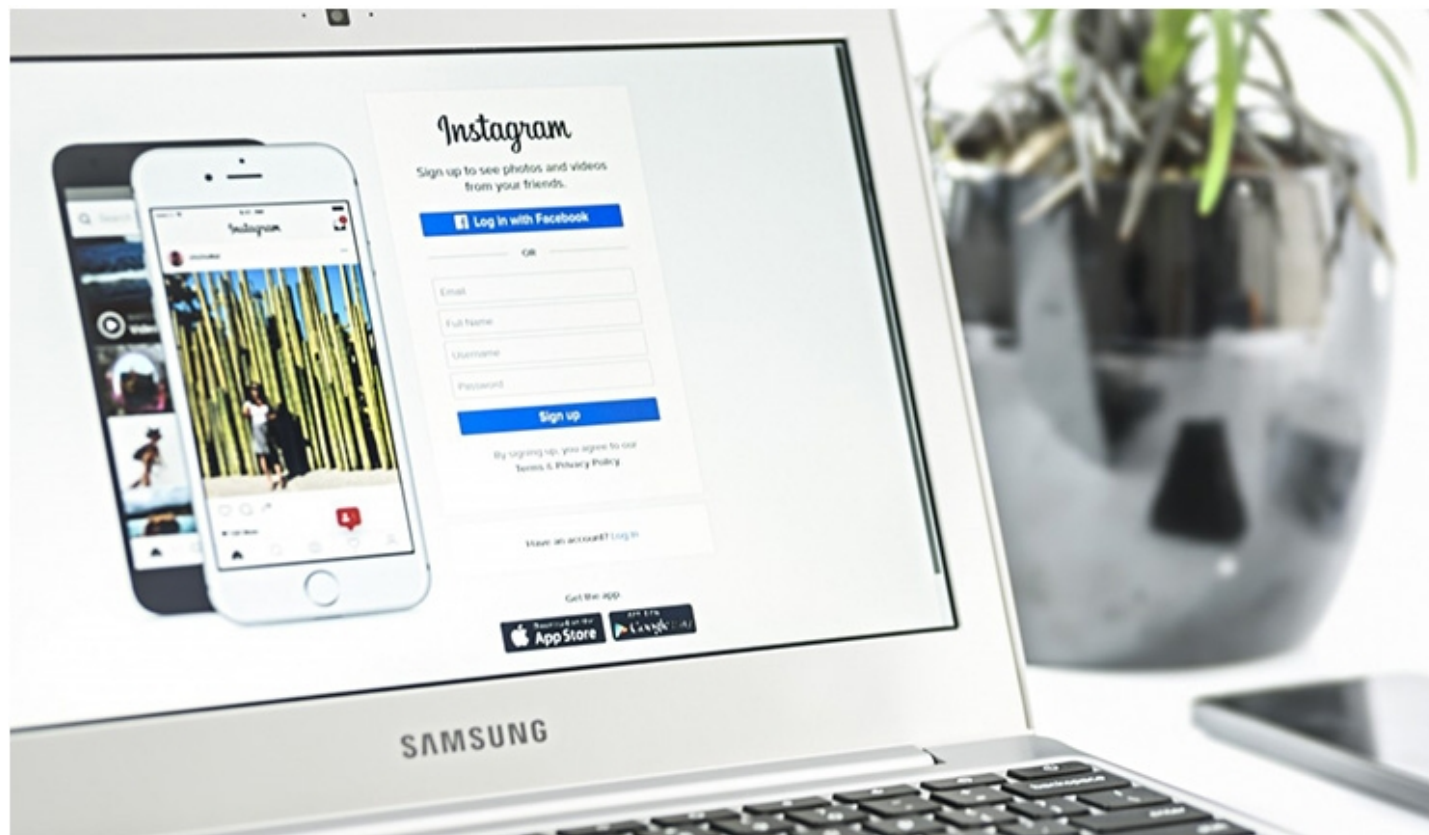


Four Digital Marketing Predictions for Dental Marketers in 2018

21 Mar 2018  Naren Arulrajah
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The latest innovations and technologies are vital in developing your online dental marketing strategy. You can analyze current digital trends and tweak your dental practice's promotional plans to meet today's marketing predictions. These four digital marketing forecasts for 2018 will likely affect how online dental marketing progresses.

Twitter May Tank While Instagram and LinkedIn Will Grow

Twitter's change from its usual 140 characters to 280 characters seems to have backfired. The networking platform did not witness growth in its subscriber base in 2017. However, other social media avenues are seeing robust and fast growth. Some Twitter users have even expressed displeasure with the fact that a core feature of the platform is now unavailable.

Twitter offered a 140 character limit, which made for specific, concise, and compelling views. Now that the main differentiator between Twitter and Facebook or LinkedIn has been eliminated, it is likely to affect the platform's popularity.

Twitter focused more on user acquisition than on enhancing its platform in 2017. This prompted marketers to adopt other media platforms to reach their audiences. This trend of marketers turning to other platforms will continue in 2018, which could cause Twitter's slow decline.

Simultaneously, LinkedIn thrived in 2017 through enhanced advertising endeavors and a renewed user interface that provides new opportunities for business-to-business and business-to-consumer (B2C) companies. In the

meantime, Instagram has steady growth at a rapid rate. In 2017, Instagram announced that approximately 800 million users are on the social media site every month.

Instagram's newest product, Instagram Stories, has garnered more popularity than Snapchat within one year of being launched. Many more people may migrate from Snapchat to Instagram in 2018. More B2C brands are finding Instagram more effective than other social media platforms. It has innovative advertising methods that will ensure its popularity in 2018.

Behavior Marketing and Artificial Intelligence Will Be Aligned

Marketing platforms now collect and store data such as site visits, browsing behaviors, search history, and content inclinations to create behavior marketing and customer profile outlines. They are developed to assist dental and other digital marketers to create customized messages targeted at specific audiences. The forecasts are quite exciting.

Adobe contends that machines will be instrumental in making crucial marketing decisions. Here, software will assess data to create various marketing messages as well as commence and end campaigns via multiple channels compiling custom copies directed at perceived personalities. Customers tend to be more responsive to marketing activities targeted specifically at them.

Advances in artificial intelligence (AI) and behavioral marketing will enable marketers to achieve more efficiency in reaching out to potential and existing customers. The most important takeaway here is that no data is more efficient than clients letting you know their preferences through their actions.

Also, platforms like Drift and Intercom allow marketers to use AI-based live chat tools to engage prospects. These tools allow sophisticated, responsive chatbots to answer customer queries without involving a human presence. However, currently these bots can only answer what they have been instructed or programmed to answer. The further refinement of this technology will lead more companies to use AI live chat to offer better services to website visitors.

The Use of Influencer Marketing Will Increase

Influencer marketing has been gaining popularity in recent years, with new and diverse brands taking note of this marketing technique. [According to inc.com](#), 84% of marketers wanted to roll out one influencer marketing campaign in 2017. Businesses earn \$6.50 for every \$1 spent on influencer marketing, [as per a 2015 study](#). Beauty and apparel brands have been engaging in this kind of marketing, and now more mainstream brands such as Amazon are interested.

There is no doubt that customers are a crucial part of influencer marketing campaigns. Brands will continue to attract customers through special promotions, contests, and exciting social media campaigns. User-generated reviews, feedback, and comments give brands an opportunity to engage customers while understanding their experiences with the brand.

To highlight this point, we look at recent developments in Amazon's Influencer Program. The online retail giant has created a self-service tool for social media influencers to provide them with an opportunity to create a page on the Amazon site. Each page is equipped with a vanity URL that will display the products that influencers recommend to their followers. Shopping and sharing product recommendations is more convenient with the influencer program.

Marketers now prefer natural, well-flowing content that does not seem forced. Younger customers are specifically encouraged by the recommendations of influencers, making this marketing strategy especially useful with the youth segment. Almost 95% of the marketers using influencer marketing strategies find it effective. We believe this number will grow in 2018.

Ad-Blocking Will Not Be a Concern for New Advertising Methods

While customers welcome ad-blocking software, marketers find it very restrictive. In 2020, 100 million consumers in the United States will choose ad blockers (software designed to prevent ads from showing up in a web page). This is a significant increase from the 44 million consumers who used them in 2016. According to [optimal.com](#), the loss in ad revenue due to ad blockers will be more than \$12 billion in 2020.

Google is developing a tool that can mute auto-play videos in Chrome, which does not spell good news for marketers. So how are marketers working around these ad blockers? Some brands are migrating to new platforms, while others such as Facebook are employing ways to prevent adblocking on their systems.

Accenture commenced work on a [product placement technology](#) in 2017. This technology is slated to earn billions of dollars through helping marketers overcome ad-blocking software challenges.

Key Insights

At least some of these trends will be established in 2018. Their success will depend on platform evolutions and advanced technologies. Dental marketers need to stay on top of these trends, as they seem to indicate the need for a more analytical and comprehensive marketing strategy. Dental marketers will have to familiarize themselves with new online media and platforms. The marketing trends of 2018 and beyond will be influenced by better AI technologies, organic search, and influencer-based marketing campaigns.

Mr. 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 more than 140 full-time marketers, [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 or email naren@ekwa.com.