an all-in-one solution, but it's an excellent companion to the rest of your online marketing. **DE**

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