

COSMETIC SURGERY MARKETING: THE FUTURE IS ONLINE

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Online medical marketing offers practices the unique advantage of positioning their practice to stand out among competitors. Up until a few years back, a majority of cosmetic surgeons invested heavily in the “me too” marketing model: Place an ad in a local vanity magazine and/or copy the ad format of their competitors. Devoid of any call-to-action as well as important information, it was only a matter of time before these ads started phasing out.

Today’s patient is highly demanding, empowered, astute in his/her observations, and extremely picky when it comes to making a choice. The only way aesthetic practices can keep up with changing patient preferences is by focusing marketing and advertising efforts on their patients with the aim of providing an enhanced experience.

ONLINE MEDICAL MARKETING FOR AESTHETIC PRACTICES

Online marketing provides practices with all the necessary tools, platforms, and avenues required to navigate their way to success. Contrary to popular belief, aesthetic surgery is no longer a “life choice” for only the rich and famous. An increasing number of people from various demographics and from all walks of life are opting for cosmetic surgery. These are people who are extremely active over the Internet and veterans within the social realm! In short, cosmetic surgery practices that want to reach out to this growing target base need to be active and engaging online.

THE FUTURE OF COSMETIC SURGERY MARKETING IS ONLINE

Increasing numbers of Americans today use the Internet to look for information when they have health concerns. Here is a look at a few interesting online trends.

▶ **1** IN 3 AMERICAN ADULTS GOES ONLINE TO FIND INFORMATION ABOUT A PARTICULAR MEDICAL CONDITION

- ▶ 57% of patients look for information on plastic surgery online
- ▶ Social media photo sharing led to a 31% increase in requests for surgery
- ▶ 77% of patients actively use search engines such as Google, Bing, or Yahoo to look up health conditions
- ▶ 76% of patients go to hospital sites to look for health related information
- ▶ 52% of patients visit health information sites, such as WebMD

These trends serve to highlight one important fact: Potential patients are looking for you online! It also reiterates the fact that the Internet is the first place they are most likely to visit when looking for information about cosmetic surgery practices and procedures.

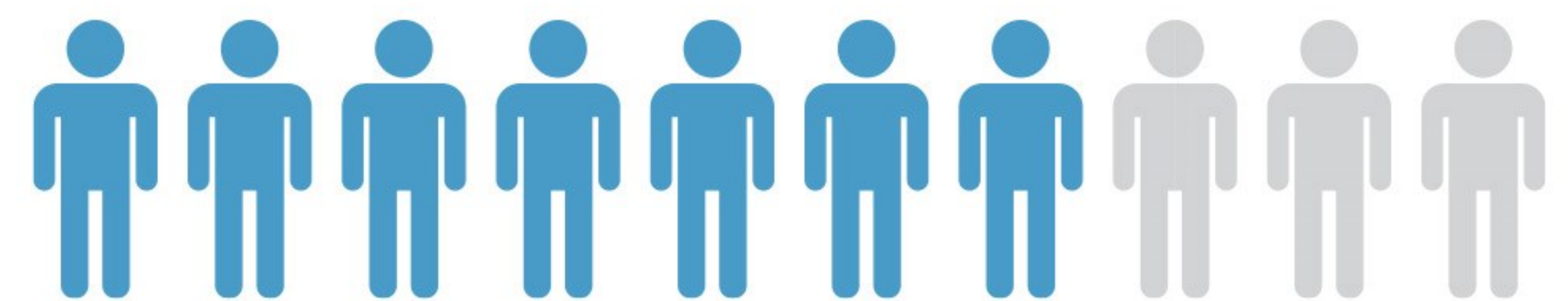
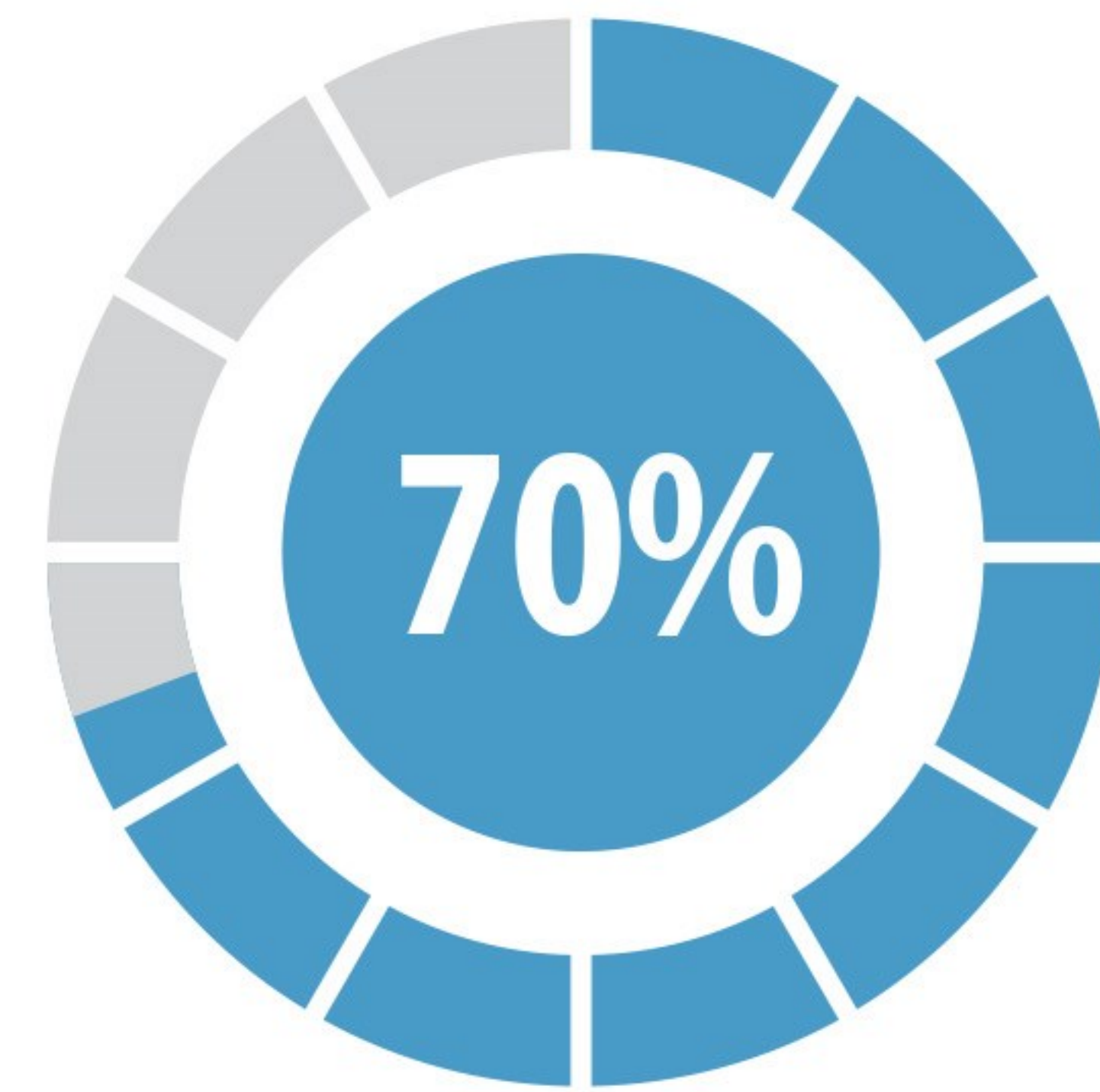


PATIENT ENGAGEMENT IS KEY

The most effective way of reaching out to and engaging with potential patients is by first understanding the decision-making process of a potential cosmetic surgery patient. The Internet is today the number one source for all types and manner of information; one might say, the Internet has fueled the thirst for information among users. Cosmetic surgery practices can use this to their advantage by customizing their practice websites, blogs, marketing material, and their social space to address concerns, issues, and queries of potential patients. This is the best way to connect with your target audience.

Best Practices for Patient Engagement:

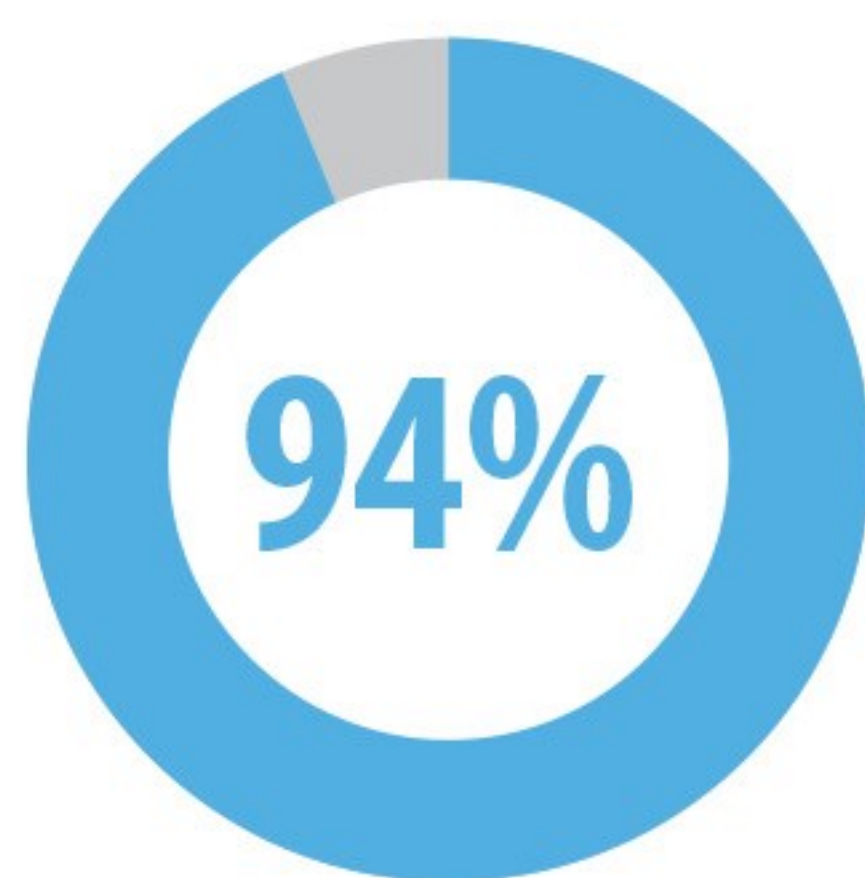
- ▶ Strive to deliver that “personal touch” from start to finish anytime you engage with a potential patient
- ▶ Address their desires and concerns and answer all their questions honestly
- ▶ Ensure all your communications are personal and timely
- ▶ Position yourself as an authority through strategic alliances
- ▶ Provide reassurances-backed by proof every step of the way
- ▶ Patient testimonials are considered “marketing-free” validations; use this to show potential patients what you can offer



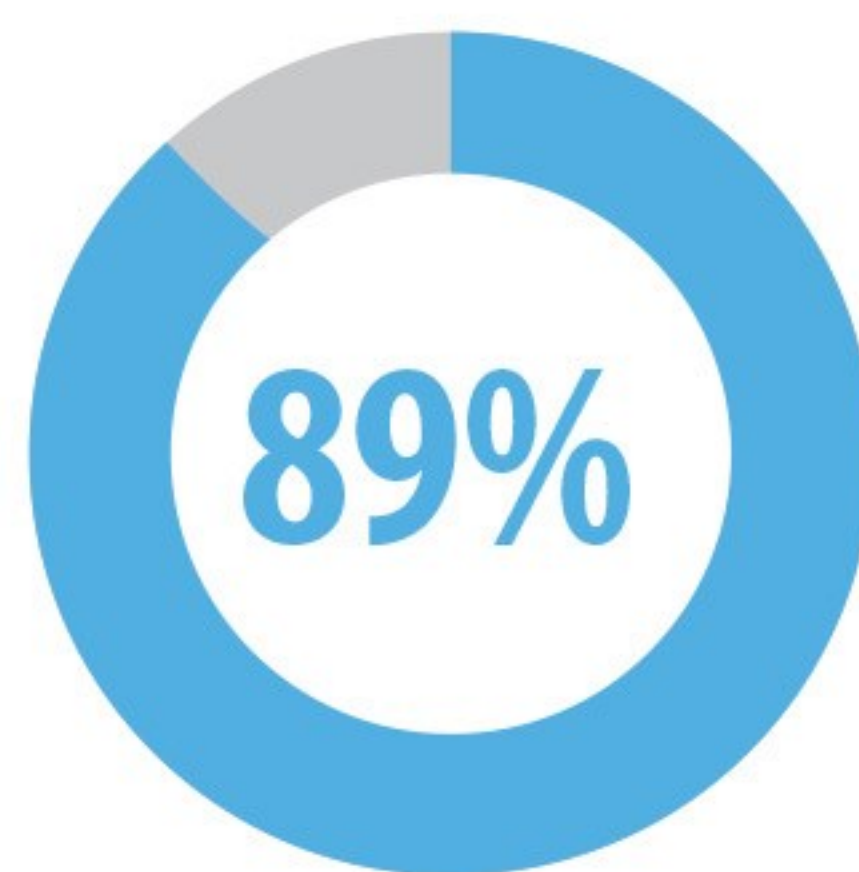
▶ **ENCOURAGE REFERRALS; 70% OF YOUR NEW PATIENT BASE CAN COME FROM REFERRALS**

ONLINE REPUTATION MATTERS TO PROSPECTIVE PATIENTS

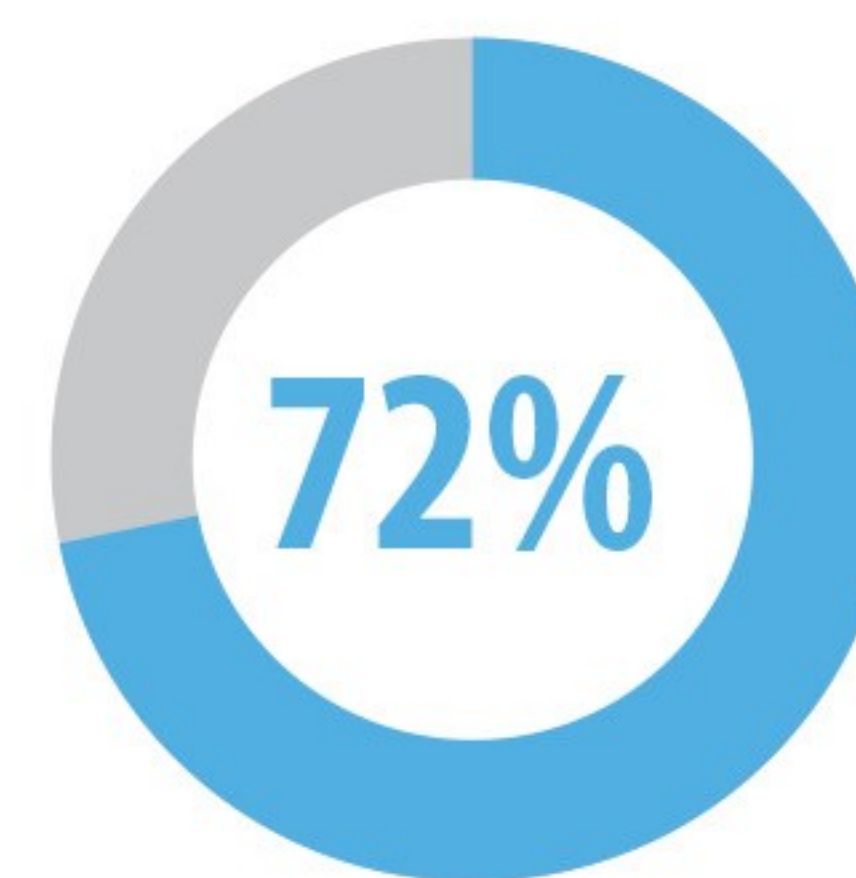
The online reputation of your cosmetic surgery practice is critical to the success of your practice. The first thing a potential patient will do is scrutinize your online reputation. She simply has to visit Google and type in “your name + reviews” to find out what is being said about your practice online.



**94% OF PEOPLE
USE ONLINE
REVIEWS WHEN
MAKING A
DECISION**



**89% OF
PEOPLE
TRUST ONLINE
REVIEWS**



**72% OF PEOPLE
CONSIDER ONLINE
REVIEWS TO BE OF
THE SAME VALUE
AS PERSONAL
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Brand reputation is an important element of online marketing. If you were to Google your cosmetic surgery practice, you can find out what is being said about your practice—the good, the bad, and the ugly! The best way to maintain your practice brand is by constantly monitoring and enhancing your online reputation. Respond to all reviews; acknowledge and thank a user for leaving a positive review. If you do receive a negative review, don't ignore it. Respond with an olive branch, so to speak. The aim should be to resolve grievances amicably and to the satisfaction of both parties involved. Here are the top review sites to target if you want to get more reviews and to optimize your listing so your practice moves up the ranks in Google search results:

- | | | | |
|----------|-----------------|---------------|-------------|
| ▶ Google | ▶ Health Grades | ▶ Doctors Dig | ▶ Real Self |
| ▶ Yelp | ▶ Doctoroogie | ▶ Vitals | |

Online marketing is the future of marketing for cosmetic surgery practices. It requires a specific and customized approach; one that can set you apart from your competitors and move your practice to the front lines so that your cosmetic surgery practice more visible to potential patients. ■



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RESOURCES

1. <http://healthworkscollective.com/parkerwhite/127586/healthcare-marketing-2014-10-reasons-demand-digital>
2. <http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2013/Health-online/Summary-of-Findings.aspx>