



# 6 Digital Marketing Strategies to Win More Patients for Your Dental Practice

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Winning new patients and maintaining the loyalty of the existing ones can be challenging, but it should be the ultimate goal for any competent dental practice. It involves committed efforts, but the results are well worth it.

Maintaining your rapport with existing patients is important. However, it is also essential to grow your practice and address the needs of new patients.

Here are six effective digital strategies to enhance your marketability to your existing patients to ensure that they refer you to friends and family enabling you to grow your dental practice.

## **Make Effective Use of Social Media and Images**

Social media can offer you an avenue to market your practice. When patients “follow,” “like,” or “share” your content through social media platforms, their whole social media network can view it.

This can drive significant user traffic to your page and can enable you to generate leads without any advertising spend. The key here is to provide unique and new content that can engage your followers and inspire them to share it.

It is advisable to post short articles on dental advances, wellness tips, preventive care, general health information, news on local dental events or any important information on the services that you offer.

For social media promotion, you can make use of hashtags such as #PatientExperience or #DentalCareForAll to engage your target audiences on Twitter.

Any sensitive patient-specific information should not be put on social media platforms. Also, do not post any stock images or generic pictures of your website and social media profiles.

Rather, choose real-life photos of your practice, team, procedures, and the facilities that your practice provides patients. Customize your practice website to reflect your office and the vibe at your practice.

### **Gain Patient Testimonials and Reviews**

A person's dental health is a serious matter to them and their family and friends.

Tech-savvy people will scour the internet and social media platforms for reviews of previous patients and their experiences to ensure that they are visiting the right dental professional.

Patient reviews are an excellent way to attract new patients and grow your practice. Therefore, it is a good idea to encourage existing patients to share their experiences on an online review forum.

Some review forums that provide an avenue for patients to post their experiences online are:

- ZocDoc
- Google reviews
- Angie's List
- Yelp
- Healthgrades

You can also offer incentives for reviews, feedback, and referrals by holding contests with prizes, discounts, giveaways, and free oral care products and services.

You can take the patient's permission to share their reviews digitally.

Small gestures can make your patients feel happy. This strengthens your relationship with them and encourages positive word-of-mouth referrals and reviews on online forums for your practice. This could significantly increase the revenues for your practice.

Keeping an eye on your online reputation is essential. Unfortunately, dissatisfied patients are usually most vocal when posting reviews online. This can cause a huge misrepresentation of your practice.

It is vital to respond fast to positive as well as negative reviews. Through addressing patient's complaints or concerns rapidly, you come across as a proactive and dedicated practitioner to potential patients.

It showcases to prospective patients that you care and engages them efficiently. Positive reviews can directly lead to an increase in potential patients for your practice.

Now, you are aware of the demand for reviews and referrals, ensure that you have the supply!

### **Launch Your Own Blog and Update it Regularly**

Around 72 percent of patients review health-related information and medications online prior to or even after a consultation with a doctor. In this case, a relevant blog post may be what they are looking for.

Dental practitioners should provide patients with information on various issues such as views on particular treatments, case studies of existing patients, announce local events, updates about your practice and general wellness tips.

Disseminating information on health through the patient website or mobile health app is an excellent method to educate patients. Do not forget to provide a link to your site. Alternatively, you can create a blog on your website itself.

Updating existing content and creating fresh posts routinely will help boost your SEO initiatives. This will enable patients to locate you more conveniently on search engines.

You can use your social media profiles to promote your blog and interact with prospective and existing patients.

A majority of people do not think about their dentist unless they have a toothache. This approach may not be appropriate.

Your patients should think about their oral health regularly. Not only when they have a problem and need to visit your practice.

A significant way to boost your practice and improve patient satisfaction is to talk to your patients about relevant oral health issues and ensure that they understand why these topics are so vital.

Patients who care more about their oral health will be more satisfied and healthier. This will make them more likely to refer you to friends and family.

When a patient gets ready to leave your office, provide them with free informational material on their condition and encourage them to read these materials.

### **Get Listed in Directories and Use Email Marketing**

More than 70 percent of individuals searching for medical or dental practitioners find them from local online listings on directories such as Yelp, White Pages, Google +, etc. Enlisting your practice on a local online directory is an excellent method to drive targeted traffic to your site.

Email marketing is another efficient way to maintain a steady stream of patients. This promotional method can be used for:

- Reminders
- Promotional offers
- Sending newsletters
- General information about your practice to current patients

### **Achieve Media Exposure and Engage with Community**

The right media exposure can attract several new patients to your practice and enhance the branding and expertise of your office.

Creating media exposure needs time, effort, follow up, and a comprehensive understanding of how media operates.

Media exposure can lead to surprising outcomes when done properly.

A simple way to acquire new patients is by giving back to the community. Ensure that you engage in charitable initiatives and community events.

Offer oral healthcare services or supplies as a volunteer. It can assist in existing patient retention and projecting a positive image of your practice.

Initiate a seminar to provide information and explain to your community about various treatments or even healthy lifestyle choices. Be sure to accept invitations to speak on current dental health challenges.

Organize workshops to educate children on oral health and hygiene. Parents will be appreciative of this initiative and reach out to you when in need of a dentist.

The main idea of connecting with your community is to get the attention of people who are presently not aware of your practice and the services that you offer. It is an excellent chance to support, educate, and extend the list of prospective patients in the local community.

### **Focus on Both Current and Past Patients**

Create a system to monitor each patient appointment. The system should be able to flag patients that you haven't seen for a while and send them reminders.

Try out a "We Miss You" email campaign to engage such patients again. You may be able to successfully convince them to revisit your office with a few small, well-timed gestures.

Many practices spend significant resources in attracting new patients, but they get complacent about their existing patients. You must follow-up with your current patients after consultations. The follow-up care is an integral component of a comprehensive treatment plan. It can make sure that your patients are on the correct path to recovery.

People tend to forget things, and the same applies to dentist's appointments as well. Emails have proven to be quite useful in reminding patients about impending appointments. You can schedule emails for follow-ups after every consultation to remind patients about their appointments.

Lastly, genuine empathy and a smile can touch anyone. Real concern and love for your patients as well as the intention to improve their well-being is more important than creativity. Your practice will attract more patients when you establish strong relationships with existing patients.

You can employ any of these methods to attract new patients and enhance the patient experience. You may not be able to achieve immediate results. Therefore, experimentation is important.

### **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.