

10-Questions to Ask BEFORE You Sign a Marketing Contract

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Have you ever regretted signing a contract? If so, you probably found yourself thinking, “if only I had known about *that* in advance.” You certainly do not want to experience contract regret when hiring a third-party individual or firm to market your dental practice. Here are some of the most relevant questions to ask before you commit.

1. What is the duration of the contract?

It takes time for a new website to rise in Google’s rankings and any marketing campaign to gain momentum. To give your new team a chance to prove what they can do, you should expect to stick with them for at least a year. However, if you aren’t seeing results in that length of time, you will probably want to move on, so you don’t want to be stuck in a multi-year agreement.

2. Who owns your website?

Again, you want to prepare for the possibility that you will not stay with this new company. You need to know who retains rights to your website, content, and domain name if you leave.

3. What is included in the quoted monthly website fee?

If you are ready to sign a contract, you have probably been quoted a monthly fee, which virtually always includes website maintenance and hosting. You need to know what else it covers. For example, you will want to update your site as your practice evolves, and you will probably want to redesign it occasionally.

4. What additional services do they offer?

Think beyond a website. You also need social media management, email marketing, NAP (name, address, and phone number) consistency monitoring, and more. Find out if these services are included in your contract, or available for additional fees, or not available at all.

5. How often will your website be updated to new Google standards?

There are minor updates to Google’s algorithm daily, and major updates typically happen once or twice a year. That means SEO best practices can change just as quickly. Find out how fast your marketing team will respond to such changes.

6. What are the client’s (your) responsibilities?

It is wise to be involved to an extent. You will want to ensure that your practice is well-represented and that the marketing plan supports your business goals. However, some companies expect far more of their clients. For example, you may be required to write your articles, post on social media, or

frequently attend scheduled marketing meetings. Know what you are committing to!

7. Do they provide unique content?

You may have been told that the “duplicate content penalty” is a myth. *Technically*, that is true. Google does not directly penalize duplicate content unless it is considered deceptive. However, they do not want to promote it either. For effective SEO, you want all original, unique content.

8. Do they have experience in dental marketing?

Every industry is unique. As physical businesses, dental offices need local SEO. As part of the healthcare sector, dentists fall within the YMYL classification and must meet Google’s stringing standards for expertise, authority, and trustworthiness. Additionally, content creators need to understand dental procedures. These are just a few examples of why someone with marketing experience in an industry such as e-commerce is unlikely to be a good fit for your dental practice.

9. Do they provide secure email hosting?

Patient communications are confidential, and depending on your location, that confidentiality may be protected by law. Verify the security of email services, chatbots, online forms, and any other types of communication that your marketing company provides.

10. What analytics and reports do they provide?

You have a right to know how well your marketing campaigns are performing. Ask how often they will send your reports and what information will be included. Ideally, the reports should be detailed enough to be thorough but simple enough to be easily understandable.

Conclusion

You know that effective marketing requires a unique skill set outside the realm of the typical dental office staff. It also takes far more time than your team has available. Hiring a well-established marketing company seems like the perfect answer – and can be, providing you choose carefully. In order to avoid costly mistakes, do your research before signing on the dotted line.

About the Author:



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