BOOST YOUR MARKETING MESSAGE WITH THIS 15-POINT WEBSITE CONTENT CHECKLIST
By Tom Trush

Your website content is an essential piece in the persuasion process.

Its effectiveness determines how well your marketing message appeals to your patients' emotional senses that trigger action. The writing on your website also affects whether people can find you and your business using search engines.

I encourage you to print out this checklist and set aside a few minutes to review the questions below. Then mark the items that apply to your current website content.

If you're missing more than two of the following 15 items (and please be honest with yourself), then don't wait to adjust your writing.

Are you ready? Here we go ...

> **Do you have compelling headlines?** Use the text at the top of your content to instantly grab your patients' attention and encourage further reading.

> **Have you stated your patients' problem and explained the need for a solution?** Identify the problem, clarify the need for a fix and then work your product or service into the solution.

> **Are your words easy to understand?** Write your website content as if it's a one-on-one conversation ("talk" directly to a single patient), avoid using unfamiliar or technical jargon and match the language your patients use to describe their situation.

> **Are keywords incorporated into your content?** Include keywords used by your target audience -- and variations of those keywords -- in title tags, headers, anchor text and your body content so search engines know what your website is about.

> **Have you focused on your patients' needs?** Curb your desire for an instant sale or inquiry and instead offer information that helps address your patients' problems.

> **Have you expanded your features to create benefits?** A feature is a fact (e.g., the dental
implant has a specific proprietary design), while a benefit explains an outcome resulting from the feature (e.g., you will spend less time in the chair and healing will be easier).

> **Have you answered WIIFM?** Explain how your solution addresses the subconscious question your patients can't ignore -- What's in it for me?

> **Do you offer several ways to interact with your patients?** Encourage involvement by asking for questions or driving patients to other contact channels (e.g., your Facebook page, Twitter feed, blog, etc.)

> **Do you have a way to collect your patients' e-mail addresses?** Allow patients to qualify themselves and gain knowledge, while you grow a valuable list of people who express a need for your service.

> **Have you linked your content (i.e., anchor text) to other sections of your website?** Direct patients to internal pages with more in-depth information so they gain a greater understanding of their problem and you keep them on your website longer.

> **Are your claims backed up with proof?** Incorporate testimonials, case studies, letters of recommendation, media references, published articles, and before and after photos.

> **Do you have a call to action?** Tell patients on every page the specific step you want them to take next.

> **Is your content "skimmable" with subheads and bullets?** Format your text so it matches the natural reading style of Internet users, which is to skim first and then re-read in more detail.

> **Is your content free from typos and spelling errors?** Let someone else look over your content so it gets a fresh perspective.

> **Have you eliminated unnecessary text?** Cut excessive words so you have tighter sentences and clearer ideas.