

# The Two-part Formula for Successful Dental Marketing

03/31/2023 by Naren Arulrajah, Ekwa Marketing



iStock

What is dental marketing? There are many ways to answer that question. In fact, it could be a topic of a book or even an entire series. Yet, it can be summarized in a very simple statement. [Dental marketing](#) is the art of getting people to find you and then getting them to choose you. That's it. If you master those two things, you will have a reliable flow of new patients streaming into your office.

## Part one: How people find you

You probably have heard terms such as brand awareness, brand recognition, online presence, visibility, and digital footprint. These concepts all relate to how well-known and noticeable a business is. In other words, they link to how likely a potential patient is to find your dental practice.

In the pre-internet era, a dentist who wanted to get noticed might get an enormous billboard or purchase premium ad space in the yellow pages. They were placing their messages where potential patients were most likely to look. Today, people don't look to road signs and billboards to learn about nearby businesses. Instead, they check Google Maps on their mobile devices. And if someone is looking for a dental office, they don't open the yellow pages. They use Google Search.

No doubt, you can see where this line of reasoning is going. If someone is looking for something, they will be on Google. If you want them to find you, that is where your dental practice needs to be. So how can your dental website become the rising star of Google search results? Here are some of the best ways:

- Provide valuable, unique content. Google wants to deliver quality results, and it does not like duplication.
- Build quality backlinks. When relevant and reputable websites choose to link to you, that tells Google your website is also relevant and reputable.
- Optimize your Google profile. When it comes to local search, optimization is not just about your website. According to a recent expert survey, Google Business Profile (formerly known as GMB or Google My Business) is a top-ranking factor.
- Be proactive about reviews. Google is quite good at differentiating between information searches and location searches. For example, someone searching for dental services does not just want to find a great website. That person is more interested in finding a great dental practice, and Google uses reviews to judge what patients think of you. Abundant, recent quality reviews indicate an excellent dentist.
- Take technical SEO seriously. For example, you can put brand-new siding and trim on a rotten house, which might look great from the outside. Yet a building inspector would still notice and condemn the weakened structure.

Similarly, a website can look great on the surface while having problems such as incompatibility with accessibility software, outdated plugins, and slow loading time. Like the building inspector, Google will see the hidden issues and "condemn" the website to low rankings.

## Part two: Why people choose you

We've established that solid local SEO is the key to visibility. If it is done well, you'll be on the first page of search results for your preferred procedures. However, yours will be one of many dental practices there. So, getting found is the start, but you will still need to get the lead.

Now we've reached the second phase: helping people choose you. What makes a person click your listing rather than a competitor's? What makes them stay on your website long enough to engage? Most importantly, what makes them contact you and schedule an appointment? To answer those questions, we must delve into the complex realm of human psychology.

Decision-making is more complex than you might expect. About 95 percent of the process happens subconsciously, according to Harvard Professor Gerald Zaltman. To understand the factors influencing the decision-making process, we can look to another well-known professor, Dr. Robert Cialdini. He penned the book, "Influence, The Psychology of Persuasion," which has guided successful marketers for decades.

**Social proof** – The opinions and actions of others easily influence people. A dentist with a large following on Facebook and great reviews on Google will be viewed as popular and high quality, whereas someone with no social presence and no reviews will be unknown. It is easy to guess which practice someone is more likely to choose.

**Scarcity** – People will likely seize an opportunity that seems to be disappearing. This is a classic marketing technique seen in seasonal sales, limited-time deals, and special edition products.

**Authority** – Besides professional credentials, comprehensive bios, media mentions, and accurate website content help establish you as a trusted expert.

**Liking** – Photos, mentions of hobbies in bios, and a high degree of authenticity can showcase your practice's human side, making you likable.

**Reciprocity** – People are more agreeable when they are feeling gratitude. If a patient thanks you for doing a great job – that is the perfect moment to ask for a testimonial or review.

**Consistency** – When someone has chosen to engage with a dental practice – for example, by visiting the site or liking a social post – they are more likely to gravitate towards that practice. The more often they choose you, even in small ways, the more likely they will choose you when they pick up the phone and schedule an appointment.

**Conclusion** – yes, you can troubleshoot and solve your marketing woes

There are two reasons a dental practice's marketing is failing or underperforming. Either people are not finding you or they are not choosing you. The most basic marketing analytic data, such as website visits and call tracking reports, can help you figure out which it may be.

Optimize your website and online presence for Google local search if people are not finding you.

If people are not choosing you, optimize your content and branding for human psychology using the basic principles of persuasion.

---

## 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.