



Your Dental Practice – Is There an App for That?

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Your dental patients are on the go, and they take the internet with them. They are using mobile devices to view your website, check their schedules, and contact your office. Why not make it easy for them with your very own mobile app?

WHY YOU NEED AN APP

You are always looking for new ways to market your practice and expand your patient base. However, you might be underestimating the rapidly skyrocketing popularity of mobile applications. Nearly 150 billion apps were downloaded last year, and experts expect that number to exceed 350 billion in the next four years.

Apps don't just reach new people. They also help build loyalty among existing patients. Offering an app will add value and convenience to their experience with your office, which they appreciate. Additionally, it can increase return visits. Patients aren't likely to pass up the convenience of scheduling an appointment with an app they already know well and use regularly.

DESIGNING YOUR DENTAL APP

When you contact a mobile developer, you will be asked what features you want included in the app. If you haven't given this much thought, you are likely to end up with a minimally functional application that does little more than advertise your practice and offer appointment scheduling. Unfortunately, people aren't likely to use it. Most of your patients are seeking valuable information, time-saving features, and genuinely useful tools.

Some of the most popular functions of dental apps include:

- Account management – Billing, scheduling, cancellations, setting appointment reminder preferences, secure communications for oral health questions (be sure that applicable features are HIPAA compliant)
- Oral health information – Hygiene tutorials, oral disease symptom checker, nutritional information, post-treatment care instructions, glossary of common dental terms
- Oral health tools – Reminders for brushing and flossing, timers to help patients brush for the proper length of time, treatment-specific guides and reminders such as when to change Invisalign aligners or when to refill prescriptions
- Creative extras – “preview” simulated results of whitening or other procedures, games and contests, tools to review your practice online, special offers and coupons, social sharing, refer to a friend
- Designed for kids – Fun games, explainer cartoons, simplified oral health information, parents' resources

Design your app around your patients, and incorporate the features that they are likely to find most useful. With some careful forethought and the help of a talented developer, you can put your practice in the palms of your patients' hands.

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 140+ 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.