

Check My Social Media... continued from page 1

- **Are your tweets, posts and blogs friendly to your target audience?**
- **Do you provide patients with useful information that sparks follow up questions?**
- **How much time does it take for you to successfully do this?**

Once a practice establishes a social media routine, no more than a daily allotment of 15 minutes should be spent tracking the progress. Each account is there for the practice to share information with their patients and also for patients to interact with the practice. **Practices must maintain consistency in all areas: target audience, logo, website links, general content, tone, color combinations, font.**

FACEBOOK is used for fun and procrastination but is also the most personalized out of all the available social media. Keep it light hearted, promote local contests, and share all community involvement. Photos and videos which feed to a practice's YouTube channel featuring the practice personnel lead to great search engine optimization and make it more enjoyable for patients to visit. The goal is to have patients post on the practice's wall. Once they post on the wall, it also shows up on their personal wall, and then their friends can also see information about your dental office on their "home pages." This provides great free exposure for any practice. Well thought out informative posts can become viral in active social networking circles.

TWITTER likes to see "tweets" about specific industries, new products, support requests and feedback about individual offices. There is a specific language used with abbreviations and acronyms that is common to all tweets. The goal is to get more followers and also to follow local competition to see what questions they are being asked. Most users overlap Facebook with Twitter.

LINKEDIN is especially business focused, with an excess of 100 million professionals utilizing the service. There should be a practice profile as well as an individual profile set up for the doctor. LinkedIn serves as a powerful forum for leadership information, staff recruitment, and networking with local business owners. The goal is to become familiar with local small business owners and look for ways to commence joint ventures. "LinkedIn Answers" provides a great way to showcase a dentist's knowledge about subjects they may excel in.

QUORA is new, but will soon have over a million users. It provides an optimal resource to find answers to common and advanced questions for business owners. Due to its relatively small size at the moment, it provides higher quality responses. The goal here is to become the go-to-expert for the dental field locally. Monitor questions diligently, if your practice is asked a question, then users of this site expect a high quality prompt response.

In order to monitor these extensive networks in fifteen minutes, systems and tools must be put into place. Real Simple Syndica-

tion (RSS feed) utilization is a necessary and easy first step. The feeds are nothing more than an information feed that a practice can subscribe to with a reader. The most common RSS feeds are found in blogs. RSS feeds work seamlessly with Google reader, thus any RSS feed may be sent directly to the reader for easy monitoring from one convenient source. For instance, conducting a Twitter search for "dentistry, hometown" and selecting "Feed this query," will automatically put the information into the reader for monitoring any new tweets.

TWEETDECK follows friends on Twitter, Facebook and MySpace from one simple place. It seamlessly organizes inbox messages, manages pictures, and shortens links. It is mac compatible and available on most smart phones. Unfortunately, this does not yet allow a practice to collect feeds of posts from a business page wall on Facebook.

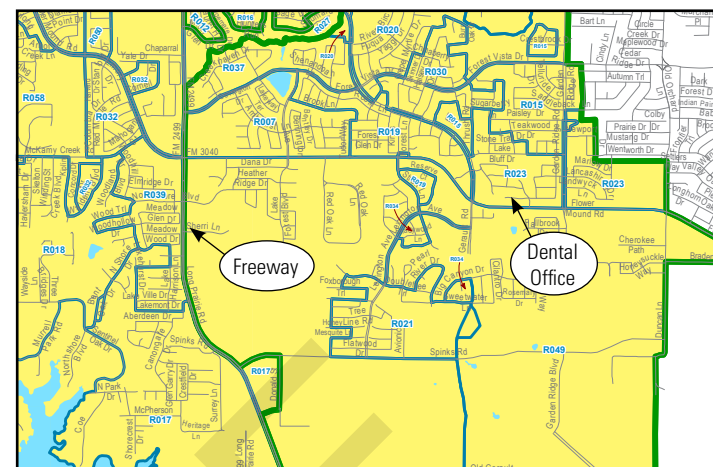
HOOTSUITE is an award-winning program that allows practices to schedule and publish messages to multiple social networks, monitor results and participate in conversations. It is web based, functions with word press blogs and requires no downloads.

GOOGLE ALERTS is another option for tracking blogs as well as relevant news. Google provides users with option to monitor these in real time or have specific alerts be emailed to the user at requested times.

Everyday, 15 minutes should be spent on social media content monitoring. To maximize efficiency, four minutes should be spent on analyzing Twitter chatter about a practice and its competitors. This should ideally be done utilizing one of the above-mentioned free programs. Three minutes should be used to scan Google news and Blog alerts for new articles that a practice could contribute to or comment on. Four minutes should be delegated to filtering and flagging dental related LinkedIn and Quora questions. The last four minutes should be spent on logging into the business Facebook page to scan the wall for recent comments. Carefully constructed answers should be given to questions on Facebook and Quora, while keeping in mind the purpose of both social networking tools.

Every practice is unique, but if the goal with social media is focused on marketing, then results must be actively measured. Google Analytics and HubSpot can help monitor traffic, leads, and new patients. The programs can differentiate between Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Blogs, and Wikipedia. Practices can obtain statistics on new links to their pages or e-articles written about their practices. New links and articles with embedded links optimize search engine results for the practice and always lead to new patients.

Please feel free to contact Dr. W Keith Dobracki D.D.S., M.B.A. at dobracki@gmail.com. He has been a featured writer for multiple publications and has spent time lecturing to his colleagues across the country. It would be Dr. Dobracki's pleasure to provide you with further insight on this article, hot trends in marketing, or other practice management topics.



by David Stone²

It is important to your success with any marketing program that you map out the area around your office so you don't market too far away and that you take out any undesirable areas. We use a very sophisticated computer mapping program for all our clients, that takes into consideration natural obstacles such as freeways, bridges, rivers, etc., that might cut into your zip code, or cut your marketing area in half, therefore, reducing your return on your investment if you marketed to the entire zip code!

The criteria for smaller, rural towns is different than a metropolitan area. In a smaller, rural town, you can market 15 to 20 or more miles away from your practice, if all the residents have to come to your side of town for your kind of service. However, in a metropolitan area, you would do better to stay within a couple of miles, not five, just **1 to 3 miles max** from your practice, depending on the size of your metropolitan area and location. Ask your staff and friends what is the natural direction people that live in the area go when they leave their driveway!

Where are the shopping centers they tend to frequent? Which direction are the business districts they go to? With each neighborhood, there is a natural route people take when they leave their home or office. You need to consider all these factors.

A lot of businesses get caught up in the fact that they have "New Patients" or clients come from far distances, and some do. However, that's normally from Referrals or because their workplace is close by. Referral patients will travel considerably farther because they're already sold on your practice before they come in. However, you should not kid yourself and use that information to determine where to spend your marketing dollars for "New Patients," because if you do, you won't get the maximum number of brand New Patients from your marketing investment that you could

How to Determine Your "Best Marketing Areas" and Alert Yourself to the "Natural Obstructions!"

have! If you go too far away and the wrong direction from your practice, your results will suffer!

Carrier Routes Within A Zip Code

When we develop a marketing area plan for a new dentist, we take into consideration the facts, even down to the carrier route within a reasonable marketing area around the dentist's office! Refer to the map on the left.

Also in the map, you will notice a green line going through those carrier routes (about one third of the way from the left of the edge). That is a freeway. In most areas, it's probably not wise to market, even if it's within the same zip code, on the opposite side of the freeway from your location unless they have to come to your side of the freeway for shopping and other services.

The only thing that is 100% accurate and reliable is the tracking of your own results. That's why tracking everything you do in marketing is so important! When you track all of your marketing efforts using a tracking code, you will have all the information you need to better allocate your marketing dollars.

With a call tracking system, you can even record and listen to how your staff is handling these Potential "New Patients" on the phone. Are they talking them out of coming into your practice or are they making it a welcoming experience from the second they pick up the phone? If you don't get the desired results you expected, you may think your marketing didn't pull –when in reality, the problem may be your staff, not your marketing!

David Stone, of Stoney brook Publishing, specializes in reactivation of dental patients, as well as attracting new "fee-for-service" patients. For The Profitable Dentist readers, David has a 32-page catalog with marketing tips for dentists available for free. Just call (800) 736-3632. Ask for the free marketing tips catalog mentioned in The Profitable Dentist.



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CROMFS CELEBRATES MILESTONES!



October marked three years since Dr. Hart opened his doors to the Castle Rock community. Although still fairly new, our practice has grown vastly and continues to do so. As Dr. Hart's first employee and original surgical assistant, we congratulate Ashlinn on her third year of employment with the practice!

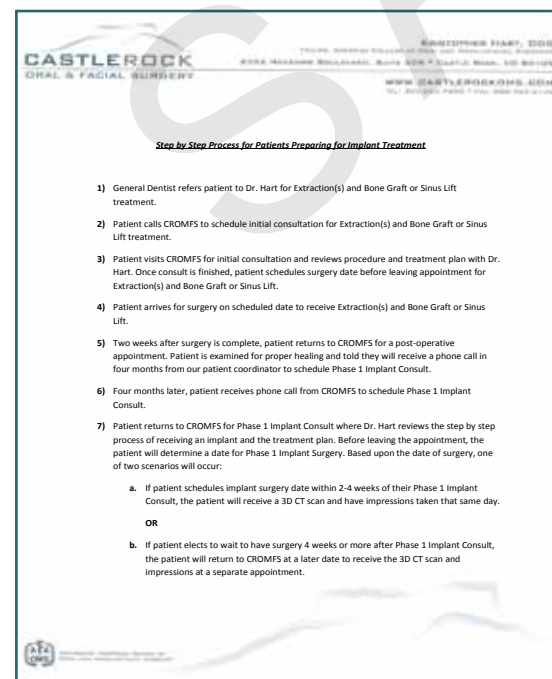
This month also marked Allie's second year anniversary working for Dr. Hart. We celebrated in the healthiest of ways; yummy ice cream cakes of course! We sincerely thank you for referring your patients to us. We owe much of our success and the wonderful partnerships we have cultivated to you. Thank you immensely!

HELPING PATIENTS UNDERSTAND THE IMPLANT PROCESS:

As many of you know, receiving an implant can be a confusing, long road for many patients. This is why we have created the 'Implant Timeline' to help simplify the process and make it easy for the patient to understand. The guide outlines step by step details of where they currently are within the process and what steps are next for them. Every patient that is seen for an extraction, bone graft or sinus lift procedure is given the timeline along with an overview of what they can expect.

We feel this is the best way to guide their understanding of the surgery as well as provide them with details on how the general dentist aids them. We encourage you to give this same timeline to your patients to help create a cohesive experience for the patient.

You can find our timeline on our website, www.castlerockoms.com, under Procedures and Dental Implants. We will have a PDF version available for you to print and give to your patients in a few weeks. We have found this to be extremely helpful to our patients and we would love for you to share it as well!



Floss Brush Rinse
 Check My Social Media

by Dr. W. Keith Dobracki¹

Everyone has heard of it, most have talked about it, a lot are doing it, but only a select few have actually mastered it. Social media exploded onto the scene over the last few years. From Facebook and Twitter, to LinkedIn and Quora, there is now a surplus of ways to "get connected." The multitude of options has led to confusion and diluted the practice profiles that offices are trying to establish in their social media community. Many practices get connected, but most fail to stay connected and reap the benefits. It's time to develop a routine that prevents future cavities in social media campaigns.

The Social Media Marketing Industry Report for this year states almost 90% of companies using social media have generated business exposure, yet only 43% have been able to generate sales from social media. Some of the most common complaints revolving around utilizing this process to attain a profit are: **"It's too complicated!"**, **"I don't know where to start?"**, and **"It takes too much time!"**.

Practices seem to be either, (1) hiring a social media specialist, (2) putting social media on their marketing coordinator, (3) choosing to not ride the social media wave. If an office has a dedicated marketing coordinator, then this seems like an obvious additional job responsibility. But for the other practices out there, this responsibility seems to fall through the cracks and disappears over time. Once a practice establishes a public image on any domain of social media, it is imperative that they maintain a consistent activity level to uphold their image in that networking community. A patient who actively follows a dental practice on Facebook will equate a lapse in activity to sloppiness, laziness, and, carelessness. Patients have a tendency to translate that over to the clinical care they receive and begin to create negative correlations. Those patients lose trust in that practice and the provider. Soon they are no longer patients...

Social media carries a lot of weight:

- **Over 70% of users saw increased traffic in their offices.**
- **Over 60% saw increased search engine results.**
- **Over 50% created new business partnerships and joint ventures.**
- **Nearly 50% were able to reduce their marketing budgets.**

If you already have a social media presence, and feel overwhelmed, then you are not alone. Like with any other marketing campaign, it's important to first select a target audience. The ideal in family practice dentistry is middle class women with a family.

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