



Dentists' Guide: Hosting a Twitter Party

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Twitter may be less popular than Facebook, but with 68 million active users in the USA, it is not to be ignored. However, many dentists find it difficult to build a following. How do you engage your audience and communicate an important message in 140 characters? One of the best answers is hosting a Twitter chat. Here's how to do it.

Choose a topic

It should be specific enough to pique users' interest, but not so specific that it is limiting. For example, dental questions that doesn't sound very interesting, but a discussion about cleaning Invisalign aligners would have a small audience. However, an offer to "answer your orthodontic questions" could interest anyone who is wearing or considering braces.

Choose a format

The most common format is called Q1/A1. The host (you) poses questions to the audience. Type Q1 before the first question, Q2 before the second, and so on. Participants mark their answers with A1, A2, etc.

For dental practices a Q&A, or "ask the expert" format is often preferable. In this type of chat, you invite participants to ask questions, and select a few to answer.

Set a date and time

Plan your chat at least a few weeks ahead so that you have plenty of time to promote it. Choose the day of the week, and the time, based on when your target audience is most likely to be online.

Create a hashtag

This will define your event, so you want something distinctive. Ideally, it should include your name, or the name of your dental practice. When you pick a hashtag, search for it to make sure it's not already in use.

Promote

Don't just announce your chat on Twitter. Promote it on other social accounts, on your website, and by email. If you have established any connections on Twitter, invite them to join.

Host

If you use social media management software, create a stream for your hashtag. Alternately, you can follow the conversation on Twitter's website by searching for the hashtag.

Begin with a welcome tweet and ask users to introduce themselves. After a few minutes of conversation, move on to asking or accepting question. Reply to as many as possible, but don't rush. It might take a few tweets to answer a question. Freely favorite and retweet the best comments.

Wrap up the chat thanking everyone, and referring them to your website for more information.

About the Author

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 dentists. With a team of 140+ full time marketers, www.ekwa.com helps dentists 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.