

Use Email Marketing to Build Patient Loyalty

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Most dental practices would like to concentrate on acquiring new patients. But they forget that mere acquisitions aren't enough, as patients who visit you once might not necessarily return. To get patients to come back, you need to provide them with a memorable experience. Going the extra mile is the key ingredient in making sure your patients are happy and loyal.

There are several ways to ensure patient loyalty. But one of the most tried and tested methods is email marketing. This might come as a surprise and sound counterintuitive, since nobody likes spam. Strategic email marketing, though, is one of the simplest ways to achieve patient loyalty and retention because email is among the top things people do on their mobile phones.

Here are a few proven tips to ensure retention and loyalty with the help of your email marketing program.

Know Your Audience

This is the first step in email marketing. You need to make sure that you understand your target patients if you want to attract them. No matter how well-written or persuasive your emails are, you need to be sure that you speak directly to your audience.

A good way to understand your patient is by building buyer personas, which are abstract representations of ideal patients based on market research and patient data. You can make these personas seem more lifelike by giving them a gender, name, income, job, and other additional attributes similar to targeted patients and create your emails with them in mind.

Target New Patients

You might get real excited to try out your new and improved email campaign. But before you completely junk your former email strategy, it is important for you to test the new campaign to ensure that it works and that it targets all your patients.

A good way to achieve this is by targeting your new campaign on a fairly new set of patients. By aiming for a fresh start, you can seek reactions from a patient base that has never had a chance to form an opinion about your services. This will provide a clear and concise picture of patient response to your new campaign without any meddling from previous strategies. You also should check for improvements in patient conversion while comparing the effects of the new campaign with your former strategy.

Once you have determined the factors that will make your new email dental marketing campaign effective, you can begin to implement the new strategies across a wider reach of your patient base. You can also begin to phase out older campaigns by integrating longtime dental patients in the new targeted database.

Customize Campaigns for Individual Segments

Your new email marketing campaign should be tailored and customized to address the unique needs of each patient base. You can hyper-target patients and sort them into segments as per real-time client data by using software platforms such as [Optimove](#).

It is important that various segments of patients receive emails that are unique and address their needs. For example, you can have two different segments for women aged 30 to 40. One segment can comprise women who have visited your practice for a cosmetic dental procedure, while the other can consist of those individuals who only made an inquiry by phone, email, or website, but never visited. It also is possible to use detailed patient segments as a base to create strategic emails.

Provide Loyalty Rewards

Emails can be used to reward patients who are loyal as well. Early or exclusive deal emails can be offered to loyal patients, or you can provide points and other such perks through loyalty programs.

Such special status can be communicated freely via emails. Also, perks and rewards such as a rebate on a specific procedure can be sent to highly targeted clients via email.

Additionally, encouragement emails can be used to motivate patients who are almost at the loyalty mark. You can send emails with messages like, “Congratulations! Only two more to go before you qualify for a free cleaning service.”

Send Reminders for Them to Return

Emails can be used to encourage patients to return by offering incentives once your patient database has been segmented and your campaigns are refined and highly targeted. Patient attention can be attracted by offers, sale promotions, special discount promo codes, and even points or vouchers to return.

Such emails create urgency and make patients feel the need to contact you. Phrases such as “deals end tomorrow,” “24 hour sale,” and “last chance” intensify this effect. You can even set up automatic email triggers for limited time sales and other incentives by using email automation tools available online.

Don't Forget "Thank You" Emails

You should send a "thank you" email whenever patients leave contact information or comments on your website. This allows your patients to feel valued and appreciated. You should also strive to make your emails as personal as possible by customizing their content.

You might also like to experiment with humor or fun comments that are relevant to your practice depending upon your company's philosophy. Thank you emails can be made to feel more personal by closing with a signature from the dentist.

Make the Patient Experience a Constant Delight

Patient satisfaction should be among your top priorities, and your efforts should not end once a patient has received a procedure at your practice. You can delight your patients by sending them birthday mails and special discounts in addition to thank you emails. This will also give you a much needed boost to stand out from the crowd in a competitive marketplace.

Client Retention Is Possible with Client Satisfaction

Set your marketing priorities so that the focus shifts from making an end sale to an ongoing client experience. You can motivate any patient to return to your practice when you energize your email campaign to provide high-value service by way of useful incentives, personalized emails, and creative extra touches. This way, your patients will appreciate your efforts and will recognize the value of your dental services.

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