

Content is the new SEO for your dental website

By Susan M. Hutson, with Vikas Vij

Your dental website is the online face of your practice. Therefore, every single page of the website must be developed with passion and commitment. Design and form represent the body of your web pages, and content represents the soul. Page rankings on all leading search engines are ultimately determined by how compelling the content is.

Dental patients regularly scout the Internet for relevant content, and if you provide it, they will flock to your website. The search engines will drive your targeted local patients to your website as long as you disseminate exclusive, authoritative, relevant, and original information related to dentistry.

What is good dental website content?

Leading search engines such as Google are paranoid about answering the search queries of their users in the best possible manner. They will do everything possible to find the websites that address their users' queries adequately and accurately. Therefore, from a search engine point of view, good dental content must have one key quality — it must provide the best answers to the most searched for dental information on the Internet.

When the content is enriching and satisfying for your website readers and potential patients, they are very likely to link it, share it, and comment about it on blogs, forums, websites, and social networks. The more time that a reader spends on your website and the more positive activity that a reader conducts in relation to your website, the higher your search engine rankings will be. In "search engine speak," content that comes on top on these parameters is good content.



Fresh content on your dental site

Search engines deeply realize the need users have for fresh content, which provides them with the very latest and most relevant information. Top search engines such as Google typically evaluate every web page of your dental website for freshness. Some search queries are about fresh content, while others will be about old content that continues to be relevant.

To make sure that your dental website appears on top in search results for both kinds of searches, it must contain both types of content. Recent news, updates, events, and developments in the field of medical and cosmetic dental should be regularly featured or updated on your website. Search engines determine the freshness of your content based on several parameters.

Date of origin

Every webpage on your website has a "freshness" quotient based on the date of its origin. This quotient typically diminishes with the passage of time. The date of origin is usually when a search engine first recorded the existence of the document, such as when the search engine first indexed or found the link.

Quantum of change

Freshness quotient of an old webpage can continue to be high if the document periodically undergoes substantive content changes. The extent of such changes will influence the freshness evaluation of the document. Mere cosmetic changes of a keyword or a line here or there will not have the same impact as significant changes to the main text, design, images, and other components of the webpage.

Frequency of change

The more frequently the content on your web pages undergoes a change, the higher will be its freshness quotient. This is where the news or blog sections are highly useful for a website because these sections are likely to add fresh updates frequently, accounting for a high rate of change.

Addition of new web pages

Freshness of a domain is not evaluated on the basis of regular revisions of the existing web pages alone. Creation of completely new web pages and expansion of your dental website also help boost the freshness quotient. The opportunity to add new content should be welcome, but without compromising existing content.

Updating critical areas of the site

Changes to the homepage and other important landing pages that receive the maximum visitor traffic are more valuable than changes to the rest of the pages. Similarly, within a web page, the more important content is the main body text, not the navigation instructions or advertisements.

New link activity

If a webpage on your dental site receives many new links within a short period of time, the search engines are likely to view it as a signal of freshness. This kind of link activity usually happens when a very current or relevant piece of content is added to a webpage.

User activity

If potential patients and other visitors to your website continue to add comments to the old content, or link it to their social networks and other sites, the content will be deemed as fresh. On the other hand, if visitors reach a particular webpage and turn back without spending even a few seconds on it, the search engine may see it as old or stale content.

Old can still be gold

Google and other search engines fully understand that for certain websites, old content is still very relevant. At the same time, new content is not necessarily better than old content in all cases. The uniqueness and authoritativeness of your dental content can extend its life for as long as possible.

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How to achieve top search rankings?

In a highly complex and competitive Internet environment, it is critically important to use multi-pronged approaches that lead your website to the top of search engine page rankings. Here are a few tips that every dentist can use to improve the SEO value of his or her website.

Be extremely selective about your web content

Your dental website should include only very high quality information that is authoritative, current, and very relevant to your target audience. Make sure that the information is presented in an interesting manner, with the support of images, videos, and graphics. The more user-friendly and engaging the content is, the more readers will like to engage and share it with others. This will boost the page rankings of your website over time.

Spread the word about your website on the Internet

Creating an excellent dental website with professional content and presentation is not enough. You need to let the world know about your website and develop a cohesive online promotion strategy. Make sure your site managers or Internet marketing consultants submit the website to high quality and reputed web directories and reference websites. Top rated blogs, forums, dental specific expert domains, Yahoo!, Open Directory Project, and Wikipedia are some of the places that should ideally be linked to your website.

Use social media and other networking means

The leading social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn, and YouTube can help publicize your dental website and have a multiplier effect. These networks will even help boost the page rankings of your website on various search engines. In addition to online networking, make sure that your website name is published on all your official stationery, business cards, brochures, fax cover sheets, and letterheads. It should also be a part of the email signatures of everyone at your office.

With some out-of-the-box thinking and the professional assistance of an Internet marketing company that has sufficient experience in promoting dental websites, you can outperform your competitors. Create a constant buzz and keep your website alive and kicking, and it will never lose its freshness, and it will continue to occupy the prime rankings on all leading search engines.

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