Why digital marketing should be every dentist's priority

By Jared Jost, Vice President of Marketing for Patient Pop

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There are many different marketing opportunities available to dentists. They should be concentrating on the digital opportunities.

If your dental marketing strategy isn’t primarily digital, it’s time for an overhaul. Defined as all marketing initiatives centered on an electronic device or the internet, digital marketing allows dentists to connect with patients on search engines, social media, email, and their dental practice websites.

Google processes more than 3.5 billion searches per day, according to Internet Live Stats. No doubt people searching for a dentist in your local area are included in this number. Relying solely on traditional marketing methods such as direct mail and radio spots is keeping you from reaching current and prospective patients. Read on for reasons why digital marketing is important for your practice.

Benefits of digital marketing for dental practices

Inbound marketing is more effective than outbound marketing

Your dental marketing efforts fall into one of two categories—inbound or outbound marketing. Inbound marketing is the process of engaging potential patients with content produced by your practice, effectively leading them back to your business. Conversely, outbound marketing requires you to seek out potential patients and compete with other practices for their business.

One-third (32%) of marketers believe outbound marketing tactics are overrated, according to HubSpot. Consider this a warning if your strategy is largely outbound. Just like you specialize in dentistry, these people have an expertise in marketing.

Consumers prefer contact via email over direct mail

Email is the most effective marketing channel, according to the 2018 Email Marketing Industry Census. This preference isn’t too surprising, considering Statista expects the number of active email accounts to reach nearly 5.6 billion this year. Effective dental marketing strategies give patients what they want, and
that’s email. Increase the success of your campaign by using your patients’ preferred method of communication.

**Online marketing is less expensive**

Running a successful dental practice means keeping an eye on your bottom line. Therefore, you should know that outbound leads cost 49% more than inbound leads, according to HubSpot. When you think about it, this makes sense. For example, if you run a direct mail campaign, you’ll incur design, printing, and postage costs. On the other hand, email marketing requires much less overhead, making it more cost-effective.

**Success rates are easy to measure**

Traditional dental advertising, such as running an advertisement in your local newspaper, is tricky because there’s no real way to determine how many people actually see it. This makes it difficult to gauge the effectiveness of these methods. Conversely, the success of digital marketing efforts is easy to monitor and very telling. The ability to view statistics such as website traffic lets you know what pages people visited, their referral source, and the device they used to access your site.

**Adjust your campaign with real-time results**

The secret to effective dental marketing is finding tactics that work. Getting this right is a process of trial and error, but digital marketing allows you to view the success of your campaigns while they’re still in progress. Since online-based initiatives such as an email or social media campaign are relatively simple to adjust, you’re able to make any necessary changes immediately. This is much more difficult with traditional marketing methods—a billboard or a television ad—because they’re harder to amend.

**Single out your target market**

Successful marketing for a dental practice is all about identifying your ideal patient base. Digital marketing makes this easy because you can see what pages are most popular on your website, blog, and social media accounts. When you know what content people are reading, and if you’re sharing it on your social sites, you’re able to tailor your marketing messages to meet people’s needs. Crafting marketing content that speaks to your target patient base will keep your waiting room full.

Digital marketing is the most effective way to promote your practice right now. It’s time to upgrade your outdated dental marketing techniques so that you don’t inadvertently send patients to your competition.

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