



RE: SURPRISING RESULTS FROM RECENT RESEARCH ON PATIENT VIEWS ON COVID-19 EFFECTS ON DENTISTRY **by Gilleard Dental Marketing**

In May of this year, in keeping with our scientific marketing methodologies, we surveyed over 500 people in the United States, with a concentration in the northeastern US where the coronavirus hit the hardest, to find out what concerns the general public might have about returning to the dentist following the COVID-19 crisis. The results were surprising. We found that the majority of public are ready to go back to the dentist and have no concerns in doing so. A smaller percentage just want to be sure that the dental practice uses face masks and other PPE and CDC requirements, which as we know, is a given.

Asking the question, “Prior to the Covid-19 crisis, when were you planning to go to the dentist,” 26.2% said they had no plans at all; 23.3% said within one month; 20.7% within 3 months; 18.8% within 6 months; 9.8% within one year; 1.8% said they had just gone to the dentist and .5% had miscellaneous responses.

Asking the question, “When are you planning to go to the dentist currently,” 29.2% said they have no plans to go; 23% said within 3 months; 20.2% within 6 months; 13.5% said within one month and 11.9% said within one year.

All told, that equates to 56.7% of the public surveyed saying they currently plan to go to the dentist within one to 6 months.

Asking the question, “Is there something you would like a dental practice to do that would make you feel more comfortable going to it,” 65% answered “no”; 23.8% said PPE, wear masks, sanitize/clean office and follow CDC guidelines; 11.6% had miscellaneous answers; 9.9% said comfort and sedation; 6.4% had no answer; 5.9% said cost, handle pricing, lower prices, take my insurance; .3% said they just need coronavirus to be over and their dentist reopened.

This unquestionably shows that 65% of the people surveyed said there is nothing they need a dental practice to do that would make them more comfortable about going to one with another 23.8% saying that they just want a dentist to wear a mask, follow PPE and CDC guidelines, clean and sanitize the office to make them comfortable with going.

With dental offices slowly reopening, we continued our research with our dental clients who have reopened their practices and restarted their marketing, both internal and external. With a survey of more than 50 dental offices, we found that 100% were getting favorable results from patients who were ready and willing to come back for their appointments with only a small percentage of patients wanting to hold for another month or so and these were majorly elderly or those in compromised health positions.

In terms of the effects of dental marketing at this time, both internet marketing and direct mail are being found to hit highest ever levels in terms of response. The main consensus behind this is that about two thirds of the dental field has not reimplemented earlier marketing strategies both on the internet and in print, thus giving a huge advantage to those dental practices who are currently marketing. These practices are capturing a larger percentage of the online searches being done, giving them more response for their marketing dollars spent on Google Ads and SEO services. At the same time, magazine clients have also reported an upsurge in response since reopening their practices. Several have even doubled up their distribution amounts due to the post-COVID-19 response.

Specific examples include:

Dr. Lee Sheldon in Melbourne, Florida reported that after sending out an email to existing patients and potential new patients, announcing they were re-opened, they literally scheduled 30 new patients the first week.

Dr. Ben Johnson in Waco, Texas reported getting 100 new patients in the first month, after reopening his practice in April and getting his magazine back into distribution.

Dr. Mandy Grimshaw at Kuhn Dental Associates in Aberdeen, North Carolina reported that the response to their magazine for high-production cases has been amazing and double the quantity of their distribution to capture more new patients.

Atlanta Dental Center in Atlanta, Georgia reported getting 50 new conversions in just a few weeks of restarting their internet marketing campaign. This was the best response they have ever gotten.

Dr. Brent Newby in Kansas City, Kansas reported that their dental practice has seen a paradigm shift since Covid-19. They found that their magazine ended up in the hands of potential patients, who were staying home and a captive audience, and that this has been key to their post Covid-19 phenomenal growth.

Dental Marketing Analysis:

Based on the responses seen with the reopening of dental practices, we strongly recommend that dental offices do not put their marketing on hold. Rather, results show that public demand for getting dental needs handled is as high as prior to COVID-19 and that there are no stops in getting patients to come in for their services.

At the same time, marketing dollars spent right now are bringing in an even greater return with a smaller percentage of dentists relaunching their earlier marketing campaigns. This then benefits those who are marketing as there is less competition hitting the public currently, giving an advantage to those who are marketing. This holds true for both internet marketing and direct mail.

It is vital to not lose sight of longer-term goals or get stuck in the concerns and fears that have been generated by the media during this time. The above survey data shows where the general public currently stand in relation to going to the dentist and this portends an increase in future business once they find out, through marketing efforts, that you are there and available to service their needs.

Information taken from online surveys. For more information contact Gilleard Dental Marketing at 855-486-2410 or info@gilleardmarketing.com.
