



YOUR PRACTICE

## 4 Ways to Engage Patients Using Mobile Communications

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It's no secret that people increasingly use text to communicate. Phone conversations have become increasingly sparse, with people avoiding calls that aren't from family or friends. In fact, because of the rise of spam and robo-phone calls, the FCC actually [warns people](#) not to answer calls from unknown numbers.<sup>1</sup> So it's no wonder your staff is spending so much time leaving voicemails and playing phone tag with patients.

It's time to end that frustrating experience of voicemail phone tag and turn to text - especially considering that according to a [recent report](#), 90 percent of customers prefer SMS contact over phone calls.<sup>2</sup>

And mobile communications can be used for more than freeing up your staff's time. The right mobile communications plan and system can engage patients and grow your practice by 1) optimizing your online reviews and getting new patients into your practice; 2) recalling patients who have gone dormant; 3) helping patients easily schedule and prepare for appointments; and 4) allowing you to scale your communications plan to grow your practice.

### 1. Optimize Reviews



When potential patients are searching for a doctor, almost 75 percent of the time their first step is to look at [online reviews](#).<sup>3</sup> The bottom line is, if you are looking to grow your practice and reach new patients, online reviews matter.

While you can't take ratings into your own hands, you can set up a system to manage, boost and share your good ratings. How can a text communications plan help? You can take charge of your online reputation by automating requests for feedback from patients.

Your communications platform should send your patients a text request for a star-rating after they leave from an appointment. If they give you a favorable rating, the system should follow up with a link directly to your profile on the most important review sites - especially Yelp and Google - where they can let other people know about their experience.

The right system will automate this process so you build reviews with each patient visit. You also should have a central dashboard where you can monitor review sites, and even automatically stream favorable reviews to your website and social profiles.

## 2. Recall Dormant Patients

If your previously active patients have missed several weeks, it may be that life has gotten busy. Sometimes a nudge at just the right time will get them back into your practice. However, it can be hard to keep track of patient lapses, and even if you do have a good system in place, it is time consuming for your staff to reach out to lapsed patients on top of all their other responsibilities.

The right mobile platform works seamlessly with your practice scheduling software to notify you when a patient has gone dormant. Then, after the right amount of time - I recommend a one-month follow-up - the system prompts a text that checks in with the patient.

The message, "We haven't seen you in a while. How are you?" could be just what they need to get into your practice again. And best is if your system allows a two-way text conversation, so when that patient responds, your staff can keep the conversation going and ask the patient when they would like to schedule their next appointment.

### 3. Help Patients Schedule and Prepare for Appointments

A good mobile communications plan can help your patients have a great experience with your practice even before and between appointments. Imagine a system that welcomes a new patient to the practice via text once they've scheduled their first appointment. Then, with the appointment reminder, the text includes a link to directions, as well as a short video about what to expect that also introduces you, the doctor.

This way, the patient has rapport with you before even walking through your door. Video is a great way to engage patients - and with video so easy to make, it should absolutely be a part of your practice's communication plan.

The conversation with patients doesn't stop there, either. You can request online reviews, send patient testimonials and successful case studies, and help patients get ready with follow-up care information.

### 4. Scale Your Communication Plan to Grow Your Practice

When you are looking to grow your practice, the right communication system can help you do it without overwhelming your staff with the extra work that comes with providing excellent communication to even more patients. With the right system, your staff will spend less time making phone calls and more time engaging patients through excellent text best practices.

A good system will integrate into your existing practice management software, using the information you already have and are working to both automate some communication and allow your staff to easily have two-way conversations to engage patients. It also will be customizable to your practice's needs. Not every practice runs the same, and having the ability to customize a system to your practice's size, personality and way of working matters.

Mobile is an incredible way to attract, convert and engage your patients - ultimately leading to practice growth. With the right system, your staff will work smarter, not harder, and you will be able to grow your practice as you communicate better with more patients. It's time to get the right system and plan in place to help you reach patients where and when they want to hear from you.

*Editor's Note:* Steve recently presented a *Dynamic Chiropractic*-hosted webinar on communications best practices: "4 Secrets to Systematically Attract, Convert & Retain Patients Through Mobile." Visit [www.dynamicchiropractic.com/webcasts/archives2019.php](http://www.dynamicchiropractic.com/webcasts/archives2019.php) to access Steve's webinar and our complete webinar archives.

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