

Video Marketing for Your Dental Practice

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by Naren Arulrajah, Ekwa Marketing

A nice website with good articles is a great start to marketing your dental practice. However, in today's multi-media, multi-platform world, that alone is not enough. You need a variety of content types, with video being one of the most important.

Video is one of the most popular and fastest growing marketing mediums. In fact, 87 percent of marketers report a positive ROI (return on investment) from videos, a number that has grown from just 33 percent a few years ago. Below are some tips and basic best practices to help you harness the power of video to grow your dental practice.

How Google understands videos

As you may know, Google strives to provide searchers with the most relevant content. Over the years, it has become quite sophisticated, and very good at analyzing content. In many aspects, that makes it easy to create optimized text. If an article is informative, high quality, and very relevant to the search term, then it has a good chance of ranking well.

Unfortunately, optimization becomes a bit more difficult when the content is in video format. Google's priorities – quality and relevancy – remain the same. However, even with sophisticated AI technology, the analysis of video is not as reliable as that of text. Therefore, it uses several signals to help understand what the video is about. These include:

- Video captions and descriptions
- Title of the page where the video appears
- Video file title
- Text on the page, especially that located near the video
- Structured data
- Referral links

Recommended video SEO best practices

A great deal of SEO (search engine optimization) advice and information is nothing more than an educated guess from experienced marketers. Through trial and error, we learn what works well. While these techniques may be effective, they certainly are not guaranteed. In fact, there is often some amount of disagreement among experts in the field. That is what makes SEO advice that comes directly from Google invaluable. In a recent episode of Lightning Talks, they did just that – covering five recommended best practices for helping videos rank in Google Search and Discovery.

Make the video available – Google search results will not show a video that is only accessible through an app. Additionally, if visitors to your website must take complex actions before seeing the video, Google might not find it at all. To make your video discoverable, it should be located on a public webpage, which is not blocked by noindex or robots.txt metadata.

Use structured data – This is a standardized markup format that provides specific information to Google and other search engines. You can use structured data to identify basic information such as the video title, description, and length. You can also use it to enable the “live” badge and other special features.

Provide good thumbnails – Every video should have a high-quality thumbnail, which is available to Google. If this is not available or is blocked, then your video might not appear in search results.

Implement a video sitemap – This helps Google find all of the video content on your website. A video sitemap can be created simply by adding appropriate metadata to your existing sitemap, either manually or by using a third-party generator.

Allow Google to fetch video data – Although Google relies heavily on other signals to understand the topic of your video, it also uses machine learning technology to analyze the images and audio. Additionally, giving it access to the file contents is necessary for features such as video previews. Make sure that not only the webpage, but also the actual video file, is accessible and that it is not blocked by noindex or robots.txt metadata. Additionally, make sure the server that hosts your video has enough available bandwidth to allow crawling.

Beyond search – promoting your videos on social media.

Google search is not the only place people look for videos. In fact, this has long been a favored content type on social media. Whether you seek to educate your audiences, promote your services, or even engage with other dental professionals, social networks are the place to be.

One of the best platforms to begin with is Facebook. As the leading social media network, it attracts audiences of all demographics, and they spend more than half their time on the network watching videos. If your dental practice does not have a Facebook page, you should seriously consider establishing one. If you already have a page, be sure to share your best videos there. You can also use Facebook's popular live video feature to share events, host question and answer sessions, and more. In addition to Facebook, you can share videos on Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and virtually any other social network that you already use.

Here are a few tips for successful social marketing with videos:

Match the content with the audience – Share videos that are targeted to patients on general networks, such as Facebook or Instagram. If you are aiming to network with other professionals, share on LinkedIn.

Make it engaging – A large percentage of social media users want to be entertained. Avoid the dull, dry, mundane, and overly clinical content. Opt for interesting topics such as educational material that people will find useful, novel “fun facts,” humor, interesting “behind the scenes” footage from your office. Encourage engagement by asking questions of your viewers and requesting feedback.

Make it sharable – Watch your video, and ask yourself one simple question: When someone sees this, will he or she want to show it to others? If so, it is probably a good fit for social.

Use YouTube – Videos perform well on most platforms. However, YouTube has the distinction of being a popular social network dedicated to video content. In addition to attracting an audience on YouTube, you can share videos from here to other social networks, and even embed them in your website.

Don't just tell people, show them. Words alone do not have the impact of images. However, still images lack the capacity to tell a story. Video is unique in its ability to draw in the audience, hold attention, and make a lasting impression. Simply stated, it is one of the most valuable tools in modern digital marketing. Make good use of it.

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.