



# 15 Shifts Impacting Online Dental Marketing in 2018

March 12, 2018

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The year 2018 has brought with it some key shifts in online marketing. New trends are surfacing in the market, and dental practices that fail to pay attention to these trends may lose out. Consumers today demand a more comprehensive experience of a product or service before they make a buying decision. There is a pressing need to be more visible and improve your promotional strategies as rapid development of digital technologies is creating new marketing possibilities.

## 1. Social media integrated with augmented reality

Mobile devices have increasingly become more robust and social apps are integrated with social media more cohesively. This will spur businesses to use augmented reality (AR) to engage with customers more effectively. For instance, businesses can use a consumer's location to promote sponsored AR content that can be accessed at a specific place and time. Pokémon Go was the leader in promoting this integration, and Facebook and Instagram are likely to follow this lead soon to integrate this technology into their platforms.

## 2. Disintegration of the influencer market

Companies are spending millions of dollars on influencer marketing at present. However, they are either not quantifying or not recognizing the outcomes they could get from other types of spending on marketing activities. The market will change as businesses identify a few specific influencers who are responsible for driving outcomes. Alternatively, businesses could shift to organic promotion activities and move away from expensive, middle-tier influencers that impact awareness, but generate little or no ROI.

## 3. In-depth understanding of the consumer

Data related to the consumer's purchase journey is a robust marketing tool. But how marketers can use this data to drive successful digital marketing activities is key in 2018. Ensure that you use this data to understand where the consumer will be at every step of their buying process, focus on what attracts them, and develop marketing plans to influence them at strategic points in their journey.

#### **4. Targeted advertisement with specific goals**

Consumers in the digital era have a limited attention span and are bombarded with online ads every day. Ads are likely to become more targeted with particular goals and strategies for both desktop and mobile encounters. Further, it is possible that mobile ad platforms will display significant growth in 2018, which include Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, etc.

#### **5. Professional Live Video**

While video continues to be a major trend in 2018, it won't be just any video for much longer. The day of live, professional video is here. Social media platforms are increasingly developing live video and adding new features every month. According to some digital marketing experts, live video is an effective method to target audiences. Unprofessional, amateur and shaky videos will not be received well by consumers in the near future.

#### **6. User-friendly interfaces**

Amazon's Alexa, Microsoft's Cortana, Google's Assistant, chatbots and other conversational interfaces will continue to be a part of customers' everyday lives and regimens. The original user interface is conversation. It is natural and will provide for brands to interact with customers who require information, want to transact, or just need entertainment.

#### **7. Video marketing**

Video is increasingly becoming the most preferred technology for online content for business today. If you use videos for your dental marketing effectively, it can make a huge difference to your business. Consumer attention spans are getting shorter leading marketers to depend more on creating engaging video content to enhance consumer engagement, improve search engine rankings, and increase website visits.

#### **8. Personalization at all levels in the sales funnel**

Mass promotional emails and advertisements are fast becoming redundant like fax machines. It is now crucial to personalize each interaction and become super targeted. Personalized landing pages must be linked to every ad campaign. Gaining the customer's attention is extremely important, and creating personalized relationships with prospects has become crucial for online marketing in 2018.

#### **9. Contextual targeting plans**

In the purview of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), it will be more complex for digital marketers to gather data on consumer behavior using cookies. Strategies meant to target audiences will be replaced by contextual targeting strategies. It will be vital for online marketers to comprehend the context of each page to ensure proper consumer targeting and brand safety.

## **10. Cost per experiment-a key metric**

Savvy online marketers will continue to move to a real ROI on their efforts by understanding all older parameters bundled up in a cost per experiment metric. These previous metrics, such as Cost per impressions (CPM), Cost per clicks (CPC), Cost per leads (CPL), and Cost per pixels (CPP) were being tracked by advanced digital marketers. An influx of channels and tech tools to choose from has led marketers to conduct these evaluations as a combined experiment and measure results more comprehensively.

## **11. Native marketing**

Including native advertising in their digital marketing strategy can be advantageous to companies wanting to improve brand relevance, consumer engagement, and market reach. Reaching out to audiences using native (editorial) language and customized tools improves the chances for viral sharing and can create a more robust relationship with audiences.

## **12. Offline experiences integrated with digital**

Digital will not be an isolated independent discipline in 2018. It will be more integrated with real-life experiences this year, and digital will be a seamless part of reality. We already witnessed this in sporting and arena events in which the digital experience starts before the event and carries on throughout the event. As per expectation, marketers will experiment with this facet in 2018 and beyond.

## **13. Voice marketing**

According to Google, 20 percent of its mobile inquiries are voice searches. This number is expected to rise with customers increasingly using Siri and Alexa. Marketers must create content to cater to these voice queries with long-tail keywords.

## **14. Predictive algorithms**

Interfaces for application programming are emerging for natural processing of language, machine-learning algorithms, and artificial intelligence. This is providing businesses of all sizes to predict their marketing expenses to ensure ideal budget spends. This is a significant development due to the fact that marketers are frequently one-sided in their strategies.

## **15. Various types of content marketing**

Every day new formats for digital marketing emerge along with increasing popularity of video, which reduces the efficacy of merely creating blog posts and listicles. Voice search capability can

change many content-based strategies in favor of targeted snippets or interactive tutorials which can speak to individuals as they perform repetitive or complex tasks. The content will be increasingly interactive and be aligned to other user interface attributes.

In 2018, it may be time to discard old strategies for new ones that would bring better results for your dental practice. Practices that highlight their personal journeys and offer exhilarating experiences will lead the pack. You must look out for the newest aspects of digital marketing platforms and develop personalized and interactive campaigns for your potential patients.

In the coming times, it is going to be vital to understand your target audience through machine learning and predictive analytics. The size of your dental practice does not matter, but it is important to understand how the world is moving so that you can always remain competitive and ahead of the game.

### **About the Author**

Naren Arulrajah is President and CEO of Ekwa Marketing, a complete internet marketing company that focuses on SEO, social media, marketing education, and the online reputations of dentists.

With a team of 180+ full time marketers, [www.ekwa.com](http://www.ekwa.com) helps dentists who know where they want to go, get there by dominating their market and growing their business significantly year after year. If you have questions about marketing your practice online, call 855-598-3320 to speak one-on-one with Naren.