

Branding and Organic Marketing for Your Dermatology Website



An investment in branding and organic search marketing can have a potentially significant impact on a practice.

BY NAREN ARULRAJAH

>> When you make a conscious and systematic effort to build your dermatology practice as a recognizable brand, you are providing it with a differentiated identity that your patients can relate to. Your brand will reflect the unique value that you offer to patients, which gives them a strong reason to choose your dermatology practice over others in your local area.

With the power of online search available at their fingertips, patients will typically search for the best quality medical care within the parameters of their budget, location, health insurance, lifestyle, and the nature of their health condition. From the practices that meet these criteria, they are more likely to opt for a dermatology practice that enjoys greater online brand recognition, visibility, and reputation, compared to the competitors.

The annual BrightLocal Consumer Review Survey in 2014 showed that medical and dental professionals are the second most-searched businesses online, after restaurants, and ahead of clothing and general stores. This is a revealing statistic that shows the kind of impact that an investment in branding and organic search marketing can

potentially have on the fortunes of a dermatology practice.

STRATEGIC BRAND POSITIONING

To position your brand strategically through your website, blog, social media, newsletter, public relations, promotional events, and advertising, you need to create a cohesive brand strategy. Ask yourself these three questions dispassionately:

- What are the vision, mission, and objectives of your dermatology practice?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your practice?
- What are the strongest attributes that your patients perceive or expect from your practice?

Clear and honest answers to these questions will help you define, adapt, and position your practice brand strategically, while keeping the patient at the center of your strategy at all times. What kind of distinctiveness can you add to your practice in terms of quality of care, range of technologies, costs of procedures, personalized attention, innovative financing solutions, health insurance support, and accommodating schedules that can set it apart from your competitors?

Your goal must not only be to deliver an outstanding patient experience, but also to communicate and highlight that distinctiveness of your practice effectively through your brand marketing for the sake of new patients.

ONLINE REPUTATION AND TRUST

Reputation and trust are the most valuable forms of capital that your dermatology practice can generate through total patient commitment and consistency of purpose, and its effective communication through online marketing. In an increasingly aware and informed world, patients do not necessarily consider “how big you are” until they know “how much you care.”

In addition to the interpersonal skills that you and your staff must employ to create a positive involvement with patients, your accessibility and engagement via your website, articles and columns, social media, and blogging will also impact your patient relationships, trust, and reputation. The BrightLocal 2014 study revealed that more than one in three patients read online reviews before choosing a physician or dentist.

Physicians and dentists exceeded all other businesses and professions when

the respondents were asked about the value of “reputation” as a decision-making factor. Nearly half of the respondents said that they would consider the reputation of a physician or dentist when choosing a practice.

BRAND MARKETING THROUGH YOUR WEBSITE

Your dermatology website can be a cost-effective and sustainable tool for brand building and organic marketing. Above and beyond the robotic technicalities of search engine optimization, which continue to be critically important, your website must be designed for patients, with a purpose to educate and inform them about various medical procedures that your practice provides.

Google continues to advise website owners and developers about how to create website content. It says that instead of attempting to “reverse engineer” their search engine algorithms, and resorting to shortcuts to achieve higher search rankings, businesses should focus on creating a great website. As long as a website is excellent and visitors love it—that is what eventually works in achieving sustainable high rankings in Google search results.

MEASURING BRAND VALUE

Google Analytics and social media analytics provided by Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and other social networks are an effective tool to measure how your brand marketing strategies are performing online and what kind of results they are producing.

These analytical tools are indispensable to constantly monitor, readapt, and reinvent your strategy, but from the perspective of a dermatology practice, you also need to evaluate the all-important attribute of patient loyalty.

You can try to quantify the degree of patient loyalty that your practice commands through an innovative measurement tool called the Net Promoter Score (NPS). To evaluate this metric, all you need to do is ask a single question from your patients: “On a scale of 0 to 10, how likely are you to recommend our practice to someone else?”

The results of this simple survey will provide you valuable insights into how many real brand “promoters” you have among your patients (who gave you a rating of 9 or 10), how many “detractors” (who gave you a rating of 0 to 6), and how many “passives.” The NPS is the difference between the percentage of promoters and the percentage of detractors. A score above 50 is considered excellent.

MAINTAINING BRAND LEADERSHIP

Branding and organic marketing is an ongoing process, and not a one-time effort. You need to be on top of your game at all times. Upgrade your web design, web content, blog, social media, videos and graphics, and mobile device capabilities in

line with the advancements in technology and changing trends.

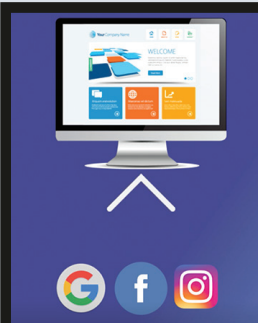
Stay interested in how your competitors are doing and what innovative strategies they are adopting in terms of their website changes, search engine rankings, social media engagement, and online reputation building.

Finally, keep in mind that the Internet and mobile-based communication and search technologies have democratized brand marketing and created a level playing field for all. Large and upscale medical brands no longer have an excessively dominating marketing power to reach out to potential patients and influence their decisions.

Google’s famed engineer Matt Cutts once summed it up succinctly in one of his educational seminars: “Individuals can absolutely become brands. If you can put out creative content, the ‘moms and pops’ of the world can become great brands.” So, it may be time to ask yourself the all-important question: Are you ready to build a great dermatology brand using online marketing? ■

Naren Arulrajah is President and CEO of Ekwa Marketing, a complete internet marketing company that focuses on SEO, social media, marketing education, and the online reputations of dermatologists. With a team of 180+ full time marketers, www.ekwa.com helps dermatologists who know where they want to go, get there by dominating their market and growing their business significantly year after year. If you have questions about marketing your practice online, call 855-598-3320 to speak one-on-one with Naren.

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Data related to clicks and impressions will show how visitors are visiting your website. This Click-through-rate helps you understand what percentage of visitors clicked on your website link. You will also know the average position of your website in Google search results.

Google Webmaster tools can help you gain deep insights into the workings of your website and thus help improve it to derive maximum benefits. Learn the four basic methods to improve your dermatology practice website.

Watch now: [PracticalDermatology.com/videos/proven-methods-to-maximize-use-of-google-webmaster-tools-for-your-dermatology-website](https://www.practicaldermatology.com/videos/proven-methods-to-maximize-use-of-google-webmaster-tools-for-your-dermatology-website)