



MARKETING / OFFICE / STAFF

Need a Social Media Adjustment? 6 Ways to Maximize Your Content

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If your social media outreach is not producing the healthy results you expected, perhaps it's time for a social media adjustment. Almost 90 percent of the social media pages I see suffer from what I like to call "social misalignments." The message just isn't connecting with the prospective audience or is so bland that it has very little relevance. You may be so busy touting how great you or your practice is that your posts are like "wallpaper" to the users on the social site - overlooked and undervalued. The good news is you can correct this problem and create a social site that produces the holistic results you want.

Adjustment #1: Do a Little Background Research

If you haven't done so already, spend about 30 to 40 minutes using the social media site personally and enter the common words or topics your ideal customers use when they are in search of answers to their problems. Make notes of what kind of information comes up in the search and who is engaging on those page groups or personal profiles.



The average social media user utilizes the site daily to be entertained, procrastinate, connect with real people and/or fill a need for special recognition. They are also using it to search for information, recommendations, reviews and answers to their questions. With an overload of information on the standard search engines (Google, Yahoo, Bing, Ask, etc.), more people are turning to social media sites and trusting the information provided on them. Therefore, the more fans you can connect with and get them to "like," "share" and talk about your practice, the more likely you'll achieve a healthy social media alignment.

Adjustment #2: Make a Lasting Connection

Make a point to reward the prospect's need to be recognized by commenting back and connecting with them when they participate. In turn, you become more valuable to them and build a stronger bond. Ultimately, it will increase the likelihood they will want to do business with you.

Even current patients have a strong need for recognition and if you feed that need by recognizing them for participating on your page. A likely result is that they become raving followers and some of your best ideal audience!

Once you have an idea of the type of information your ideal patients are searching for, you can start to plan the content you are going to share that will connect best with them.

Adjustment #3: Appeal to Patients' Interests

Social media is not about what you want to share; it is sharing what *your patients* want to hear. You should know what they are looking for and how you or your products / services can help them.

Get creative; develop subjects and topics that are interesting and valuable to your ideal patients based on your research. Your objective should be to offer helpful information or solutions. Your content needs to be engaging, entertaining and compelling. This isn't about you or your practice.

This is reviewing the content through your patient's eyes and sharing content your prospective patients would deem relevant and valuable.

Adjustment #4: Spend Time on Content Planning

After you have selected topics, plan the types of content you want to use in your updates. We all learn in different ways. Some are more visual learners while others like lots of words so have a variety of content to appeal to a variety of followers. Good sources for content can be manufacturers, research studies, professional organizations or community sites. You can also create content yourself, like filming videos, writing articles and blog posts, or making infographics. Just be sure to use different types of media formats so you are engaging all your ideal audience.

Adjustment #5: Mix It Up

When planning how to deliver content, not only should you consider a variety of content (video, audio and text), but you should also keep in mind the different ways to share it. You can share as a status update, a link, a video, a photo or an infographic. Here are some examples:

Status update - This is straight content; no links, photos or videos. Can be a question, statement or both.

Link update - A status update with a link to other information. Can be a link to an article, photo, video, blog site, another website, registration page or a different place on the same social media site. If you are creating an update and including a website address that you want the person to "click," this is a link update.

Video update - this is when you upload a video directly to the social site. This is not a link to the video; that would be a link update. It can also be a direct share from a social video site.

Here are the items you want to include when uploading a video directly on a social or video site:

- Include a title and description of what the video is about.
- Include a call to action; where you want them to go next in your description.
- Add keywords or hashtags to your description.
- List the people who are participating in the video or "tag" them.
- Include the location of where the video was shot, or use your social page as the location.

Photo update - An update in which you upload a picture. Some social sites sync directly to your mobile devices, making it easy to create photo updates on the go.

Some things to keep in mind when doing a photo update:

- Say something about each photo you upload, including your albums - say something about the album and each photo in the album.
- Add keywords or hashtags to your description(s).
- Tag people who are in the photo. It is annoying to some people when they are tagged to a photo that doesn't apply to them.
- Include the location of where the photo was taken or use your social page as the location.

Infographic update - This update is a form of content marketing. It is different from a photo or video because it uses text, and sometimes images or memes, to convey a message.

Many times you will see infographics used to demonstrate how to perform a task. Another common use is sharing statistics or educating about the history of various topics. Follow a similar protocol

when uploading an infographic as with a photo:

- Write a brief summary (just 1-2 sentences) letting people how they benefit.
- Include keywords and hashtags in your description.
- Include a call to action: what you would like them to do next.
- Use your social site as the location.

You want to use a variety of ways to share your information because you want your page to stand out. As you start to build a following and create more interaction on your page, this will entice other users to visit. The more variety you have on your page, the more likely you are to appeal to different types of users.

Adjustment #6: Provide Consistent Engagement

Strive to have three daily updates, seven days a week. Keep it simple and what is easily accessible to you. If you tend to write frequently (blogs and articles), then your updates will have more links. If you take lots of photos with your phone and love to share, then figure out a way to share content that applies.

Even if you don't think you have an abundance of a particular type of content, there are options available to you. Whether it is sharing from other community pages that make sense for your market or outsourcing the work, your goal should be to offer a variety of content weekly.

A general rule for any updates is to always try to include a question. Our brains are wired to want to provide an answer any time we see that infamous "?". Try to make the question the last sentence of your update. If you start by asking the question and then provide another statement or answer, you most likely will not have as many responses.

Pay attention to how much information will be shown in the update before someone has to click on the "show more" button. If the information is compelling enough, your followers will "have" to know more.

This is what marketers refer to as a "hook" - information that catches people's attention. If you "hook" them with a great opening line and ask a question that requires them to "Click here for the answer," most will click just because they want to know.

Keep in mind that this only works if the "hook" has relevance and value to your audience. Therefore, once you have made a list of the topics or information you are going to share, and have determined a general plan of the type of updates, jot down a few great "hooks" you can use to entice them.

Get Started Today

The biggest reason people fail is because they never take action. These social adjustments will be most helpful if you actually implement them.