Social Media Marketing Measurement - Evaluating the Effectiveness of Your Efforts

Ritz Zamora looks at tracking the effectiveness of your online presence

A re you one of the many practices marketing with social media? If so, how do you track your effectiveness? As with any marketing activity, social media marketing efforts need to be measured. Below are several metrics you can monitor and evaluate to determine how you are doing.

1. Number of quality Facebook fans - note the word “quality”. Huge numbers of people who like your practice page are likely irrelevant if those fans live outside of your geographic area or if they are not genuinely interested in your practice. For example, people “liked” your page as a favour to a friend; however they immediately hid you from their newsfeed.

A quality community consists of existing patients, family or friends of existing patients/potential new patients (people who live within reasonable travelling distance of your practice), alliances, referral partners, neighborhood friends or colleagues, and those with a genuine interest in you, your team, or your practice.

2. Number of Facebook testimonials - Facebook testimonials are more valuable than your average testimonial. For one, friends of friends may have witnessed the testimonial post in action via Facebook’s newsfeed activity. Second, the patient’s testimonial rests adjacent to their profile photo—this gives life to testimonials in ways not possible in the past. In other words you can click on other people’s profile links and confirm they are in fact “real” people/en-dorsers (not fake reviewers). Often you may see the town these people live in, which school they attended, or where they work. Third, once a patient likes your practice page, they are seeing the number of new patients “from the internet” grow. With the addition of Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube, it’s important to be able to distinguish exactly where on the internet you were found.

3. Website traffic from social media - hopefully your practice is already using a tool such as Google Analytics to determine where your website traffic is coming from. This free tool can prove invaluable for informing you where web visits are originating. Talk to your webmaster about Google Analytics or a similar report that you can easily follow. Over time the report can show you if you are receiving traffic from Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google Plus, etc.

4. Amount of engagement/interaction - a unique benefit of social media is the ability to interact and converse with your audience/clients. Many practices are successfully using creative programs to motivate interaction. If your Facebook Page participation is low, consider what you can do differently to change this. Likewise, if your Twitter is void of re-tweets, follows, etc. it’s time for a change of strategy or perhaps some training.

A huge benefit of social marketing is the flexibility it offers. Explore various types of programs and posts to see what interests your community most.

5. Number of new patients - often times practices will say they are seeing the number of new patients “from the internet” grow. With the addition of Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube, it’s important to be able to distinguish exactly where on the internet you were found.

If you are actively marketing on Facebook, Google Plus, Twitter or YouTube, add these choices to your patient registration forms. This gives patients a convenient option to specify exactly where they found you, and it also serves as a reminder of your presence leading up to the complaint.

Whatever your decision, whatever you do. Remember that interaction, consistency, and patience play a key role in social media marketing. It is not managed, nor can it be judged as quickly as a traditional postcard campaign.

Remember that interaction, consistency, and patience play a key role in social media marketing. It is not managed, nor can it be judged as quickly as a traditional postcard campaign. In fact, consider social marketing a long term communication tool. Similar to word of mouth marketing, the movement of social marketing metrics may be slow. However the quality of new patient referrals via social media (which are conversational and relationship-focused) will be far greater than those acquired via traditional media (one-to-many and sales-oriented strategies).

Which metrics are you using to measure your social marketing efforts?

### About the author

Ritz Zamora is an international social media marketing consultant and speaker. She and her team actively manage dozens of dental practices’ social media programs. Her clients are located across the United States and internationally. She has been published in many professional publications. Ritz is also Honorary Vice President to the British Dental Practice Managers Association. Learn more at www.DentalRelationshipMarketing.com or email ritz@ritzamora.com.

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