Social Media Marketing Measurement - Evaluating the Effectiveness of Your Efforts

Ritz Zamora looks at tracking the effectiveness of your online presence

Are 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/endorser (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, a copy of that “like” becomes a permanent endorsement in their personal profile’s record of likes—unless they unlike you in the future and in that case the “like” reference will disappear from their personal profile.

Avid Facebook users find Facebook a convenient—and meaningful—outlet to share both what they like and dislike about businesses. I’m happy to report that I’ve personally witnessed dozens upon dozens of highly complimentary patient comments and outright ranting reviews about dentists and team members. And the testimonials come in at all hours of the day and night—including Saturday mornings and Sunday evenings, long after their dental visits have ended! While you may not be able to put a dollar value on testimonials, they could be the deciding factor for a new patient weighing up whether you are the best fit.

3. Website traffic from social media - hopefully your practice is already using a tool known as Google Analytics to determine where your website traffic is coming from. This free tool can prove invaluable by informing you where web visit referrals are originating. Talk to your webmaster about Google Analytics or a similar report that you can easily follow. Over time the report can help you if you are receiving web 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”. 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 in these platforms. In addition you may consider a specific phone number to track where phone calls are originating. The most powerful of all new patient tracking systems is however to simply ask your patients whether they have seen your Facebook, Twitter, videos, etc. Ask, note, track. It’s that simple.

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.

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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.dentallinked.com or email ritz@ritzamora.com.