

# Psychographic Marketing: Understand What Drives Your Dermatology Patients



You know who your patients are, but do you know why they come to you?

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>> Many marketing strategies are built on identifying the demographics of your patient base and finding ways to reach more patients like them. By now, your dermatology practice probably uses a variety of digital marketing strategies based on demographics to better reach out to your patients online. But demographics alone are not enough to make a marketing plan rise above the rest. To take your dermatology marketing to the next level, you will need to apply psychographics as well.

## WHAT IS PSYCHOGRAPHICS?

What is the first thing you do when you sit down with a new patient? You listen. You know you will not be able to meet your patients' needs until you have a chance to sit down with them and hear what they want. As a skilled doctor who has been doing this for years, whether you realize it or not, in these initial conversations, you are probably applying some psychology and reading between the lines to understand what matters to each of your patients.

For example, imagine a new patient, Stacy, who is 17. She comes into the office and says she needs help treating her acne. She mentions that her acne has become so bad that makeup cannot cover it up well enough, and it still shows in pictures. She may not be directly saying it, but you will immediately understand that Stacy cares about her appearance. Because she values what her peers think of her, you likely will not only help her find treatments to treat her acne but also options that will help conceal blemishes and scarring without contributing to inflammation and irritation.

You have rightly understood the "why" behind Stacy's dermatology needs. And this is what psychographic marketing is all about. While demographics answer the question of "who" your patients are and take into account the basic facts about them (age, gender, etc.), psychographics goes a little deeper to answer the question "why" and analyze what drives your patients.

You already know that this is one of the key skills that sets you apart as a dermatologist patients trust, and you know how to use it in the office, but how can you apply these skills to reach patients before you ever meet them?

## PSYCHOGRAPHIC PROFILES

First, you will need to understand a few of the most commonly identified psychographic traits, as described at [hotjar.com](http://hotjar.com), so that you can build a psychographic profile. There are many different psychographic traits you can analyze, but these are five of the most commonly studied characteristics.

### 1 Personality

Often measured using the big-five personalities, personality includes factors such as introversion and extroversion. If extroversion is identified in many patients, marketing may emphasize images of groups of people and the social impact dermatology treatments can have.

### 2 Values

This encompasses your patients' views on right and wrong. For example, if your patients feel it is wrong to harm animals, you may want to emphasize cruelty-free products.

### 3 Lifestyle

Your patients' lifestyles greatly impact their decisions, so busy working patients will benefit from marketing strategies that promote "lunchtime" treatments and "quick" results.

### 4 Interests

This will include your patients' hobbies and how they prefer to spend their time. For example, patients who enjoy outdoor activities may benefit from increased information about preventing skin cancer and sun damage.

## 5 Beliefs and opinions

Your patients' beliefs and worldviews, whether religious or political, have a strong impact on their decisions, so marketing must expertly appeal to these views.

### BUILDING YOUR PSYCHOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Now that you understand the basics of psychographics, how do you gather this information? Some possible methods of information gathering include surveys and focus groups, but as a dermatologist, you have a unique ability to talk directly to your client base. This means it may be more beneficial to simply have an intentional conversation with your patients about their journey toward seeking treatment with you. Apply your expert listening skills and tactfully find out why your patients seek the treatments they do and what led them to choose you as a provider. Then create a psychographic profile of your average or ideal patient to move forward.

### PSYCHOGRAPHIC PROFILES IN YOUR MARKETING STRATEGY

This is where the rubber meets the road. There are actually many ways to implement these types of psychographic profiles in your practice's marketing strategy, but here are just a few examples to help you get started.

- **Reaching a different demographic**

Psychographics can be especially helpful if you want to reach a different demographic with your marketing strategy. Let us assume that you have a practice that is frequented by younger men and women, but you would like to reach older patients for anti-aging treatments with your marketing.

Psychographics will help you identify why older patients want the treatments they do. You may use psychographics to identify that older patients may be divorced and longing to have their youth back or to feel more in control of their lives. Some older patients may seek dermatology treatments to keep up appearances in the workplace. Understanding this will help you to identify phrases like "Turn back the clock" or keywords and images related to "professional appearance" in your marketing to resonate with what these patients are feeling.

- **Getting more reviews**

It is even possible to use psychographics to improve your online reviews. A German study published in *Journal of Medical Internet Research* in 2014 showed that psychographics helped to identify the factors that predicted whether people were prone to using physician rating websites or not. Identifying why patients leave reviews and creating a psychographic profile of the types of patients who leave reviews can help you more effectively encourage these types of patients to take that extra step

to leave a review for you. You can also identify the types of patients who are reading your reviews and taking them seriously and why. This may help you to highlight the types of reviews they would value seeing on your website.

- **Reaching existing patients and their peers**

Probably the easiest way for you to make use of psychographics is to take examples of your real patients (like our fictional acne patient Stacy). Intentionally identify the five psychographic traits that make up your existing patients. Who are your most loyal patients? Find their common values, interests, personality traits, etc., and build a marketing strategy that will target those areas effectively. Do your patients value natural products? Promote your most natural products in your marketing, or simply share some natural beauty tips to show them that you identify their values. As your existing patients appreciate this more, your marketing content will be more likely to reach their like-minded peers as well.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

Psychographics can help to take your digital marketing strategy to the next level to more effectively reach the dermatology patients you want. By identifying the "whys" of your patients or what drives them to make the choices they do, psychographics can inform small but essential details in the online marketing of your practice. ■

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#### 1. RECIPROCITY

When you give, others want to reciprocate.

For example:

- If you offer a free sample, someone is more likely to purchase the product.
- If you are generous with your scheduling flexibility, patients are more likely to drive a few more miles to your practice rather than choosing the closest dermatologist.



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