



Can You Afford to Ignore a Digital Marketing Strategy for Your Practice?

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Digital marketing has become one of the basic elements of successful and profitable businesses today. It has emerged as an integral part of almost every existing marketing strategy. In the modern era where the world is heavily dependent on the Internet, ignoring this factor for marketing could adversely affect your dental practice in terms of online reputation and actual footfalls of patients at your office.

Here are some of the key reasons why digital marketing has become so important today for every business:

- Many of the potential customers are dependent on the internet these days. It had become a habit of digital-savvy consumers to first acquire knowledge about a business online and then make a final decision. Consumers often check online reviews and ratings of a business before engaging with them or asking for their service.

Your absence from the online world and social media in this situation could cost you potential clients in your area. There are high chances that they may go with other dental practices that have created a good online presence. So, maintaining active social media accounts, a user-friendly and search engine optimized dental website and a favorable presence on reviews and ratings on third party sites is important.

- Being on the digital platforms, you will be able to connect with your customers more easily and efficiently compared to an exclusive offline communication.

These are some of the basic reasons why you should go for digital marketing of your dental practice. Undoubtedly many small practices tend to pay less attention to digital, but it's important to understand its unparalleled benefits. Choosing to rely solely on the word of mouth to promote your practice may not work well in today's world of digital marketing.

Primary Digital Marketing Strategies

There are many ways in which you can promote your dental business. Both the online and offline markets are influential. Though offline marketing has been around for ages, there are now innovative online content marketing and SEO strategies that can complement offline marketing. Here are some of the basic digital marketing strategies for your dental practice:

1. Build a strong dental website

Digital marketing cannot really work without an effective website. No matter what platform you choose to promote your practice, most people in the end, are going to search for your website on Google. It gives them an idea about your authenticity and your capabilities as a dental practice.

So, whether or not you create a very extensive website, you should create at least a small or mid-sized website with 15 to 20 web pages. Ensure that every aspect of your website is up to date at all times. Try and add images and videos for customers' easy and comfortable access to your key points.

2. Search engine optimization

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is a process where non-paid organic actions, like the use of the right keywords in your website, your active social media presence and references of your website in other sites and blogs etc., bring the targeted traffic to your website. Currently, according to Clutch only 44% of the businesses are investing in SEO. But being one of them can deliver good results for your dental practice.

3. Local search engine optimization

According to SEL: "More Google searches take place on mobile devices than on computers in 10 countries including the US and Japan."

Local search engine optimization means optimizing your website so as to make it available for local searches. This is because maximum people now search for businesses on their mobile phones instead of the laptop or the computer. So, in order to extend your online reach, you must go for the mobile SEO strategy.

4. Email marketing

Approximately seven in 10 businesses use email marketing today and it ranks as the third most popular digital marketing strategy. A large number of people use their mobile phones for searches, as aforementioned, and check their email on a mobile device instead of PC.

So, when you plan for email marketing, make sure your messages are precise and effective. Clicking on the links must be comfortable and keywords mustn't be stuffed in the email. Make sure to use non-salesy words in the subject line in order to prevent your email being pushed in the spam folder.

5. Social media marketing

Social media has become the backbone of digital marketing these days. In order to make it efficient, your social networks must be constantly updated and responsive. Try to avoid any typos or silly mistakes when you post messages on social media as it can irritate your potential clients and leave a poor impression about your practice.

Try to cover as many diverse social media platforms as possible for the promotion and advertisement of your dental office and services. As more and more people are getting connected to social media every day, you are likely to achieve good returns for your social promotion efforts.

6. Content marketing

Your website and blog content speaks directly to your potential clients. Whatever digital platform you may use for your dental practice marketing, the quality of the content is going to make a key difference.

So, make sure to create informative, relevant, accurate and patient-friendly content across all the digital platforms you use. It can include white papers, e-books, blogs, posts, images, videos, graphics, etc. Try to have people who can dedicate some time to develop good content for your digital marketing strategy.

7. Pay-per-click (PPC) advertising

PPC advertising is getting increasingly popular these days. You can post ads about your dental website or business on various online platforms like Google, Facebook, YouTube, and others. You are only charged when someone actually clicks your ad. Otherwise you don't pay anything.

PPC advertising helps you get attention of the target audience for your dental practice even if they are not actually visiting your website. Adding impressive images and videos to your PPC campaign can increase the chances of people clicking on your ads.

8. Marketing automation

Marketing automation is used to lessen the burden of organizing digital workload. It can act like a good support system for your overall digital promotion efforts. You can use it to send automated replies to your customers on online platforms. It can also help you execute the best timings to send newsletters, emails and such communication to your customers through an automated program.

9. Mobile Messaging

Mobile messaging is another integral element of digital marketing. It includes all, text messages, WhatsApp, messenger, Viber, WeChat and many more. You could connect with your customers from time to time via these platforms.

10. Online ratings and reviews

According to one study, 86% of consumers go through the reviews and ratings for local businesses. Maximum people between the age group 18-34 prefer reading online reviews and ratings before actually visiting a dentist.

Therefore, you must ensure proactive and regular responses to online reviews and especially to the negative ones. You must optimize your practice profile on review websites and continually update it for better results.

These are some of the tips you must follow in order to boost the prospects of your dental practice. The future belongs to digital marketing, particularly from small and medium businesses and professional practitioners such as dentists.

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 180+ 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.