

# How to Host a Webinar that Produces New Patients

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You are all set to try out webinars and offer them a place in your marketing mix. You know who your target audience is, and you have a clear picture of what you wish to accomplish—generate quality leads to find new patients. Is there anything more you need to do? Yes. Take a minute or two and answer these questions:

- What will draw people to your webinars?
- Is the speaker the right choice?
- What is the best time to hold them?
- How, when, and where should you publicize your event?

The key to getting those all-important qualified leads for your practice lies in finding answers to these questions.

## **Magnetic Content**

Infomercials are boring. Audiences prefer webinars that help them find answers to a problem they face and enlighten them about something they're interested in. What's in the webinar for them? Choose a topic close to their hearts. Offer information they can benefit from. Content should be your first priority. That's the magnet that will attract your audience to the event.

## **Choosing the Speaker**

Your guest speaker can make or break the webinar, whether you choose an outsourced industry expert or an internal employee. To choose the right speaker, your first goal should be to identify someone with authoritative knowledge and established credentials relevant to the webinar's topic.

Experienced speakers know how to modulate their voice while speaking and focus on the right volume, clarity, tone, and emphasis. They also would ideally schedule a practice session and review and collaborate on the material with you while planning the webinar.

### **Precision Timing**

You have chosen the right topic and have the best content and speaker, but your timing is off—the time of day, the day of the week, etc. Then all your efforts are wasted too, because your audience is busy elsewhere. They couldn't attend your webinar because you timed it wrong.

Plan your event around your audience's schedule:

- Try to skip holidays and the days preceding and following them.
- Mondays (too hectic) and Saturdays (weekend) may be out too.
- Check potential conflicts with any major online or offline events.
- Will the end of the month be a bad time for your audience?
- Individuals prefer to attend webinars from their desks. What time will most of your target audience will be at their desks?
- Have you considered having your webinar during lunchtime? That's popular too.

As always, put your audience first. Choose whatever time and day appeals to them.

### **Thirty-Day Countdown**

You have zeroed in on a date and time for your webinar. What's next? Choose the right time to begin promotion and registration.

Consider a 30-day window. It's optimal. Below that, you might face a time crunch to maximize attendance. Planning a month ahead is much easier than scheduling with a week to spare. If the gap is beyond that, people may forget the dates or lose curiosity in the event.

If you're proposing a single webinar, then you are bound to lose a few leads for whom your chosen date or time is inconvenient. Hitting the bullseye with a single shot is a tough task. The alternative is to set two dates for the same topic or to host a series of webinars, whichever is possible.

### **Full-House Game Plan**

Four strategies can help you have a full house at the event: leveraging your relationships, using existing patients, integrating your marketing, and dedicated campaigns.

First, contact your professional colleagues, partners, vendors, and associations. Each one can support you in some way. Some could cosponsor your event. Or, you could promote the event on their website or in their newsletters. Encourage their participation.

Second, your patients already trust your services. They are already familiar with your practice, and they may be interacting with your staff and receiving updates. But they may not know about your latest offerings. Invite them. They will be more willing to listen to the details about a new dental service or product through a webinar than through a sales pitch that pushes them to purchase something.

Next, at no additional cost, you can build a good response for your webinar by simply adding details about it in your regular advertising, including search ads, bulletins, email communications, banner ads, websites, print media, and TV and radio.

While participating in events, keep handouts and registration forms handy. Have your staff promote the event to the people they interact with. Such interactions can lead to meaningful discussions about the product or service and its benefits, right there.

Finally, create a few dedicated campaigns that feature webinar content, the benefits of participating, ease of participation, and a link to respond. As the success of your webinars grows, you will find yourself allocating more funds for dedicated campaigns.

### **Simple and Uncompromising**

Have a simple and easy-to-fill form for registration. A long form can put people off and make them decide not to participate. Losing a prospect due to the length of the registration process is unforgivable. Restrict the information you collect through the form to contact details, their reason for attending, where they heard about the webinar, and any relevant qualifying information. Maintain uniformity of the registration form on all platforms and in all formats.

### **Limit Absenteeism**

A lot of people who register don't show up for events. How should you deal with these potential absences?

- Email a thank you note as soon as they register and remind them to mark the event on their daily planner.
- Remind them about the event via email 10 days before.
- Call them by phone the day before.
- Send a last reminder email an hour before the webinar.

### **Post-Event Attendance**

Despite all these reminders, many people will miss the webinar due to unavoidable personal or professional reasons. For those people, record the event and post the video on your website. Email the link to the video to these absentees. Alternatively, you can send the absentees details about the repeat event, which they can consider attending.

### **Audience Assessment**

As you near the end of the webinar, invite your audience to give you feedback. Gather vital qualifying information from them. A significant part of your audience will participate in the feedback survey. Use it to find ways to improve future events and discern their interest level in the offering—whether they need it, when they plan to buy, etc. Choose the questions in your survey with care.

### **Prompt Follow Up**

Strike the iron while it's hot. Email a thank you note to your attendees, and split your leads into hot, warm, and future prospects. Share the details of these leads with your sales team and get them on the job. Keep track of their progress. If you planned your webinar well, you are sure to see a positive outcome in terms of a boost in inquiries and new patient visits to your dental practice.

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