

Twitter Marketing for Dentists: Seven Effective Strategies to Gain More Followers

How can dentists gain more followers on Twitter? Take advantage of all the benefits the social media platform has to offer with these seven strategies.

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Twitter can be a great tool to grow your practice, connect with people, and firmly establish yourself as an authority in your domain.

Up until a decade ago, most medical marketers would have rejected the idea of spending too much time on social media. Today, not only are an increasing number of physicians and their medical marketing partners using social media, but are benefitting immensely from it as well. Twitter, in particular, has proved to be one of the most effective social media platforms for medical professionals.

Why Use Twitter?

With well over 300 million active users, Twitter is one of the most popular and widely used social networking sites in the world today. It allows you to create a strong online presence, establish yourself as the foremost expert in your domain, expand your practice by attracting new patients, stay in touch with existing patients, connect and collaborate with other medical professionals, and stay updated on all the latest news, educational events, and policy updates.

One of the main goals of setting up a Twitter account is to gain a large number of followers. After all, if no one reads your tweets, what is the point of doing it in the first place? Fortunately, it is easier for medical professionals to gain followers on social media than professionals from many other fields. People generally trust medical professionals, look up to them, and rely upon them for guidance. The prefix ‘Dr.’ instantly gives you an air of authority and authenticity, which works to your advantage on social media.

Given here is a list of seven easy-to-follow, tried-and-tested strategies to increase your follower count on Twitter.

1. Build a Solid Bio

A solid bio is very important as it is the first thing people are likely to notice when they visit your Twitter account. So, you need to make sure your bio grabs people’s attention, but not in an overly needy, over-the-top manner.

The first thing you need to do is to upload a high resolution picture of yourself in professional attire. Casual attire should be avoided, as the goal here is to establish yourself as an authority in your domain. It is a good idea to give a human face to your practice, as it makes it easier for people to connect with you.

You should highlight your educational qualifications to let people know what your specialty is. You should include your location and also a URL to your personal website or blog, if you have one.

2. Develop a Posting Schedule

Your main goal should be to keep your Twitter account active. So, post regularly – at least two or three times a day – and make sure your posts are focused on general wellness as well as your particular area of specialty.

The timing of your tweets is also important. You should send out your most useful and educational tweets when your target audience is likely to have the leisure to spend time on social media – typically late afternoons and evenings. If you are not able to do so, you can schedule your tweets so that they are posted automatically at regular intervals. There are free services available, which allow you to schedule your tweets according to your preference.

3. Share Useful, Relevant Information

Keep it simple and make sure your tweets are easy to read and understand. Do not limit yourself to your area of specialty. Tell people how they can lead a healthy lifestyle, share motivational health messages, and offer health tips that people can easily implement in their life.

Tweets with images generally tend to attract more eyeballs, so add relevant visuals to your posts whenever you can. Share links to medical journals, interesting articles, and policy updates to make sure your followers are well informed of the latest happenings in your field. If you have a personal blog, make sure you share links to your own posts as well.

4. Follow Others

The thumb rule of Twitter is that if you follow others, they are likely to follow you back. So, here is who you need to follow.

- Your existing patients and local community partners like drugstores and lab testing facilities.
- Prominent medical and health organizations like the American Medical Association.
- Prominent medical websites like WebMD, MedicinePlus, Healthline, and Prevention.
- Dentists from your own specialty as well as other specialties.
- Drug companies and brands that you usually recommend to your patients.

5. Use Hashtags

The conversations that take place on Twitter are categorized and organized with the help of hashtags. So, it is important to add relevant hashtags to your tweets. It could be the name of a medical procedure, an ailment, a medical institution, a field of specialty, a medical conference, or any other keyword that is relevant to your tweets. By using proper hashtags, you can make sure that your tweets reach a larger number of people – particularly those are in need of general medical advice.

6. Engage Your Followers

Do not use your Twitter account like a message board where only you get to post things. Respond to your followers from time to time. Understandably, you cannot offer medical advice on social media, but you can certainly answer general questions related to your field and practice. Be nice to your followers and try to respond to their feedback, criticism, and queries sincerely. While it is not humanly possible to engage everyone who follows you, a quick glance at your timeline will show you who deserves a response and who does not.

7. Promote Your Twitter Account

Promote your Twitter account by adding a link to the same on your website, blog, and email signature. Add your Twitter handle to your invoices, payment receipts, and promotional material like brochures and posters. If you have other social media accounts on sites like Facebook, Google Plus, LinkedIn, and Instagram, you can promote your Twitter account through those pages as well.

You can also ask local community partners like pharmacies, health stores, and lab facilities to promote your Twitter profile on their social media pages.

What Not to Do on Twitter

Now that you know what you need to do to increase your follower count on Twitter, here are a couple of things that you should never, ever do.

- Do not buy Twitter followers for any reason. Let your follower count grow organically, even if it takes time. Purchasing followers is a violation of Twitter's terms and conditions. So, your account could get suspended, which could dent your online as well as offline reputation.
- Do not tweet anything that could violate your oath and ethics. Make sure you do not accidentally reveal the identity of your patients in your tweets. Do not get into arguments with anyone, particularly with fellow medical professionals. Social media arguments have a peculiar way of turning nasty before you even realize it. So, avoid quarrels at all costs.

Keep Calm and Tweet On

Twitter can be a great tool to grow your practice, connect with people, and firmly establish yourself as an authority in your domain. If you tweet relevant, useful information on a consistent basis, you can increase your online reach greatly, enhance your professional reputation, develop contacts, and build networks that could last you a lifetime.

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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 doctors. With a team of 180+ full time marketers, www.ekwa.com helps doctors 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.

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