

The Ultimate Guide to Attracting More Patients

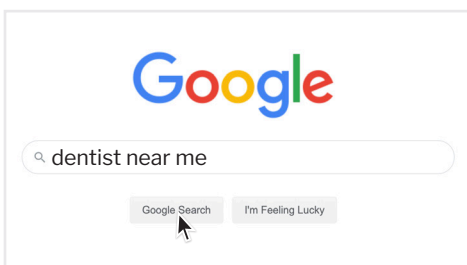
Dental Marketing Strategies to Grow Your Practice



Why Patients Look for a New Dentist

At some point in your dental practice's history, you've sought out ways to attract new patients. There are many great ideas, but where do you start?

Read on to find out the answer.



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Why Patients Look for a New Dentist

Some patients seek a new dentist because of a negative experience elsewhere. Some are new to the area or seek a specialist for a specific service or treatment type.

No matter what compels a patient to search for a new dentist, the patient is actively seeking a solution to a problem or need. The operative word here is "search." While social media marketing, ads and other methodologies have their place, a patient looking for a new dentist is going to be searching for you. Where do they search? Online!

When setting yourself up for online success, there are a number of strategies that we are going to discuss, but they can be broken into two categories: (1) Rankings and (2) Ratings.

Rankings: The Importance of Search Engines in Dental Marketing

Your ranking is simply the spot in which you appear on a search engine results page (SERP). That's just a fancy way of describing all the results that are displayed after you click "search." So, when you go to Google and you type in "Dentist Near Me," what spot do you appear in? Are you at the very top of your page? If so, congratulations!

Your ranking indicates how likely a dental patient will be to click through to your website. In fact, if you are in the top spot, you are likely to receive a click-through rate (CTR) of 25-30%. That will decline exponentially as you move to spot two, three and four. So the question is: how do you get to that coveted, top spot? On the following pages, you will read what you need to know so your dental practice can rank number one in a Google search.

Search Engine Optimization for Dental Practices

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is the process of implementing keywords and other factors into your website and content to rank higher on the SERP. The keywords are the terms that people type into the search bar in Google, Yahoo or Bing to find information about a specific topic. There are certain keywords for your dental practice that will drive more traffic to your website which, in turn, allows you to attract more dental patients.

Here are a few dental SEO tips that can help:

- 1. Use Google's PageSpeed Analyzer:** This is one of SEO's best kept secrets. Search engines send out web crawlers called "spiders" to scan your website. These bots look for many things including usability, speed and, of course, content. If your website is out-of-date, your website's rank will take a hit.
- 2. Content:** Creating content for your website is important. Make sure you have relevant information about your practice including up-to-date bios and pictures of your team, information on various technologies you have and services you offer, etc. The more content you create that is relevant and easy-to-understand, the higher the likelihood you will rank better with search engines.
- 3. Technology and Website** You want to project an image of being current and up-to-date to potential patients, and your website is often the first impression that a patient will have of you and your team. Not only does this create a better user experience and is attractive to new dental patients, it also helps with your SEO.

All of these tips will help as a part of your dental marketing plan to increase new dental patient traffic to your website. However, SEO is not the only thing that impacts your search engine ranking.

Paid-Per-Click Ads to Attract New Dental Patients

One of the best ways to get new dental patients when they search online is via pay-per-click (PPC) search engine ads. Remember, new dental patients are most likely to click the top one or two results. Paid search ads are one of the best ways to appear at the top and capture those early clicks.

Once a potential patient clicks your ad, make sure they're going to a dedicated landing page on your website. For example, if the ad mentions a special offer for a New Patient Exam and X-Rays, then you want the landing page to mention the same special offer.

Do not neglect to spend money where it matters. It is important to set the right dental marketing budget for online marketing. Remember, the lifetime value of a dental patient is literally thousands of dollars.

By using tracking phone numbers on your PPC ads and the corresponding landing pages, you can see how many potential patients responded to that ad. It's an effective way to learn if your ads are working.

Website Content Ideas

- Doctor bio
- Team pictures
- Video of your practice
- Welcome video from Doctor
- Patient video testimonials
- 5-Star reviews
- Fun pictures with patients
- Before & after pictures
- Descriptions of services
- Special offers



PPC Tips

- ✓ Ads & landing pages match
- ✓ Tracking phone numbers
- ✓ Clear call-to-action



Make a Great Impression with Your Google Map Listing

Many people will look at your Google star rating and reviews before making the decision to call.

Is Google My Business Important for Dental Offices?

In addition to using SEO best practices on your website, it is important that you also make sure all of your social profiles are updated as well. Your business hours, website address (URL) and office address should be consistent across Yelp, Facebook, Google, etc. All of this can influence your ranking. But for now, we will focus on the importance of Google My Business. Many people refer to this as their Google map listing.

By claiming the Google My Business profile for your dental office, you are able to control how your practice is displayed on the search results page. The number one way for your dental practice to appear at the top of Google searches is to activate your Google My Business profile and keep it up-to-date. You can also use a call tracking phone number on the Google My Business page, so you know exactly how many potential patients call you after seeing your listing. Just be sure that you also enter your dental practice's main phone number in the second phone number field your Google My Business listing.

The Importance of Click-to-Call

In all of your ads, promotions and marketing for your dental practice, you absolutely must have clear call-to-actions (CTAs). A call-to-action is what makes someone move from a "researcher" to a patient. Having great SEO, local listings and a beautiful website are all important, but if a prospective patient does not have a clear path to set an appointment, you've wasted every dollar you spend on all those marketing efforts.

This is the biggest dental marketing fail. It is important to have the phone number clearly listed on every advertisement, on your Google My Business listing, and in multiple places on your website. In fact, on your dental mobile website, your phone number should have a big "Click-to-Call" button right at the top. Google will already add this feature if you include your number on your Google ads.

Many dental practices use call tracking numbers so they know where every caller comes from and whether or not they converted to an appointment. This will help you better measure return on investment (ROI) of your dental patients.

Ratings: Why Your Dental Practice's Online Reputation Matters

Online reputation management for dental practices is a hot topic. Getting patient ratings should be a critical part of your dental marketing plan. These ratings show up on platforms like Google, Yelp and Facebook to help reinforce the fact that your practice creates an outstanding experience for all patients.

Personal referrals to dental offices no longer are as powerful as online reviews. In fact, an online review of your practice can heavily influence whether a patient will pick up the phone and call to schedule that appointment. A recent study shows that 93% of your patients will decide whether or not to go to your practice based on online reviews.

Your ratings can directly influence your ranking. If you have no reviews or poor reviews, the search engine algorithms will show other practices with better reviews first. Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

- 1. Quality over quantity:** The content shared by patients means more than the number of reviews. Encourage your patients to share a bit more about their experience. What did they like most? Was it your team, the ease of scheduling, how their smile looked after their visit? These are the things that a potential patient who is researching your practice wants to know.
- 2. Keep it consistent:** The search engine algorithms tend to show dental practices that regularly get new reviews higher than ones that don't. That means it's better to have a few patients review you each week rather than a bunch review you all on one day.
- 3. How to overcome a bad review on your dental practice:** The best way to overcome a bad review is to have more good ones that outweigh it. You can't delete poor reviews. Instead, you can post a polite reply such as, "We strive to provide excellent patient care and customer service every time. Please call our practice directly so we can address your concern." In this case, one sour review will not spoil your dental practice's online reputation as long as you have happy patients regularly posting happy reviews - and pushing down those few negative reviews.

93%

Consider reviews
before calling



Online Review Tips

Ask happy patients to review you via their cell phone before they leave your office.

Adding just two great reviews each week can boost your visibility and attract more potential patients.



Social Media is a chance to showcase what makes your team special.

How Dentists Can Be Found Online

There are countless ways to make sure your dental practice can be found online both before and after a patient conducts a search on Google or one of the other search engines. Let's explore some of the top ways you can attract new dental patients through online marketing and answer several common questions dentists have about the best way to get new patients.

Online Retargeting Ads

Have you ever visited a website and then after you leave that site, you see an advertisement from that company? This is retargeting, or remarketing, and it is a standard digital marketing practice. Without getting into too much technical detail, companies can place a tracking pixel on their website or leverage other customer data they have to target consumers throughout their online journey.

Dental practices can utilize retargeting ads online to maximize their reach in attracting new patients to their practices. These ads can be displayed on news sites, blogs, forums, social media and more. The best part is these ads are relatively inexpensive. But don't forget, it is critical to display clear call-to-actions to get that patient to pick up the phone and call your practice.

Social Media Posts

Social media is a great platform to post updates on your dental practice. Remember that people buy from people that they like and trust. Just as you may use social media in your personal life to stay connected with people, your dental practice can, too. Here are some tips on what dental offices should post on their social media accounts

- 1. Keep it personal:** People like to be able to relate to you. Did you have a fun holiday part or are you celebrating a birthday? Post pictures showing off the fact that your office is human and you like to have fun. It gives the sense of community.
- 2. Provide Dental Insights:** If it is National Dental Assistants week, post something about what a day in the life of an assistant looks like or post fun pictures of your dental assistants. Educate people, but again, keep it personal.
- 3. Show happy patients:** First things first, make sure your HIPAA docs are in order and you have the proper photo releases--but after doing that, share your patient stories and testimonials, as appropriate, on your social media channels. A fun picture of a patient who just finished Invisalign or just had a bridge seated or just had their teeth whitened - these are all great examples!

4. **Expose what non-patients are missing:** By highlighting the fun in your office and special perks you offer like mints when you walk in or soothing oils and scents for the operator, you can invoke FOMO (fear of missing out). This is a great social media tactic that can especially capture the attention of Millennials. If your practice has cooler amenities and nicer perks than their current dental practice, they may make the switch.
5. **Call-to-actions in your office:** This is an easy one: make sure your phone number or a tracking phone number is clearly displayed on each of your social media channels. Also, if you have a custom hashtag or just want people to tag your profiles during their visit, make sure your social media information is clearly displayed in the operatories and check-out area.
6. **Ask patients to post pictures on their own social media sites:** While it's great when a patient signs the consent form and gives you permission to share their picture on your practice's social media sites, it's even more impactful when they share their picture on their own social media sites.

A dental practice's social media posts should connect on an emotional level with their patient population, not try to sell them. This keeps your practice front of mind and is a great source of marketing to existing patients.

Social Media Advertising

Paid ads on social media allow you to market directly to prospective patients. Unless you provide very elective procedures like exclusive teeth whitening, TMJ specialization or implants, paying for social media advertising is not always as effective as search might be.

For example, if you offer multiple services, adding these each in a carousel ad on Facebook or Instagram could be very effective. It shows your practice is the one-stop dental office for multiple needs. In cases like these, paid social ads could encourage patients to switch to your office.

Traditional Advertising

Online advertisements are quickly becoming the primary way in which dentists are advertising. However, there are still some offline traditional mediums that dentists use. So does traditional advertising work for dental practices? The answer is a clear and resounding ...it depends.



Advertise where
your patients
spend their time.

2.5 hours

Daily average time spent
on social media

Marketing is how you let people know about you.

Once they've called your practice, it's up to your team to convert that caller into a new patient.

Very much like maintaining social media accounts, most traditional mediums such as radio, print ads, television and team sponsorships help a dental office market to its new and existing customers and re-instill brand loyalty. If you look at the marketing funnel, the top of the funnel (meaning where new patients first find out about you) is the Awareness section. Moving down the marketing funnel, you have Consideration. This is where a prospective patient makes the decision to come to your practice. Most offline marketing techniques generate awareness. This could include items like banners on the soccer field or sponsoring an ad in the local high school playbill

In the case of high-end cosmetic procedures or specialty elective cases, advertisements in print or on the radio may still make sense. Regardless of your medium, it is critical you have a clear call to action. You need to get patients to call your practice and in turn, make sure your team answering the phones knows how to convert that caller into a lifetime patient.

Turn More Callers into Booked Appointments

You've invested in marketing to drive new patient calls. Now your team needs to convince the caller they've made the right choice by choosing your practice for their dental care. The only way you can know if you succeed with your marketing efforts is to implement in-depth call tracking practices to measure the return on investment (ROI).

What is Call Tracking?

Call tracking uses custom phone numbers that instantly forward to your dental practice or call center. There's no delay for the caller, and no change in how your team member answers the phone. Sophisticated call-tracking services record the phone call and analyze it so the dental practice owner knows what the caller wanted and if the call ended in a booked appointment.

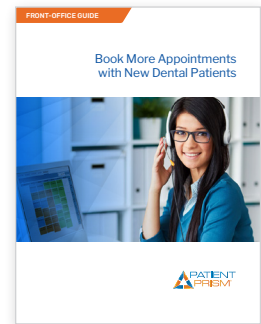
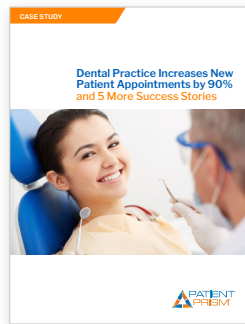
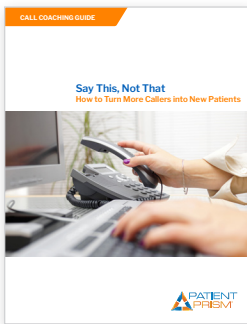
Patient Prism takes that one step further. Through patented Artificial Intelligence technology, it identifies potential new patients who did not book an appointment and emails an alert to the dental practice within an hour with specific coaching tips so a team member can call back that potential patient, address his/her concerns, and win them back. It's a second chance to identify and recapture missed opportunities and provide quick training to your team so they know how to handle a similar situation the next time it comes up.

To learn how Patient Prism could help your team convert more callers into new patients, call 800-381-3638 or visit PatientPrism.com/demo.

About Patient Prism

Patient Prism provides call tracking and call coaching software designed exclusively for dental practices to improve new patient call conversions and increase dental practice revenue. It provides business analytics, coaching tips, and actionable data to improve staff performance and recapture callers who initially did not book an appointment. In addition, it offers Patient Prism Academy, a learning management system with more than 900 training videos and interviews with dental industry leaders. This gives dental practices a way to consistently provide team members with access to the industry's most respected leaders so they can stay up-to-date on the latest trends and best practices.

Please visit PatientPrism.com to download more resources to help you grow your dental practice.



For more information, call Patient Prism at **800-381-3638** or visit us online at PatientPrism.com

We bridge the gap between your dental marketing and patient conversion.