I know this subject is scary and most of you don’t even want to think about producing video as part of your Internet marketing program. “It’s too expensive. It takes too much time. I don’t know where to start!”

If you don’t, though, you are missing out on a huge opportunity that will affect the bottom line of your practice today and its future in the years to come.

Online video viewership set a new record in December 2008 with a 13 percent increase over the previous month, according to a report released from the comScore.com Video Metrix Service. For the first time, U.S. Internet users watched more than 14.5 billion videos in December.

As you might expect, Google Sites (which includes YouTube) led the growth charge, accounting for 49 percent of the incremental gain in overall videos viewed versus the previous month. In December, almost 100 million viewers watched almost 6 billion videos on YouTube alone.

Having your video rank on page one of Google is equivalent to reaching the “dental marketing Mecca.” Viewers can’t resist clicking on a video when searching for products or services online. Once your video link reaches page one, you are golden.

Viewers click and your video keeps playing and playing, just like the Energizer® battery bunny, 24/7, whether you are working, sleeping, eating, playing golf or spending time with your family. There is no better return on investment today than video marketing.

**Why is video so powerful?**

Video is the No. 1 marketing tool available to deliver your personalized marketing message, exactly the way you want it, at precisely the moment a prospective new patient is looking for your services on the Internet.

It engages the senses and creates emotion. Viewers can hear and see who you are and what you are all about. This is difficult to accomplish with the written word on a Web site.

Statistics show that video marketing on a Web site increases consumer interest by more than 100 percent, resulting in a call to action for products or services (such as, actually contacting your office for an exam).

It is less expensive to produce video than TV and radio commercials. In addition, once your video is created and uploaded to the Internet, it is “evergreen” visible for everyone to see until you take it down, or not.

Video is the No. 1 preferred form of communication in today’s tech-savvy society. What would you prefer to do: watch a video on a subject of interest or read Web site copy? There is no contest.

**Speed to market**

Speed to market wins the race. The window of opportunity to be the first in your area to add video to your Web site might never come again.

Are you waiting around for patients to find you?
site is a small one. Don’t be a “me too” practice. Lead the way in an economy that cries out for something different to allow a practice to stand out in the crowd.

If your marketing budget doesn’t allow for custom video right now, an inexpensive but powerful alternative is www.marketingwithlivevideo.com. Here, you can hire an Internet actor to deliver your marketing message for you.

One way or another, video is the key to a successful Internet marketing campaign. Venture outside your comfort zone and deliver your own public relations message to consumers in your demographic.

Do it today to improve the health of your practice, or die.

Earn C.E. credits online with Miller's focused Webinar series
Mary Kay Miller offers a six-part series of Internet marketing Webinars. Each archived module allows you to watch the videos at a time that is convenient for you. Take advantage of this opportunity to improve your Internet presence with your current Web site and Web 2.0 marketing strategies, while earning ADA-CERP credits. You can find Miller’s Webinar series at www.DTStudyClub.com.

About the author
Mary Kay Miller is founder and CEO of Orthopreneur™ Marketing Solutions. After 50-plus years as a business and marketing coordinator for professional practices, Mary Kay has narrowed her marketing expertise to Internet Web 2.0 marketing, SEO (search engine optimization) and the creation of marketing systems to save teams valuable time and effort.

Her book, “Marketing Your Practice Through Different Eyes,” was released in May 2008 and is a free 100-page eBook available on her Web site www.orthopreneur.com. It is the first multi-media eBook of its kind in dentistry and the first book ever written on marketing for both dentists and team members. It enables dentists and staff members to understand and experience for themselves how the Internet and Web 2.0 marketing engages and grabs the attention of today’s consumer.

Fight oral cancer!
Did you know that dentists are one of the most trusted professionals to give advice? Thus, no other medical professionals are in a better position to show patients that they are committed to detecting and treating oral cancer.

Prove to your patients just how committed you are to fighting this disease by signing up to be listed at www.oralcancerselfexam.com. This new Web site was developed for consumers in order to show them how to do self-examinations for oral cancer.

Self-examination can help your patients to detect abnormalities or incipient oral cancer lesions early. Early detection in the fight against cancer is crucial and a primary benefit in encouraging your patients to engage in self-examinations. Secondly, as dental patients become more familiar with their oral cavity, it will stimulate them to receive treatment much faster.

Conducting your own inspection of patients’ oral cavities provides the perfect opportunity to mention that this is something they can easily do themselves as well. You can explain the procedure in brief and then let them know about the Web site, www.oralcancerselfexam.com, that can provide them with all the details they need.

If dental professionals do not take the lead in the fight against oral cancer, who will? And in the eyes of our patients, they likely would not expect anyone else to do so — would you?