





## The 15 Marketing Tactics that Every Dental Practice Must Follow

You've worked hard to get to where you are now. You studied through dental school, did your on-the-job training, and set up your own practice. You're ready to fill cavities and clean teeth, to help everyone who needs dentures or fillings.

But you need patients to do this, and maybe you're not getting as many as you could be.

Marketing matters when it comes to dentistry. The best practice in the world can't help anyone unless people know about it. That's why you need tactics that will give your practice the attention it deserves.

HeyGoTo Marketing knows how to get results. Having managed the online marketing efforts of over 50 dental practices, we have learned exactly what needs to be done in order to stay competitive. That's why we're giving you an in-depth look at the top Internet marketing tactics that'll make you unbeatable.

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# 01 Your Website is Your Foundation

**Quick Fact:** 50% of visitors to the average website will *leave without buying* anything.

A website lives or dies by its content. You need to make sure that what you have to say is informative, interesting, and up-to-date. That's what will make your website rank well on the search engines and turn visitors into patients. Be sure to regularly post new content to your site. You're an expert on dentistry, so use a blog to show off what you know!

The terms that people use to find your site on a search engine are known as keywords. Your content needs to reflect the keywords that visitors are using. If you want to be found for a particular keyword, like dental x-rays, make sure that you have a page for it.

Your site also needs to offer a good user experience. Look at your site the way a visitor would. Can you easily get to where you want to go? Do you know how to engage?

*Remember: you only have a visitor's attention for about seven seconds.* If it takes longer than that for them to do what they want, they're going to look elsewhere.

You also have to pay attention to the fold. The fold is the bottom edge of the browser window. When someone visits your site, they'll have to scroll down to see anything below that. It's critical for all of your important information—your call to action, links to other pages, and so forth—to be immediately visible. As far as most visitors are concerned, anything beneath the fold might as well not be there at all.



Here are the  
**3 Essential Elements**  
of user experience.



## Internal linking

The content on your website should have links to other pages on your site. Not only does this make it easier for visitors to get around, it's also something that Google looks for when ranking websites.



## Responsiveness

Did you know that mobile searches are very close to surpassing desktop searches? Your site has to be responsive. This means that visitors can enjoy the same user experience whether they're using a desktop, a tablet, or a smartphone.



## Calls to Action (CTA)

For all of the importance of content, the one element you cannot forget is the call to action. This is undervalued by many practices, but is very important. A bad CTA can cost you patients. By focusing on content/CTA, you can leverage or monetize your traffic, and increase your chances of converting them into patients. It's all about conversions.



# 02 Build Your Backlinks

**Quick Fact:** *Quality matters* more than quantity when it comes to links.

Links are a critical aspect of online marketing. A big part of a website's success is based on how many **quality links** connect it with other sites. In the SEO industry, the ranking power a website gets from links is known as "link juice".

This ties back into what we were talking about earlier with local directories. Directory profiles should include links to your site. Because directories are high-value, your website will benefit. Even more important are links to industry-specific sites like 1800Dentist.com. Don't just build links on any website. Trust matters, and it can hurt you to be associated with websites that Google considers untrustworthy.



You can get a lot of mileage just out of building backlinks to referral partnerships. Talk to orthodontists, periodontists, and other professionals in related fields and start building links to each other's websites. From here, you can go on to suppliers and non-local colleagues.

Some of the best backlinks are found in **content**, like informative blog posts dealing with dentistry or press releases that let people know what's going on in a practice.

If you have the means, try writing some guest articles for other dental blogs, and put your link at the end. Even videos can act as links. A good video that gets shared throughout social networks and other venues can be very helpful.

The portion of a text that links to another website is known as the anchor text. This too can be optimized. For the best results, use a **high-ranking keyword** for your anchor text.

# 03 Quantity and Consistency with Directories

**Quick Fact:** 97% of consumers do online research on products and companies online. This research includes *looking at directories*.

Directory management is the third most important aspect of local Internet marketing. That's because Google uses directories as checkpoints. The more often they see your information in these directories, particularly local related directories, the more credible your website will be. More credibility means higher rankings.

The key information on each profile is your (N)ame, (A)ddress, and (P)hone number, or NAP. It's essential to make sure that your NAPs are consistent across directories. That's because even small differences can trip up Google.

Here's an example. Suppose you list your address as "123 Main St., Suite 103" on one directory, and "123 Main St., Suite #103" on another. That extra pound sign means Google won't recognize them as being the same address. In other words, you won't be benefitting as much as you should.

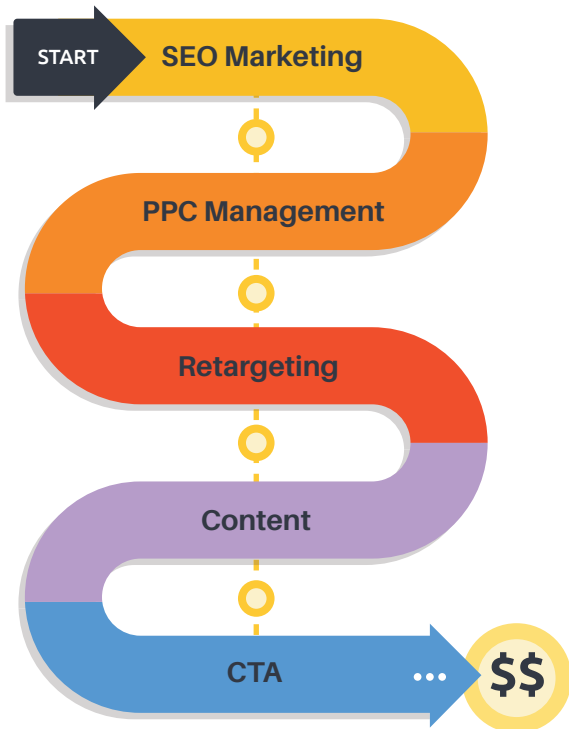
What many dental practices don't know is that some directories will scrape data from other directories. This means that your NAP might end up on directories you didn't even know about. That's a good thing as long as your NAP is consistent. Otherwise, it'll just further confuse Google. Again: consistency is essential.

- 1 Redmond Way Dentistry**  
[www.redmondwaydentistry.com](http://www.redmondwaydentistry.com)  
5.0 ★★★★★ 30 Google reviews · Google+ page  
15946 Redmond Way #106  
Redmond, WA  
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- Redmond Family and Cosmetic Den...**  
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7502 164th Avenue  
Northeast Suite A-135  
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- Redmond Art of Dentistry**  
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★★★★★ Rating: 5 - 14 reviews  
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- 4 Redmond Way Dentistry - Redmond WA 98052 | 425-898 ...**  
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15946 Redmond Way, Suite 106, Redmond, WA 98052. Phone: (425) 898-2168. Photos: New chair at the office. Redmond Way Dentistry 15946 Redmond Way, ...
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Sep 26, 2011 - Address: 15946 Redmond Way, Suite 106, Redmond, WA 98052. Telephone: (425)898-2168. Category: Dentistry ...
- Redmond Dentist John Sayyah, MD, DDS Providing ...**  
[www.redmondtowndental.com/](http://www.redmondtowndental.com/) ·  
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- 7 Redmond Dentist | Redmond Way Dentistry | (425) 898 ...**  
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Redmond Way Dentistry. 15946 Redmond Way, Suite 106, Redmond, WA 98052 - View Map. 47.6749087 125.06 - 122.1276055276. Phone: (425) 898-2168.

# 04 If It Don't Make Dollars, It Don't Make Sense - So Focus on Conversions

**Quick Fact:** Over 90% of visitors who read headlines will also read the call to action.

*Headlines are important.*



There's nothing worse than spending money on traffic that isn't converting. Too many businesses put lots of time, money, and effort into getting more visitors, but neglect to convert the ones they already have. *Remember: each conversion is a new patient.*

You've already seen us use the term "CTA". What we're referring to are calls to action that are clear and precise. These are what will get potential patients into your practice. A good call to action means a better user experience, and a better user experience means a higher conversion rate.

If you don't have ways to gauge user actions, then you won't know your true conversion stats.

## Here are three great ways to optimize your conversions



### Use split A/B testing

This is how you will find out what parts of your campaign(s) are performing best, as well as why. This tedious but crucial tactic is usually overlooked because it seems so time-consuming. However, it actually saves you time in the long run and takes out the guesswork.



### Call tracking

This is a must. As the owner of your practice, you have to be focused on the bottom line. Are your marketing efforts getting new people through your door? Are they making the phone ring? You just can't know this without call tracking, PERIOD.



### Analysis and goal reports

Most people don't take the time to review their analytics, or properly set up analytical goals. By setting up goals inside of your analytics, you can consistently measure small steps of success and better understand your overall plan.

# 05 Email Marketing is Still the Standard

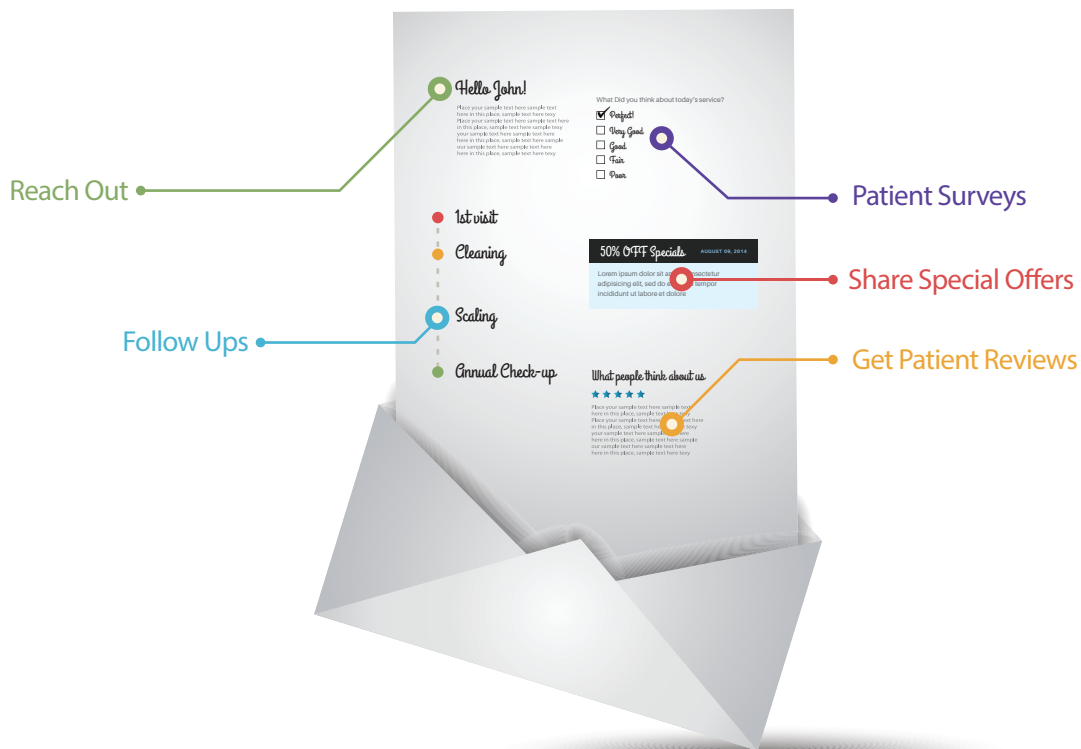
**Quick Fact:** EmailExperts.org points out that, on average, each dollar put into email marketing gets *a return of \$44.25*.

We don't want to go too deep into email, because its value is clear. Still, we need to emphasize that it's one of the critical steps that your practice must take and follow through on. Emailing, much like social media and text marketing, is another way to **build customer loyalty** and retention. It's also a great way to share special offers, follow up and do patient surveys, reach out and get patient reviews, and so forth.

Split testing is something that you need to incorporate with email marketing. Not only for testing emails that you're sending out, but to also test the subject lines that are most likely to catch a reader's attention. Your emails don't need to be long and elaborate to be effective.

Email marketing is done through newsletters and targeted emails. Newsletters can be sent to anyone who signs up for them. Not only are they engaging, they also strengthen your brand name. Recipients will associate you with interesting and up-to-date information.

Targeted emails upsell patients on additional services that might complement ones that they've already bought. As an example, you might send an email about retainers to a patient (or a patient's parents) who has already purchased braces.





# 06 Social Media Strengthens Relationships

**Quick Fact:** The 80-20 principle still applies to social media.  
Only *20% of what you share should be self-promotion.*

Social media involves a lot more than just scheduling posts. It's about strengthening your relationships and extending your circles. Nothing else makes it so easy for you to interact with your patients a few times a week. Most dentists are already using social media. If you aren't, you need to start. Get out there on Facebook, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn, and all the others.

Social signals are what you get when somebody Likes what you post on Facebook, or Retweets what you post on Twitter. Google takes notice of social signals, which is why they play such a valuable role in strengthening your website's traffic and credibility.

Referrals are another benefit to social media. Happy patients will share their experiences at your practice with other people on their network. This can translate into **even more patients.**

You can also use social media to tell patients about new developments on your site, like blog posts. Doing so can drive more traffic to your site, and help maintain interest in your practice.

You have to be active to get the best social media results. This means searching through the different networks. You can arrange it so that if someone in your area talks about having a toothache on Twitter, you can be the first one to find out and respond. You'll get to the patient right when they need you most.

With social media, you can have patients advertise your practice every time one of them steps inside. When someone enters your practice and checks in on sites like Swarm/FourSquare, Yelp, and Facebook, more people will learn about you. You can even encourage patients by offering specials to those who do check in.

The more often you update your social media profile, the more valuable it will be. Make posts that are informative, thoughtful, and that provoke discussion. When in doubt, go for a laugh. A funny image can go a long way.

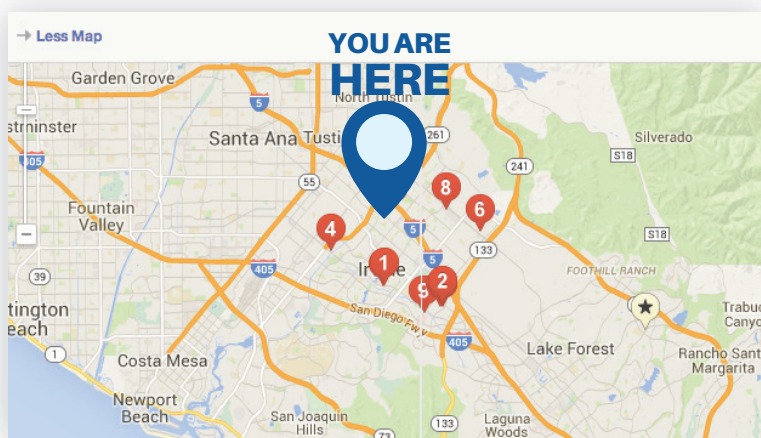
**Remember:** dentistry is a personal industry. Getting your patients to know you better will make them feel more comfortable.



# 07 Think Local

**Quick Fact:** 97% of consumers search for *local businesses* online.

You don't need to worry about out-competing a dental practice on the other side of the country. What you do need to worry about is the dentist a few blocks away. Dentistry is a locally based business; patients are usually **people in the neighborhood**. You have to make sure that they find you, not your rival.



Start off by setting up a profile on Google Places that gives details about your business, like its location and phone number. It's best to have your name, address, and phone number (NAP) on as many as possible. Directories can also drive referrals to your business. Some practices have more than one office. If this is the case with yours, create a profile for each location.

Don't just set up a profile on Google Places and leave. This is something that represents your practice, so you want to make sure that it looks its best. You can start by uploading a photo of your office building. Patients who see this will know what to look for when they come in for an appointment. You should also include some of your keywords in the profile's description. Another technique is to add links to review sites. This reminds visitors to leave reviews, and makes it easier for them to do so.

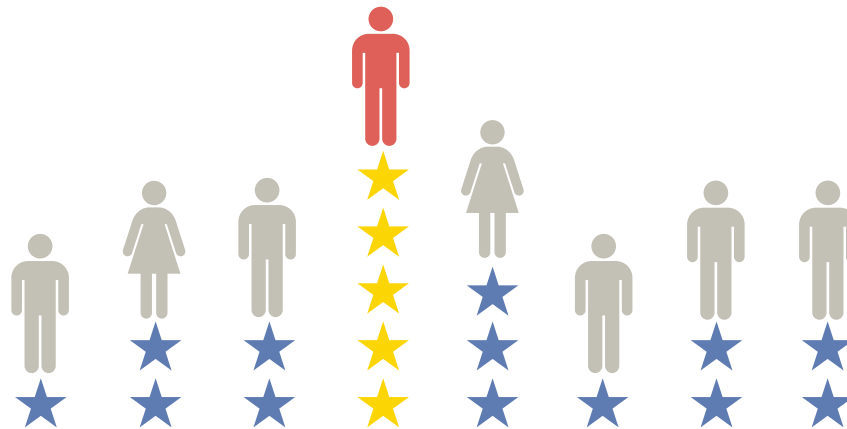
There are also dental review sites. Make sure that you keep these sites updated with the latest information about your practice. That way, patients who use them for reference will have the most accurate information.

*Here's a cool secret: optimizing your website and having a presence on local directories can build off of each other and give you more online visibility.* The strength of your local SEO is connected to the presence of positive patient reviews. Reputation management can help you get the most out of these reviews.

# 08 Reputation is Everything

**Quick Fact:** 72% of online shoppers consider *positive Internet reviews* as meaningful as recommendations from people they know.

Word-of-mouth matters more than ever these days. You can see this when you go to social media sites. Many people decide whether or not to go to a dental practice based on the reviews they see on places like HealthGrades or Yelp. Happy patients leave good reviews, and good reviews lead to more people going through your door.



Good reviews are another metric by which Google ranks websites. You can cultivate this by encouraging patients to leave reviews, and by posting links to business rating sites.

However, there's a dark side to all of this. Scammers, unscrupulous rivals, and disgruntled employees can leave negative reviews on your Yelp page to drive away potential patients.

On the surface, reputation management is about posting good news and reviews to drive out the bad—or at least push it to the back. But that's really just the start. Reputation management can be **proactive as well as reactive**.

This is why it's important to have your ear to the ground when it comes to reviews. One good idea is to set up a Google Alert for your practice's name. The alert will let you know whenever someone starts to talk about you online.

By monitoring and managing the positive reviews you get, you can leverage it to boost your practice. Don't be shy! If someone writes a glowing testimonial about how you did a great job on a filling, let people know about it. Send it out in emails, on social media, and every other platform.

# 09 Extend Your Reach with PPC

**Quick Fact:** When keywords of high commercial intent are involved, *64.6% of clicks* go to paid ads.

When you search for something on Google, you'll see sponsored ads at the top and along the right side of the search results page. These are known as PPC (pay per click) ads. These ads can show up on any of the millions of sites within the Google Display Network.

People in your area will see your PPC ads when they search for dentistry services. The ads should be specific to particular keywords. This makes it easier for patients to find the exact services that they want. The link can go **directly to your website** or to a landing page.

Unlike other ads, you only have to pay for a PPC ad when someone actually clicks on it. Therefore, you need to make sure that visitors who do click on them actually convert. That's why it's important to design ads that meet the needs of potential patients.

You need to be organized to get the most out of PPC. Find out which keywords are being used by prospective patients. Divide the keywords into ad groups that focus on particular services, like dental crowns or cavity filling. You can base your PPC ads around these.



By keeping track of who's clicking on them, where, and how often, you can target your ads. You can compare the number of times your ad is seen to the number of times someone clicks on it. This is known as the click through rate (CTR). This data is key to tracking your return on investment (ROI). You need to make sure that your ads can beat those of your competitors.

Landing pages and PPC ads make for a powerful combination. If the ad leads to a relevant landing page, the visitor will be much more likely to become a patient. The design of a matching landing page should lead, or "funnel" visitors into signing up. They'll be filling up seats before you know it.

Make sure that your PPC ads **include your phone number**. That way, some people will see the ad and just call you directly. In other words, you get a potential patient without being charged for the click.

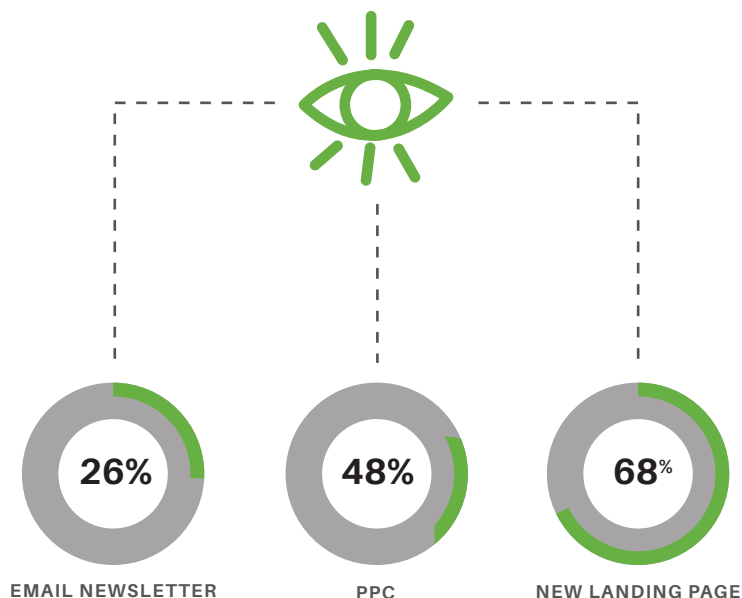


# 10 Call Tracking Gets Your Phones to Ring

**Quick Fact:** A call is *worth five to ten times more* than an online sign-in form.

Phone calls give you a great way to **measure progress** in online marketing. By purchasing tracking numbers and assigning them to different campaigns, you can find out which ones are most effective.

As an example, you could use one tracking number for an email newsletter and another for a PPC ad. If you get more calls from the newsletter, that means it's drawing in more attention. This, in turn, lets you know that it's time to change your PPC ad. Also, people who pick up the phone and call are usually more invested than those who just click on links.



**Remember to stay local.** It's the people in your area who will be filling the chairs in your practice. Have your tracking numbers include your area code. People feel more comfortable calling something that they know is nearby.

Don't be careless. Having too many tracking numbers can confuse the search engines and hurt your rankings. Make sure that you keep control of the numbers.

# 11

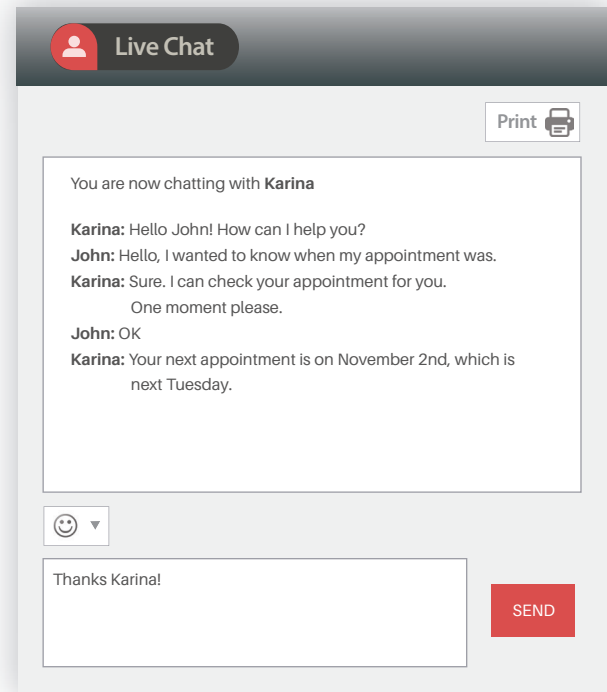
## Make Visitors Feel at Home with Live Chat

**Quick Fact:** 73% of users express *satisfaction with Live Chat*. 61% are satisfied with email support, and only 44% are happy with phone support.

Nothing puts people at ease quite like knowing that someone is paying attention. Live chat means that visitors can instantly communicate with someone when they go to your site. Having this in place results in **higher visitor retention**.

Live chat is conducted online. It's a lot like a Skype chat. This gives patients an easy way to have their questions answered promptly. People are sometimes reluctant to ask questions over email, since they can't be sure they'll get a response. Live chat removes this worry.

Of course, a visitor to your site needs to know that live chat is available. Make sure that the link to live chat is a **visible and dynamic** element. You should be able to see it whether you're at the top of the page or you've scrolled all the way



Don't limit live chat to your website either. It can be very effective when placed on landing pages.

You don't need to recruit a whole bunch of new employees to run live chat. Instead, you can hire an existing chat center. Give them the information they need and they'll make your patients feel right at home.

# 12 Retargeting Brings Them Back for More

**Quick Fact:** Retargeted visitors are almost *70% more likely to buy* your services.

Most of the people who visit a website won't become patients. This will be the case even if you have the best dental website in the world. People might visit, but when it comes to signing up they forget, postpone, or get distracted. Retargeting ads give you a way to **remind them**.

With retargeting, bits of data called cookies will keep track of those who go to your website but don't call in or sign up for your services. The program will show them banner ads for your practice when they visit other sites, helping them remember what you have to offer.

As a dentist, you already know the importance of respecting the patient's right to privacy. Retargeting ads are not seen as a violation of privacy so long as the content of the ad doesn't imply that the recipient has a specific dental problem or needs a particular procedure. It's safer for the ads to focus on your brand rather than a specific treatment.

Use some restraint in retargeting. People get annoyed if the same ad keeps popping up again and again. Show them the ad often enough that they remember you, not so often that they get tired of you. One option is to have several ads for a single target; this lets you rotate them as needed.

Take the time to make these ads look their best. When designing them, apply the same principles that you learned while making eye-catching call to action buttons and landing pages. Since you're advertising to locals, set the advertising parameters accordingly. There's no need to send retargeting ads to someone who visits your website from the other side of the country.

With retargeting, you'll be able to build brand recognition even among people who don't immediately become patients. They'll see your ad and **remember you**. When they do, some will go back to your site for a second look.



The user visits your website.

Data from your website is remembered by the visitor's browser. The browser will display your ads when the visitor goes to other websites.

This reminds people of your website, which makes them more likely to return and convert.

# 13 On-Target Landing Pages

**Quick Fact:** 68% of B2B companies rely on *landing pages for sales leads*.

Having a website is just the start. What many of the most successful dental practices are now using is something called a **landing page**. This is a single page that's designed for a specific keyword or ad.

A good landing page has everything a prospective patient should know about your practice. Everything is in one place and the layout grabs their attention. This means visitors are more likely to **become leads**. By linking a great landing page to a targeted PPC ad, you can help connect people with the services they need at just the right time.

As mentioned before in the PPC section, your landing page needs to match the ad. You might want to have them share the same headline. A landing page that's on-target with its associated ad will be seen as more trustworthy.

The principles of designing a good landing page are much like those for designing a good website. Make sure that it's clean and easy to understand. You can also boost conversion ratings with good content, CTA buttons, and videos. Avoid navigation menus or links to other pages. The purpose of the landing page is to funnel visitors directly to conversion. Links will just distract them. That said, it doesn't hurt to have social media sharing buttons. This makes it easy for an interested visitor to tell other people about your practice.

There are tools that let you see exactly where and how often people click on your website. By using these, you can find out if visitors are clicking where they should be. If you want them to sign up for your newsletter, but they aren't clicking on the sign-up button, it may mean the button needs to be more visible

A good way to improve landing pages is by using A/B testing. This is where you compare two slightly different versions of the same landing page. By comparing results (conversion rates, click-through rates, and so forth) you can find out which version is better. You can constantly fine-tune and improve a page by doing this.

Another trick is to make multiple landing pages. You can have one linked to social media, and another linked to a PPC campaign. You can better address visitor needs by being more specific.

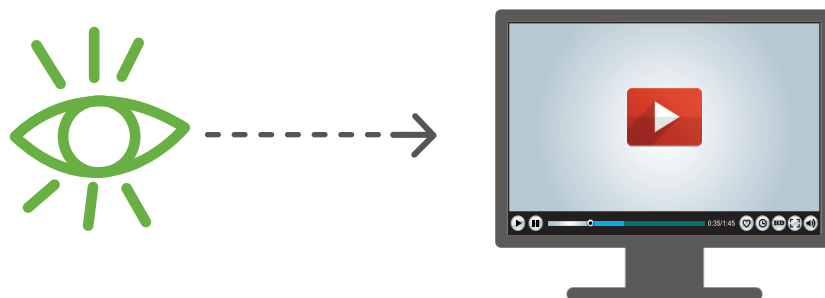




# 14 Video Marketing Gets Viewer Attention

**Quick Fact:** A video on a website can raise its conversion rate by *as much as 80%*.

Before anything else, a website or landing page has to get the visitor's attention. Video is one of the best ways to do this. This is the era of YouTube, and it's critical for you to take advantage of this fact. Visitors will pay more attention to videos than they will to text or images.



Video marketing also gives you a fantastic opportunity to let potential patients know what you have to offer. A video that shows you, your staff, and your practice will ramp up the viewer's interest. Consider adding some patient testimonials so that visitors can see how you've helped people. Trust and comfort are key elements of dentistry, and a good video offers both.

Making your video the best it can be also involves optimizing it. Place keywords in the title and the description to help the search engines find it. You'll definitely want to upload the video to YouTube as well. Having a YouTube presence can help your practice soar past the competition. Some practices go so far as to have their own dedicated YouTube channels, which can do wonders for online visibility and brand recognition.

Another good idea is to have the video end with a call to action button. The viewer will see the button right when their interest is at its highest, making them **much more likely to convert**.

Take a close look at your video's statistics. This lets you know whether or not people are watching the whole thing. If viewers are quitting at some point in the middle, it probably means you need to make your video more engaging.

If you have the time, you may also want to make videos for special occasions. These might be for holidays or the anniversary of your dental practice.

A visitor who watches the video will spend more time on the site. Though their attention is on the video, they'll still be aware of the site around them. As a result, they'll be more likely to remember your practice.

# 15 Keep Your Chairs Filled with Mobile Marketing

**Quick Fact:** 98% of SMS & MMS messages are *actually opened and read* by their recipients. Compare that to email, of which 88% is never opened.

Mobile marketing is crucial when it comes to communicating with your patients. It goes further than just sending specials or coupons—it's also an effective way to send reminders for appointments, or to reschedule them. By the time most patients cancel or reschedule, it's too late to try and fill that chair. When you send out text reminders ahead of time, you give the patient the opportunity to confirm or to set a new date.

With the costs of running your practice being what they are, it's critical to have the opportunity to **keep those chairs filled** if someone cancels or reschedules. Mobile marketing lets you send unique offers to current patients that will get them to come in when you need them. This all can be done with very little effort.

Mobile marketing is also a great way to get patients to leave reviews, and to gain a better understanding about their experience. Doing so builds loyalty. When you can learn how your patients feel about their visits, you get better insight into their thoughts and opinions.

vvvvv



**TEXT REMINDERS**



**EASY SCHEDULING**



**PATIENT REVIEWS**



**SEND COUPONS**

# 16 Check Your Website the Way You Check Your Teeth

**Quick Fact:** The average bounce rate is around **50%**.



Like anything else, **websites require maintenance**. You need to remember that Google always has its eye on your website. If problems appear and aren't fixed, your rankings could start to drop.

It's important to routinely check your website for problems, like 404 errors. Take action once you learn about these. The sooner you get them fixed, the better. Think of it this way: you work hard to make sure that your practice meets the most rigorous standards of dental care. Your website should reflect the same level of dedication.

Information is critical when running a website. You need a way to see how many people are visiting, where they're coming from, and how long they're staying, to give just a few examples. This is what ties together all of the tactics discussed in this document.

By seeing and understanding the data, you'll know what you need to do. If people are bouncing from a certain page, or aren't responding to an ad, take quick action to address it. You can also use this data to find out who your customers are. If there's a specific demographic, tailor your marketing accordingly.

## Now that You Know More...

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... it's time to talk to the experts! HeyGoTo Marketing & Social Media is a company that knows how to get you ahead of the competition. We know all of the marketing tactics inside and out, have access to the most powerful tools, and can use cutting-edge tactics to get you the patients you need.

Good Internet marketing involves a lot more than just using a few of these tricks. The key to success lies in getting them to work together. When you get good reviews, post them on your social media profile and let people know! When you find out that a particular image or call to action button on your website is getting a lot of clicks, go ahead and use it on banner ads! We're experts at coordinating these strategies.

At HeyGoTo Marketing & Social Media, we can create a comprehensive online campaign that meets your needs. Get in touch with us by visiting [HeyGoToMarketing.com](http://HeyGoToMarketing.com), or by calling (888) 440-4SEO.