

How Online Patient Reviews Can Boost the Prospects of Your Dermatology Practice



Build your brand by asking for positive online reviews from the right patients at the right time.

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>> Google and other online platforms have given people the power to freely express their opinions and share their experiences about your dermatology practice. If the reviews are good, it can add value to your online reputation, but a negative review can have an adverse impact on your practice.

It is definitely worth it to invest time and effort to create a beneficial online image through positive reviews in order to counteract any negative ones. This might seem like a Herculean task. However, it is important if you want to stay ahead of the competition.

It is now more important than ever to showcase positive reviews online. This holds especially true for medical practices in all fields, because potential patients often want to check out the comments and experiences of past patients. You can grow your practice in more ways than one if you develop a solid online strategy to acquire more positive online dermatology reviews.

FOCUS ON PATIENT EXPECTATIONS

Gone are the days when a doctor's worth was judged by her/his skill and experience alone. Patients do not choose a doctor merely based on proximity to their residence or office anymore. They choose a doctor based on

a long list of priorities. Patients expect a customer service experience from their healthcare professionals with all their needs catered to.

So, what are the priorities?

This is the million dollar question in the healthcare field. The answer lies in online doctor reviews. You need to go directly to the source (patient reviews)

to understand what they prioritize the most. The key to a successful practice is to focus on these expectations and transform patient processes to meet them.

When was the last time you actually pulled up your online doctor ratings? If it's been a while, then there will be some work to do. Make a list of everything your patient niche expects and

Ask for Reviews to Build Your Dermatology Brand

You can build your brand by asking for positive online doctor reviews from the right patients at the right time. This might even compel the locals to see you as an authority in your field. Over time with enough positive reviews, you might be able to counteract the effect of negative reviews.

How to Seek Positive Online Doctor Reviews

Requests sent through an automated system are a good way to seek positive reviews at the right moment.

You have more control with automated review systems. A questionnaire is sent prior to the request for a review. This includes a scoring system on a scale of 1-10. Patients who give your practice a rating of 7 and above are sent a follow-up mail requesting for a review on your website and other platforms such as Yelp!

A separate set of emails are triggered on lower scores. These patients will be asked to share their feedback and suggest ways to improve their satisfaction levels. It is not necessary that they would return to your practice. However, this exercise may prevent them from giving a negative review and venting out on other online platforms.

>> MARKETING MATTERS

prioritizes. The negative reviews and complaints are a good place to start. In a slow and steady manner inculcate needed changes through diligent strategies and auditing processes.

Unfortunately, many healthcare practices make the rookie mistake of dismissing negative reviews or complaints as a one-off situation. The right thing to do is to work toward changes for a better patient experience.

RESPOND POSITIVELY TO CRITICISM

Take a moment and think. What do you do when you read a negative online review about your practice? Some healthcare professionals dismiss it.

However, this does not work toward making your practice popular in a competitive healthcare setting. You can create a better patient experience and even strengthen the patient-physician bond by making an effort to learn from your patients.

Making patients feel comfortable and special is no easy task. However, you can make a patient feel exceptional by responding to reviews in a HIPAA-compliant way. It is vital that you do not refer to any details that compromise an individual's privacy while responding.

Responding to negative reviews may even win some patients back by improving patient experience. This will also send out a message that you care and that you are committed to your practice and patients.

Here are few tips to get it right:

- **Always thank them for the review:** Nothing leaves a bigger impact than a simple thank you. Thank the patient for giving their feedback. The trick here is to keep it simple and to not disclose any PHI (Protected Health Information). You must not acknowledge that the person is (or was) your patient.
- **Provide Offline Contact:** Let the patient know a way to contact you directly.
- **Develop approved responses:** You and your team can come up with pre-approved messages in compliance with HIPAA provisions to respond directly to negative reviews. This will save time while addressing patient queries.
- **Personal Responses:** Stick to personal responses whenever possible. For instance, let them know that systems are being upgraded if there is a high wait time or connect them to the right person in case of billing error.

The right response can result in a reviewer taking the time to update a negative review to a positive one. Quick and timely response will also suggest that you care about your patients' satisfaction levels.

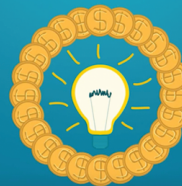
USE POSITIVE REVIEWS TO BOOST SEARCH RANKINGS

Local search results rely heavily on reviews. In 2017, online reviews were among the top seven local search ranking factors as per a study conducted by Moz.

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Reviews can boost your Google and other search engine presence in several ways:

- Search engines are constantly in search of fresh content. Reviews are a great way to continuously add fresh content to your website.
- Patient interaction is increased on your site through reviews.
- High rated sites have a higher chance of click through.

ONLINE REVIEWS CAN HELP YOU CREATE A GREAT FIRST IMPRESSION

Studies show that 84 percent of consumers trust online reviews as compared to friend recommendations. This is a huge deal. This indicates that patients base their decision to visit (or not visit) your practice on these reviews. They also come to your practice with pre-set expectations.

Your reviews serve a higher purpose. The patients who come to your practice through online reviews have already developed a patient-physician bond without interaction. This is a good thing, as the patients come to your practice with a positive attitude and healthy trust after reading positive reviews. ■

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