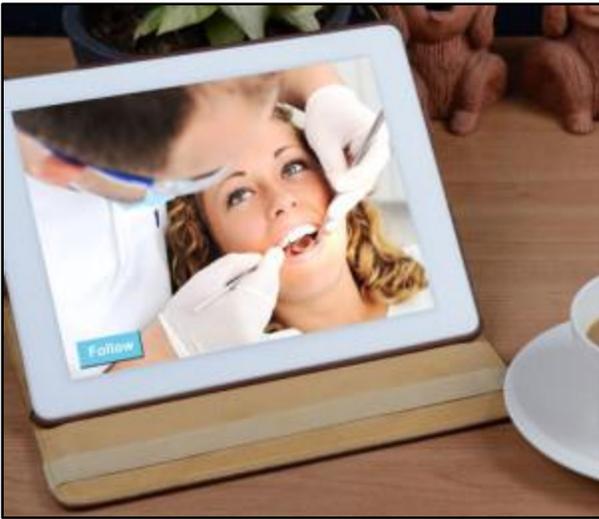


# Don't Let Social be a Dilemma

Written by *medmonthly* on January 30, 2015 in *Features*

## Make it a Smart Dental Marketing Choice

The new age digital landscape is dispersed, vibrant, and more diverse than before. If anything, this has made the market place more competitive and fragmented for dental practices. The challenge thus that most dental practices today face is to reach out and connect with a wider, yet scattered audience that is both demanding and entitled. Nothing short of impressive marketing efforts will work in such an environment.



Marketing today is all about individualization. You are no longer connecting with a section or group of your target audience. It is safe to say that marketing strategies that celebrate the “individual” stand to win more traction! And this is where social comes in. Social media in a lot of ways helped demarcate traditional marketing from the new age digital marketing. In fact, in 2014 we saw social emerge as an absolutely elemental aspect of digital marketing as an increased number of dental practices decided to walk the social path.

## Aligning with the Social Diversity

- In 2014, 92% of internet users in the age group of 16-64 had an account on at least one social network.
- On an average, online adults today have accounts on at least 5.07 social networks.
- This figure is a little higher at 5.9 among those in the age group of 16-24.

Potential patients have strong expectations from your dental practice brand. Target audiences want to interact with your brand on a platform of their choice at a time that is most convenient to them. One of the best ways of meeting those expectations is by being in a place that provides you and your target audience with an active and effective means of both connecting and engaging with each other.

In other words – get your dental practice brand out there! Build a brand presence on several social media channels and connect with potential patients from a variety of different sections.

## Social Highlights Human Values

Social offers dental practices with a sure way of showcasing your brand’s dedication to accountability, transparency, and a commitment to customer service. Keep in mind that even if a section of your potential target audience might not actively comment or add likes and might actually just maintain “radio silence,” they’re still watching.

The one thing that brands often tend to ignore is that that today's digital audience is not only intelligent, they are also highly perceptive. They understand that social media often leaves brands susceptible and vulnerable to criticism. However, maintaining a social presence in spite of this, can win you respect and much required attention. Ask your readers for feedback, respond to their queries and concerns in a timely manner and they will respect you for it.

## Meeting the Demands of your Social Audience



So you know your target audience is active in the social realm and they expect your practice brand to be active over possibly multiple social channels. The obvious question then to ask yourself is – what do they want from your dental practice brand?

Any item which has the potential to enrich the life of a reader is a winner on social networks. Your potential patients want things that are most relevant to them and when you deliver on this expectation, you can expect to be rewarded with brand advocates and tangible consumer goodwill. Remember your content needs to be entertainment rich and deliver obvious relevant value that is specific to the needs of your potential audience. Don't make social about direct selling; any marketing that will come about will and should be delivered by your brand advocates. At best, social should only be used to lightly touch upon your practice products and services.

Social highlights an environment that is highly personal and conversational and the last thing your audience wants to hear are sales pitches.

## Social as an Active Communication Platform

In the [2014 State of Multichannel Customer Service Survey](#) report 1,000 consumers were asked if they had at any point asked a customer service question over social media.

- 35% reported that they had.
- 51% of these respondents also said that receiving a response from the brand provided an improved view of the brand.

Consumer reliance on social media is also highlighted in the HubSpot report [The Social Lifecycle: Consumer Insights to Improve Your Business](#), where 569 customers were questioned about social media presence for brands. According to the report,

- 50% respondents said they had complimented a brand in the past 5 months.
- 35% respondents had complained about a brand.
- 30% had actively requested support.

In fact, an increasing number of senior citizens (above the age of 60), today use social media as a way to communicate and connect with brands. They are using social to get guidance or to express their satisfaction and gratitude. What this indicates for dental practices is a clear opportunity to connect with a lucrative target audience that is keen on communicating over social networks.

## Conclusion

Smart social marketing simply translates into the following – use the comments, likes, criticism, and feedback earned over social to improve and better your dental practice brand image. Establish a responsive patient service channel, communicate in a timely manner and you can easily and quickly build credibility for your practice. And credibility is the cornerstone of a robust digital presence for dental practices in the ever vibrant world of social.

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