



WEBSITE TRAFFIC: WHEN BIG NUMBERS EQUAL BIG DISAPPOINTMENT



If you have lots of visitors but a low conversion rate, you've got a problem.

BY NAREN ARULRAJAH

Lots of website visitors must mean that your digital marketing is successful, right? Not necessarily. While it might feel good to see big numbers in your analytics report, this isn't your goal. You want people calling your office and scheduling appointments, and more eyes on your website does not always equal more patients in your office.

More people visiting your website might mean you are getting more leads, but are these leads converting to patients? This is known as your conversion rate, and it's a very important metric when evaluating your digital marketing campaign.

Website forms, custom call tracking numbers, chatbot records, and other data can be used to measure how many visitors contact you.

Things aren't always as they appear. For example, imagine you have 1,000 visitors with a 10 percent conversion rate. You revise your strategy to increase traffic. The next reporting period you have 10,000 visitors, with five percent conversion rate. That is a 10-fold increase in traffic, which appears to be a great success. Yet, only half as many people contacted you. That means the lower volume of traffic ultimately generated more leads.

QUALITY VERSUS QUANTITY

More website visitors and fewer leads? It seems counterintuitive, but it can happen easily if you are attracting the wrong type of traffic. Some people might click on your site, but they will never become patients. Here are the top three reasons for that:

1. **They are not local.** The internet is global, but your patient base is local. You might have tens of thousands of digital visitors from other cities, states, or even countries. How many of them are likely to schedule appointments at your practice? The answer is probably zero.

2. **They are not looking for the services you offer.** There is a common myth that popular search terms make good keywords. Don't fall for it. Lots of people may search for diet pills. Carefully crafted content might draw them to your website. Unless you sell diet pills, they will probably read the article and leave again.
3. **They aren't a good fit for your practice.** Maybe you are a dermatologist specializing in high-end anti-aging treatment. College students plagued by acne might be looking for a dermatologist, but they can't necessarily afford what you offer.

TARGETED MARKETING - ATTRACTING THE RIGHT TRAFFIC

The key to successful marketing is reaching not only a lot of people, but the right ones. Here are a few of the best ways to achieve that:

Local SEO (search engine optimization). Google is very good at differentiating between types of searches. When a person is looking for information, it

can come from anywhere in the world. However, people looking for a brick and mortar business want something nearby. These are called local searches, and they are handled differently. You want your website optimized for city names, zip codes, and "near me" search terms. Furthermore, you need listings in business directories, local citations (links or mentions) and consistency in the way your contact information appears across different channels. These and similar techniques help Google recognize your website as valid and local.

Relevant content. When choosing topics and keywords for website content, focus on what applies to your practice and your patients. Consider your target demographic (i.e., age, income level, neighborhood) and what is most likely to appeal to those people. Think about what questions new patients often ask, and post content that provides answers. Decide which procedures you want to do more often, and then offer in-depth information about those. Essentially, look at

your topic and ask yourself two questions: Is a person who seeks out this information likely to visit my practice? Is the type of person who will read this someone I want as a patient?

Targeted advertisements. If you invest in ads on social media, PPC (pay-per-click), or other purchased advertisements, targeting options are likely built in. Although every platform is different, most offer some form of geo-targeting, which only serves up your content to people in a specified location. Typically, you can further refine your audience according to demographic information, hobbies, interests, and other criteria. ■

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- A leader in medical marketing for over a decade. Ekwa provides comprehensive marketing solutions for busy doctors, with a team of more than 180 full time professionals, providing web design, hosting, content creation, social media, reputation management, SEO, and more.
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