

Is your social in a state of flux?

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Making sense of the numbers and gleaning perspective

Previously, we shared insights on how to make sense of fluctuations in your website's traffic and ways to put such data in perspective. With so many potential connections and relationships between your website and social platform presence, it is also essential to understand and exercise some caution when identifying, assessing, and potentially pivoting in light of fluctuations in YouTube, Facebook, and other channels' traffic.

Your communications and [marketing strategy](#) is a sum of its parts. When one part lags, it can bring down the whole. Likewise, the "whole" can follow suit when one component gets a lift. A rising tide can lift all boats.

Good data to know

The latest figures on Canadians' social media presence and evolving trends suggest these channels have never been more popular. In 2023, nearly 86% of the population was on at least one social platform. Facebook's reach remains strong; its ad penetration is equivalent to more than half of the population (53.5%). YouTube reportedly has a staggering following,

with an ad reach equal to nearly 86% of the population – the same percentage reportedly present on social as a whole.

Instagram, TikTok, and X (formerly Twitter) each had an ad reach of around 41%, 34%, and 27% of the population, respectively.

Generally, Canada boasts some of the highest overall Internet penetration rates in the world, with a reported 93.8% and 98.5% of the population using the Internet and mobile devices, respectively. Any percentages above 95% suggest “universal usage.”

Yes, but what does this mean for your practice’s social strategy?

There are several takeaways from the latest social, Internet, and connectivity statistics:

- **Diversify your social presence.** If you are not present on one of these top platforms, an enrichment of your social strategy and the roll-out of more “buckets” for potential visitors to choose from may be in order. Do not abandon existing channels with not-so-favourable fluctuations (quite the contrary – see next point). Just know you could be missing out on other platforms that better align with current or evolving demos in the market and patient base. Provide ample avenues within your broader social and communications strategy to reach the quality patient or potential partner that could prove fruitful to your practice.
- **Diversify content.** Just because the nature of the content on social media is different than the content that may be added to your website does not mean it deserves anything less than your utmost care and attention. Inventory the type and nature of the posts and any accompanying media on these platforms. Ensure that their quality complements, supports, and amplifies your website’s articles, videos, photos, and other types of content.
- **Gauge for the visitor experience.** You mind your offline presence. So, do the same with the online experience. Content should be intuitive, meaningful, memorable, and provide value. With the push of a button, readers should be transported “virtually” to your office. Think of them as “sitting in” on procedures. They should be presented with videos, photos, and other examples of your best work. Ensure that you are reaching patients wherever they may “be” in terms of personal content consumption. They should get a real sense of who you are and what makes your team and practice tick.
- **Take a step back.** Is the type of platform and nature of content keeping pace with your neighbourhood and community? As needed, go back to the fundamentals. Really think

about how your market may be changing, as well as the types of patients you want to get through the door for your practice's long-term sustainability and growth. The types of services, where you are "at" in the digital universe, and how you showcase your services and expertise can all vary based on your average or ideal patient/health care consumer.

• **Consider, is your website doing your social presence a favour?** The website should inspire and help drive the quality of what is available on your social media. If you are not happy with your website content, and the numbers for traffic are not where you would like them to be, then these are clues to groom that site. After all, there should be a symbiotic relationship between your site and social, especially if you are building, launching, or re-launching virtual services to complement your in-house offerings, visits, and experience.

Putting it all in perspective

If social is in a state of flux, it can mean any number of things that may have little or nothing to do with big macro trends. Regardless of what is responsible, assess and focus on what can be controlled.

The first step to making sense of the fluctuations is to ensure you have a system in place to monitor the numbers and that you are actually doing so regularly. This consistency helps to minimize some of the panic associated with potential dips. You are less likely to see a dip at a given time, panic, and make a rash decision or conclusion based on the near term when you have other quantifiable, historical data or business intelligence. You have the capacity to take a longer view and are less likely to make emotional decisions based on short-term fluctuations. Panic investing is less likely to obtain a good result over the longer term. The same notion applies to panic-induced website marketing.

Instead, think in another positive light about how any changes in the numbers can allow you to glean additional insights into your practice, as well as market and industry ebbs and flows. Remember, just as with your website, social flux can be driven by factors like:

- Evolving competition, from new practices to new ownership groups
- Seasonal fluctuations; for instance, consumers may be thinking less about dental work and more about retail and tourist hot spots during peak travel or holiday periods
- Economic ups and downs, which can be silver linings in disguise if one's messaging focuses on the value of proactive health care during challenging times

Final “pro tip”: Traffic without engagement isn’t truly effective. Distinguish between elements such as reach (total number of people who viewed the content), engagement (percentage of the community who was moved to action based on the post – by liking, commenting and so on), and conversion rate. The last item refers to visitors’ following through on a prompt to inquire about a service or to schedule a consultation.

Be sure to think big picture and to evaluate for growth. From there, you can dive deeper into the specific areas that may be lacking. What is, for instance, the sticking point that may be standing between the growth in your total reach and your comparatively disappointing engagement and conversion rates?

Lastly, change is constant, and not all change is bad. Resist rash actions. Stay the course.

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 schedule a session at your convenience with the Senior Director of Marketing – Lila, by clicking <https://www.ekwa.com/msm/> or simply send a text to 313-777-8494.