

Attracting New Patients to Your Dental Practice

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Whether you just launched a new dental practice or are looking to grow your existing practice, you will need to spend time on attracting new patients to survive. You already know that it is important to have high-quality services at an attractive price, but a comprehensive marketing strategy is just as crucial to the longevity of any dental practice.

In today's competitive market, you will need to focus on some proven methods for attracting new patients... and keeping them. In this article, let's take a look at some marketing strategies along with actionable items to set your practice apart from the rest.

Make a lasting first impression with an engaging web presence

Your website is likely the first place a potential patient will interact with your dental practice. Are you putting your best foot forward? Your website should be engaging and interactive so that you can convert visitors into new patients. What can you do to make your website better? The first thing you should consider is having your website designed professionally. Professional web developers understand how to use SEO (Search Engine Optimization) and design to drive traffic.

Here are some aspects of a winning dental website:

- **SEO** – Search Engine Optimization is the best way to ensure that you are ranking high in search results. SEO has come a long way from just throwing a bunch of keywords on a page. If you do not know anything about SEO, consider hiring a professional as they will understand the nuances that can make you rank higher, increase website visitors, and convert them into new patient appointments.
- **Positive Reviews** – If you search for your dental practice on Google, do you have many 5-star reviews? Do you have any reviews at all? If a new patient is given the choice between a dentist with no reviews and one with dozens, they will choose the dentist with reviews almost every time. Make sure you are always encouraging your patients to write a review

for your practice on Google, Facebook, and Yelp. You can solicit positive reviews in a few different ways – asking patients at the end of their visit, sending them an email reminder after their appointment, or even requesting them through a monthly newsletter. It is also important to take the time to respond to any reviews – positive or negative. Make sure to handle all negative reviews quickly to explain things from the business point of view.

- **Sleek Design** – Think of your website as your best salesperson. You would want them to look professional when they are meeting with potential patients. The same goes for your website. Having a sleek, easy to navigate website design will make a big difference as a visitor looks around for the first time.
- **Pictures** – Visitors to your website want to know what the office looks like even before stepping through the door. Make sure your website includes pictures of the front office and inside as well as staff pictures.
- **Easily Accessible Contact Information** – When trying to attract new patients through your website, you want to make it as easy as possible for them to finish their experience by setting an appointment. Make sure that your contact information is displayed prominently and that you provide visitors with multiple ways to reach you to make that appointment.

Invite your community in by hosting or sponsoring fun events

Another way to attract new patients is by having a positive community image. One way you can do this is by hosting fun events at your office such as Easter Egg Hunts, Halloween parties, or barbecues. Given the current situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to take precautions such as maintaining social distancing, wearing a facemask, etc. during such gatherings. You can also sponsor charity events or other community activities so that you are building name and brand recognition in your local community. Make sure to publish these activities on all your social media platforms and post pictures during or after the events.

Consider a patient referral program

Once your dental practice is established, most of your new patients will come from existing patient referrals. Even if you are just starting, patient referrals can serve as an important voice to attract new patients. This is because individuals are far more likely to convert to a new patient if they have been given a recommendation by a trusted friend or family member. The problem is existing patients do not always consider the fact that you are actively trying to grow your dental business. So how do you motivate them to tell their friends and family about your practice? A patient referral program.

Patient referral programs can be a great motivator for your current patients to spread the word to new patients. Consider rewards such as a free product or a discounted service whenever they refer someone.

To take it a step further, you can even develop a program to incentivize your employees to recommend your practice.

Conclusion

Even the best dental practice will lose up to 17% of their patients each year due to natural attrition so it is important to always focus on new patient generation. While some of the marketing ideas mentioned above can be implemented on your own, others may require hiring professionals. In either case, the biggest takeaway is that attracting new patients will require effort on your part, but once you lay out a plan and put it into action, you should see positive results in new patient growth.

About the Author:



Naren Arulrajah, President and CEO of Ekwa Marketing, has been a leader in medical marketing for over a decade. Ekwa provides comprehensive marketing solutions for busy dentists, with a team of more than 180 full time professionals, providing web design, hosting, content creation, social media, reputation management, SEO, and more. If you're looking for ways to boost your marketing results, call 855-598-3320 for a free strategy session with Naren. You may also text at 313-777-8494 to schedule a session at your convenience.

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