

Does Your Dental Marketing Team Need a Social Media Content Calendar?

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At first, it might seem easy to keep your dental practice's social profiles active and interesting. After all, we all find time for social media in our off hours and idle moments. However, social media marketing is quite different. It involves setting goals, developing strategies, and creating a cohesive plan involving all channels.

To make this happen efficiently, you need a framework, which is what the content calendar provides.

How a content calendar can help

Ensure that your profiles are not neglected. Like other tasks, social posts are easily procrastinated without a deadline.

Keep posts on topic. Your calendar will give the content creator the necessary details to ensure the post aligns with your strategy.

Fine-tune your timing. Some days of the week and times of the day are better for posting. Statistics about the supposed perfect time are abundant, and they can provide a good starting point. However, every audience is different, so adjust this as needed.

Avoid confusion. Social media management is surprisingly time-consuming, so it is typically a team effort. If specific tasks are not clearly allocated, it is easy to miss something or waste time duplicating efforts.

Brainstorm with your team. The question of what to post can be a challenging one, especially when feeling pressured and uninspired. Advanced planning allows you to tap into the cumulative creative power of your team, gathering everyone's input and ideas.

Gain valuable insight. Are some posts performing much better than others? Get the relevant details from your calendar and look for commonalities such as post type, length, or topic. This information can help improve future planning.

What should your calendar include?

The most important information contained in a content calendar can be summed up by the five W's. These words, along with "how," are traditionally known as the questions that you need to answer in order to tell a complete story or solve a problem. However, they also present the most important questions that your content calendar should answer.

- Who is responsible? Depending on the complexity of your process, this might be one person or a team. It might also change as the project passes through various steps.
- What is the post? You might specify a title, give a general topic, provide links, or refer to a specific event. Use whatever details are needed to fit your workflow.
- When is the deadline? Every content calendar should include the time and date of planned publishing. Some teams also plan deadlines for each stage, such as research, creating, approval, scheduling, and posting.
- Where will it be posted? List which network(s) the post will be published on. If cross-posting, you may need different versions of the content. You can create a separate entry for each version. Or you can include all required versions in the requirements for a single entry. Whichever method you choose, be consistent and enter this type of project the same way every time to avoid confusion.
- Why are you posting it? Never publish content purely to keep your social page active. Every piece of content should have a purpose. It might be to garner engagement, drive web traffic, or increase brand awareness. Maybe you are seeking to build your reputation within the local community, or you might be looking for professional networking leads. Whatever the reason, the creator needs to be aware and tailor the content accordingly.
- How will you deliver the message? If your post formats are relatively standard, you might simply specify a type such as a blog, meme, newsletter, photo, or text. If needed, you can add details such as word count, number of images, or keywords.

Content calendars facilitate good habits

Social media is not just for fun. When it comes to marketing your dental practice, it is serious business. If you choose to handle it in-house, you need to give the same level of dedication and consideration to the strategy that you would expect from a third-party marketer. For that, your team needs deadlines, and they need to meet those deadlines. The content calendar is not only an excellent tool for organization, but it is also a great motivational tool.

The best format for your calendar

What exactly is a content calendar? The answer can range from a paper notebook to high-end purpose-specific software and everything in between. The best choice depends on your needs. Some of the most popular formats include:

Paper calendar or planner

Advantages: This is by far the most straightforward option.

Disadvantages: It obviously lacks many benefits of digital versions. Most notably, the lack of remote access makes this impractical for most modern offices.

Notes: This can be a good starting point for planning a calendar that will be moved online.

Digital calendar

Advantages: Any sharable calendar app can be used. Many calendars offer features such as color-coding, prioritizing, and custom sharing.

Disadvantages: Your calendar will quickly become cluttered and overwhelming if there is a high volume.

Notes: Depending on the platform, you may need to enter your deadlines as events or appointments.

Spreadsheet

Advantages: It is a familiar interface, and platforms such as Google make collaboration effortless. The option to add tabs enables detailed planning and tracking.

Disadvantages: It can be cumbersome for complex workflows or large volumes of content, and integration options are limited.

Notes: If you choose this method, download a template, or create your own. It will save time and facilitate consistency.

Scheduling apps

Advantages: Features such as assignments, team sharing, approvals, and automated publishing can significantly streamline the process. This is a great timesaver.

Disadvantages: The most functional apps typically require a subscription or software purchase. Also, there may be a learning curve for your team members.

Notes: There are many options available , ranging from simple collaborative apps to complete social media management suites. Prices and features vary widely, so consider your specific needs before choosing one.

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 visiting

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