

Why Native Advertising Is a Value-Rich Marketing Option

17 Nov 2016 Naren Arulrajah

1005 times



Change and disruption have become the hallmarks of the digital advertising space. In this space, the consumer truly is the king. However, brands are finding it increasingly difficult to reach out and connect with their new age consumers because conventional advertising channels and media have lost steam and they don't exactly deliver in the digital environment.

For example, **70% of consumers** prefer to learn about brands and products via content as opposed to learning about them via traditional channels. In fact, potential consumers can spot advertising from a distance and actively ignore it. Millennials in particular are weary of any form of advertising. This obviously places brands in a difficult position since engagement and conversions are proving to be a huge challenge.

So how do brands connect with target audiences that simply don't respond to most forms of advertising?

Native Advertising

Before you consider any form of advertising, it is important that you chalk out or are clear about your purpose for advertising. If your main focus is to increase brand engagement, then you should be placing most of your advertising spend in content marketing. But if creating a buzz or awareness for your brand is a primary goal, then native advertising is an option worth considering.

Native advertising is a relatively new way of building brand exposure. Yet if used in the right way, it can help generate "impressions," click-backs to your practice's website, and even brand engagement. It also can help educate potential patients, raise awareness for your brand, or highlight a particular product or service that you want to present to target audiences.

But before we get to how native advertising can work for your practice, let us first tackle the all-important question of what native advertising is.

In simple terms, native advertising is essentially paid content created by an advertiser to match the form and function of the host or third-party platform or channel on which it is featured. Content can be in the form of articles, infographics, videos, and adverts among other formats. Although the premise for native advertising is to provide value, the immediate goal is mostly to sell a product or service.

Sponsored stories on social sites such as Facebook and Twitter and infomercials again are easy-to-spot examples of native advertising. You're probably thinking that they aren't exactly new, and you're right. Native advertising isn't new. What is new or rather what is different has to do with where these ads are placed.

Everyone is familiar with BuzzFeed and Huffington Post. These sites are popular because of the absolute convergence of value-based content that takes place on their platform. They partner with brands to create or feature content that highlights specific topics in ways that align with the goals of a brand. In other words, the content builds awareness for the brand among target audiences. And because these sites have established a high level of credibility among readers, content featured on these platforms automatically gains a certain level of trust.

With native advertising, you can expect to establish an intellectual connection with potential patients. Native ads are customized beyond just the visual aspect or the short-term lure of discounted prices. This form of advertising forges connections that align with consumer values, thinking, and expectations. Once this kind of a connection is created, brands can start building their own loyal audience base.

The content featured on the host site is tightly integrated with the platform to give it continuity rather than create a jarring effect. We have already established the fact that most digital audiences are weary of ads. But surprisingly, consumers respond well to native advertising since it is a more customized form of communication. Most native advertising platforms have small financial buy-ins, which means even small businesses or practices can leverage native advertising.

Native Advertising Platforms

The most effective and cost-friendly native advertising options for local brands are social sites. Twitter's promoted tweets, featured videos on YouTube, and sponsored posts on Instagram and Facebook have become a natural part of social audiences' browsing experiences. The ads flow naturally in users' feeds and blend with the content on the website almost seamlessly. The only way to distinguish them is through the words "promoted" or "sponsored."

Facebook ads is a fabulous place for dental practices to get started. It is a great platform mainly because it is huge, it allows specific targeting, it is popular among most patients, and it is affordable. The only thing to keep in mind when creating your ads is the reader mindset. If you aren't very sure about what to post, start by repurposing content that hit its mark with your audience in the past. This is one way of ensuring that users will feel more inclined to click on your ad when it appears on their screens.

Another thing to keep in mind when creating native ads is the platform. Facebook, for example, is a good option if you want to connect with new audiences or potential patients. While on Twitter, ads tend to be of a more informal nature and essentially deliver brand identity. And if you do have the dollar spend, then you could also look into publisher editorial streams such as [Nativo](#), [Outbrain](#), [AdNow](#), and [Taboola](#).

3 Things to Keep in Mind

First, set clear goals. Native advertising can be a shot in the arm for your advertising goals. However, their placement requires dollar investment. This means you need to be sure that you can measure the return on investment (ROI) for your native ad spend.

For example, explore the option of attaching your native ads to conversion rate calculations or with impressions, or even your site click-back rate. By including some kind of metric or benchmarking value to your native ads, you can evaluate and measure a particular area that demonstrates measurable growth.

Second, allocate a budget. Native ad spending is pegged to touch the [\\$4.57 billion mark in 2017](#). Clearly, native advertising is something that brands need to consider carefully. That said, big businesses can attach a 5- or even 6-figure dollar value on native ads. But for smaller brands, a budget check is critically important when seeking out native ad placements.

Start small by paying for a sponsored link published on a channel that is appropriate for your practice. If you see positive results, consider expanding to bigger and better campaigns via other channels. Just don't lose sight of your ROI while you experiment with different channels.

Finally, plan your marketing mix carefully. Native advertising can present your practice with a lot of potential for exposure if it is executed correctly, meaning you chalk out a plan that combines native advertising with

content marketing. This way you can expose your brand to target audiences in a way that primes them for deeper engagement and eventually conversion.

Keep in mind that different sites offer different levels of targeting. So ideally, it would be wise to look beyond demographics of age, gender, or marital status. You might also want to consider expanding your content reach beyond the host site. Look into other options such as a targeted campaign or placing the content on your own channels.

Conclusion

The volatile nature of the digital space has made it difficult for brands to find the ideal marketing channel. And in an environment that is cluttered with so much content, getting your brand message across to audiences can be a huge challenge.

Native advertising can help you reach out and connect with an audience that is more ready to engage with your brand. What is crucial to the success of your native advertising goals is that you ensure your message maintains its form, purpose, and value as opposed to becoming a blatant sales pitch.

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 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 to speak one-on-one with Naren.

Related Articles

[Use "Social First" Digital Marketing to Win New Patients](#)

[How to Improve Web Search Rankings for Your Dental Practice](#)

[Use Online Video to Build Your Dental Brand](#)



Tweet

Like Be the first of your friends to like this. G+1