

9 Ways to Optimize Twitter for Your Dermatology Practice

Stay focused on the right interactions and conversations, to derive greater business value from your efforts on Twitter.

BY NAREN ARULRAJAH WITH VIKAS VIJ

Twitter commands an active user base of more than 200 million. This means that there is a fairly good chance some of your prospective dermatology patients will be on Twitter. The challenge is to identify the segments of Twitter conversations that could be relevant to your practice and prioritize your marketing effort in those targeted areas.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

If you can stay focused on the right interactions and conversations, you can derive greater business value from your efforts on Twitter. Here are a few key tips to achieve this goal:

Engage with those who Respond. You should monitor people who show interest in your dermatology services and products, and focus on building a social relationship with them. Address their queries, express your gratitude for their comments, and pay more attention to them so that they feel they are being recognized. To identify and follow the people who comment on, reply to, or share your content at one place, create a “Twitter List” on the Twitter site and review it regularly.

Send Personalized Twitter Messages. Whenever a new patient at your dermatology practice informs you of their Twitter handle, make sure to maintain a record and connect with them on Twitter. Show them that you are grateful and you care by thanking them warmly and personally on Twitter. This will kick start a new social media relationship with that patient. Such warm and friendly tweets will also get noticed by others who will appreciate your personalized commitment and engagement with every patient.

Include a Twitter Handle Field in your Patient Forms.

Proactively obtain social media contact information about your new patients. The simplest way to do it is by including a Twitter username or handle field in your patient forms. The online contact form on your practice website can also have this field to collect information about new patients and visitors. Once you have the information, you can add the names of relevant people in your online “Twitter List,” which will enable you to engage meaningfully on Twitter with relevant and targeted people.

Focus on Twitter Users in your Local Area. Your maximum marketing effort on Twitter should be focused on people who are located in and around the geographical area where you run your dermatology practice. Twitter automatically tracks the geographic location of all such users who have enabled this option. This will help you know the location of the people that you interact with on Twitter. You can prioritize interactions and engage more with people who are closer to your office location because they are more likely to visit your practice in future.

Pay Attention to those who Tweet “Help”. Your larger goal through your social media engagement should be to assist, support, and educate people about various aspects of dermatology and familiarize them with new services, procedures, and products. Whenever an individual on Twitter has a query or seeks help or support about something, attend to such tweets on priority. A number of keyword filter tools can also be used to identify such tweets when they use the words “help” or “support”.

Track the Most Important Localized Keywords. Over time, you should have a list of both short and long-tail key-

(Continued on page 24)

(Continued from page 21)

words that generate the maximum localized traffic to your dermatology website. While tracking these keywords is important from an SEO point of view, you can also use the same keywords to optimize your Twitter promotion strategy. Use keyword monitoring tools such as TweetDeck or HootSuite to set up relevant keyword streams to monitor the targeted keywords. Once the streams are in place, you can quickly connect with people who are interested in those specific topics.

Connect with People who Visit your Website. Some of the visitors to your dermatology website may take some kind of action or engage with your site in a way that enables you to get in touch with them online. These people may download a free e-book or white paper, fill up their contact details in the contact form, make an online inquiry, or simply leave a comment in your blog along with their email address. Wherever you receive the Twitter handle of such visitors, you can engage with them proactively over Twitter. Advanced online tools are also available to track people who have visited one of the important pages of your website.

Use Appreciative Tweets as Patient Testimonials. Some of your patients may be very active on Twitter, and may tweet something positive about their experience at your practice. If you have been monitoring or engaging with your patients on Twitter, you will come to know about such valuable appreciative tweets that boost your online reputation. Choose the most encouraging of these tweets and use them as testimonials on your practice website. Once those testimonials are live on your site, you may even tweet the links to the original patients with a note of thanks.

Use Twitter for Market Research. Twitter can be used not only to engage with potential patients from a marketing perspective, but also to conduct simple market research about the prevailing trends. You can gauge what kind of products, services, and procedures are currently the topics of conversation and what kind of concerns and issues are garnering maximum attention. You can take specific note of competitors' names being mentioned and what kind of activities they are engaged in. ■

Naren Arulrajah is President and CEO of Ekwa Marketing, a complete Internet marketing company which focuses on SEO, social media, marketing education and the online reputations of dermatologists. With a team of 140+ full time marketers, www.ekwa.com helps dermatologists 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.

