



# MARKETING TIPS

## TO HELP GROW YOUR DENTAL PRACTICE

Your go-to guide for straightforward, actionable marketing tips for attracting more patients to your practice through branding, online promotions, social media, special events, and more.



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# WELCOME

Like most dental professionals, you likely set your career in motion with a passion for dentistry and helping others, and didn't get into business with a passion for marketing. We get it, marketing can be a foreign concept to many, laden with countless options and methods to help you grow your business. If you're focused on building a pediatric or family practice catering to kids, there are a few specific ways to connect with audiences and earn more patients.

We built this guide with you in mind, to help demystify and clarify marketing tactics and tips that you can put to work in your practice today.

You shouldn't need a marketing degree to build a thriving practice, and we hope this guide helps you achieve success!



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# BRANDING BASICS

“Products are made  
in the factory, but  
brands are created  
in the mind.

— Walter Landor  
Pioneer of Branding

# The Branding Basics

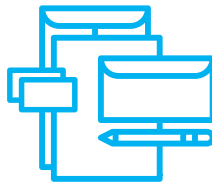
You already know you have an amazing office; now you need to make sure the world knows it. Creating a look and a brand that stands out in your community amongst all the other dental and medical providers in your area is easy... once you have that hook that makes you different. We're going to tell you how to begin creating your brand, but before we dive into the nitty gritty details, let's start with the basics.

Here is a quick vocabulary lesson:



## LOGO

Your logo is a graphic mark, emblem, or symbol that you use to aid and promote instant public recognition.



## IDENTITY

Your identity consists of the materials you use to market your company. These include your logo, mascots, business cards, website, social media posts, employee uniforms, office theming, and even a radio jingle.



## BRAND

Your brand is what people think and feel when they hear about your office – an emotional and psychological relationship between a company and consumers.

# Create Your Brand



Creating an amazing brand is important if you want to find success! If you missed it, branding is all of the ways you establish an image of your company in your customers' eyes. It's what they think about you when they hear your name beyond just the visuals of a logo and business cards.

A consistent brand is important for your company's image, for advertising, for generating new customers, and for the general perception of you and your work.

## WHAT IS BRANDING?

Branding is more than just a logo; it is a way of presenting your business to the public and developing trust in your company. Your brand is what people think when they hear your name. It's your personality!

**Red Bull is young and exciting.**

**Gucci is classy and sophisticated.**

**Harley Davidson is rugged and free.**

Those are the personalities embodied in those famous brands. But what is your brand?

Your brand will shape the way you interact with the public.

Is your office all about fun and positive memories? Post photos on your social media of your patients and staff posing with your props, wearing costumes, and participating in contests. Advertise your cool, kid-friendly office that will leave patients begging to come back again.

Is your office focused on education and caring? Include a themed education station in your office and hold workshops with at-risk children. Advertise that your office that sets children up with dental health knowledge that will last a lifetime.

The possibilities are endless. At IDS, we give you the stepping-stones for creating a strong brand we know your patients will love.

## HOW TO CREATE A STRONG BRAND WITH IDS THEMING

Enriching your office with a custom theme is an excellent way to grab people's attention. Adding murals or 3D elements to your waiting room, reception area, or treatment rooms, turns what can be a scary experience for children into a fun and welcoming atmosphere.

Instead of nervous patients, you'll have kids excited to go to the "dentist with the elephant" or the "fun dentist".

With a themed office, that's what your personality and brand can be - the fun dentist that caters to kids and gives them the next level of care. Your brand is fun and caring.

These are real quotes from parents that we found on the Facebook pages of some of our theming clients:

*"Makes coming to the dentist fun and something to look forward to!"*

*"If you're a kid and you need to go to the dentist, this is the place to go! The atmosphere is fun, friendly, and eases the anxiety of seeing a dentist!"*

*"The Disneyland of dentists."*

*"Feels like you are in a little amusement park."*

These sound like offices with a great, memorable brand! Parents want to take their children there. Children want to go!

# Create Your Logo



Your logo, the foundation of your identity, needs to grab attention, make a strong first impression, and should separate you from your competition. A well-designed logo is an easy way to convey to potential customers that your business is welcoming to children, professional, and provides quality services.

First impressions matter, so make sure you have a great logo to represent your business. Here are two logos created for IDS clients. See how you can apply these fundamentals to your own logo creation.

Businesses that cater to children have two audiences to target to when creating a logo: the adults who make the purchase and the children who want the product or service. A successful logo design connects with both. Use a fun mascot character with bright colors to appeal to children while using clear legible text aimed at the parents.

We suggest matching your logo to your IDS theme... literally! A great option is to use a prominent character from your office theme and turn it into your logo. ETCD used the moose character from their reception area in their logo.



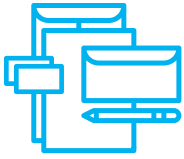
A good identity is about consistency. A themed logo creates an instant connection between your printed identity and your physical office. It also helps differentiate your office from your competition by showcasing what makes your practice special - in this case, the kid-friendly woodland themed decor.

If you are an established practice with an existing logo that your patients recognize - you don't want to lose that recognition. In order to update your look and bring consistency to your identity, you can consider adding theming or characters to your existing logo. Dr. Martin added his three new mascots to his existing "M" logo.



Not only does an update to an existing logo keep your identity consistent with your decor, it also signals to current patients that an update has been made to your office, so they better come in and check it out!

# Create Your Identity



Just like your personal identity makes you uniquely you, your brand identity is the look of your business that sets you apart from every other dentist in town. An identity is the collection of all elements that a company creates to portray an image to its audience.

Theming by IDS is an invaluable marketing tool for your business. Your theme becomes part of your brand, which in turn influences your identity. From a giant exterior landmark character, to the photo of your themed office in a reminder postcard, right down to the themed logo on your business card, your identity helps you stand out in the mind of your potential clients.

When creating a marketing package for a dental client, we like to include a logo design, business cards, referral pad, and letterhead. This is a great starter pack for creating your 'look,' which will help when you expand into flyers, magazine ads, signs, and more.

Be consistent with your designs; use the same style of fonts, the same colors, and include your logo on everything. You should also include your social media handles to bring attention to your online presence.



*A farm theme identity created by IDS for PDAO featuring a logo design, letterhead, business cards, and referral pad.*

## DID YOU KNOW?

Blue is the most universally appealing color in the spectrum and can help your identity appear more trustworthy, so if you want to appeal to a wide audience - and get them to trust you in the process - use blue in your design!

By keeping your graphics consistent, your practice becomes more memorable and more likely to be at the front of potential clients' minds. When you see a white cursive font on a red background, what do you think of? Coca-Cola of course! You can create the same recognition with your brand.



*A surf themed identity created by IDS for Smiling Seal featuring a logo design, referral pad, business cards, and letterhead.*



# ONLINE TIPS

“

Digital design is like painting, except the paint never dries.

— Neville Brody  
Influential Graphic Designer

# Build an Effective Website



The yellow pages are a thing of the past. Having a website is an important, if not the most important, part of your marketing plan. Today, the majority of your potential clients are using the internet to find the services and products that they need. When someone is looking for a dentist, they are most likely to search online and pick from the results they find there. If you don't have a website, you are missing out on potential clients.

Businesses that have a website are often ruled to be more professional or legitimate than those that don't. Moreover, a website is an additional opportunity to market your services to a wide audience and provide answers to questions and information about your practice.

## HAVING AN INEFFECTIVE WEBSITE IS JUST AS BAD AS NOT HAVING A WEBSITE AT ALL

Worse than not having a website is having a bad website. According to a study in 2015 by Adobe, 38% of people stop engaging with content if it is unattractive and 39% will stop engaging if your content takes too long to load. These are just two reasons why it is important to ensure that your website not only exists, but is also attractive and provides a positive user experience.

## OPTIONS FOR BUILDING YOUR WEBSITE

For many, the cost of hiring a web professional has been noted as an obstacle to having a website. An online presence is becoming increasingly important for reaching your patients, regardless of the monetary investment. The expense is quite small compared to the potential amount of lost business, so remember to make room in your marketing budget.

While having a professional web developer gives you more control over your online presence, there are different alternatives to building a website from scratch.

It is worth looking into a website template builder, and there are many out there to choose from like:

- [Wix](#)
- [Squarespace](#)
- [Wordpress](#)
- [Weebly](#)

That's just to name a few. They provide templates to get you started and have developers on staff who can build a website for you using their platform.

So what do you need to include in your dental website? Check out our infographic on the next page for a breakdown of what your developer should include on your site.

# Include These Elements in Your Homepage

## 1 NAVIGATION

Put the most important information in your nav bar - your logo, location, and contact information. Organize the links in a hierarchical structure. Don't pack this with too much information as it can become cluttered and hard to navigate. Additional links can be added to the footer.

## 2 HERO IMAGE

Include a large relevant image or video that conveys the outcome of visiting your office - happy patients, smiling faces, an easy, stress free visit.

## 3 HEADLINE

A clear concise headline telling visitors exactly what you do to confirm that the visitor is at the right website. Also include a subheader description that can supplement the headline by offering a brief description of what you do or what you offer. Zero in on a common client pain point that your service solves.

## 4 CALL-TO-ACTION (CTA)

What do you want the visitor to do - call now, book appointment, read more - call them to action with a big, bright button.

## 5 BENEFITS

What makes you different from the competition? Is it a child-friendly environment, convenient hours, a new pain-reducing or time-saving technology - choose 3-5 to promote on your front page with links to learn more.

## 6 SOCIAL PROOF

Add in reviews and testimonials from real clients to convince visitors you are the right office for their children.



## 7 SECONDARY CTAs

This is where you can put highlights of information that visitors are most likely to look for when on your site - your bio, information for new patients, and of course a tour of your facility.

## 8 FOOTER

Referred to as the junk drawer, this is where you stick all the extra info you do not want cluttering up the main navigation. Add your awards, AAPD badge, links to social media, plus additional menu items.

# Write a Blog



If you don't have a blog on your website, you're missing out. You're missing out on improving keyword rankings on search engines. You're missing out on increasing organic visits to your website. Most importantly, you're missing out on opportunities to get new patients.

According to Hubspot, businesses that blog receive 67% more leads than those that do not!

## SEARCH ENGINES LIKE BLOGS

Search engines like original content, sites with a high volume of content, and content that is updated on a regular basis. The easiest way to create content is with a regularly updated blog.

But you also need to create GOOD content to get people to click on your blog. Focusing on educating readers, not selling services or talking about your business, is key. People want information that will help them personally. You won't be able to get anyone to read your blog if your posts don't appeal to your target audience.

Here are some interesting and educational ideas you could write about that might interest parents:

***The Top 5 Children's Toothpastes  
Ranked by a Dentist***

***The Best Halloween Candy  
for Your Children's Teeth***

***How to Prepare for Your Child's  
First Trip to the Dentist***

***Are Dental X-Rays Safe  
for Children?***

***How to Keep Your Child Calm  
During a Dental Appointment***

The more clicks and engagement you get from your readers, the more search engines view you as an authority on the topic you write about, boosting your ranking in search results.

As a bonus, your blogs can be shared as a social media post, making your feed a useful source of information.

## POTENTIAL CLIENTS LIKE BLOGS

People like hearing 'inside' knowledge about a topic. It helps to build trust and will cement you as an expert in your field. Clients will see you as an authority on dental health when you provide answers to their questions. They will seek you out in person to help care for their children's teeth. They may even share your articles amongst their friend and families, further increasing your potential client base. Be sure to make your blog easy to share through social media and email to encourage this activity!

## NOT A WRITER? NOT A PROBLEM

Not a writer or just too busy? Leave writing to the experts. You can hire copywriters who specialize in dental related topics to create content for your website.

Here are a few good places to start your search for a professional copywriter:

- [Upwork.com](https://www.upwork.com)
- [Copywriters.com](https://www.copywriters.com)
- [Scripted.com](https://www.scripted.com)

# Set Up a Google Business Profile

In an effort to gain more visibility on Google, it is important to create a Google business listing, known officially as a Business Profile.

It's important the information about your business that shows up when people search Google is as accurate, complete, and optimized as possible.

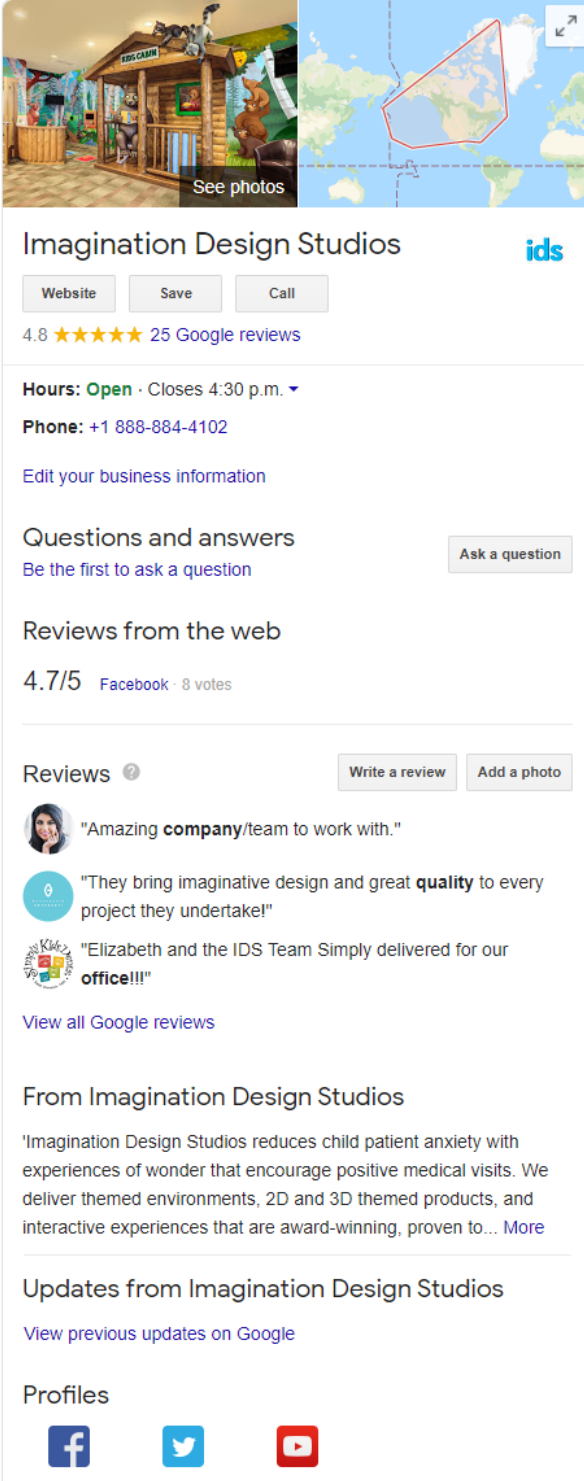
## HOW TO CREATE YOUR GOOGLE MY BUSINESS LISTING:

1. Log into the Google Account you want associated with your business (or create a Google Account if you don't already have one).
2. Go to [google.com/business](https://google.com/business) and select "Start now" in the top right-hand corner.
3. Enter your business name.
4. Enter your business address.
6. Choose your business category.
7. Add your business phone number and website.
8. Choose a verification option. Phone or email is the easiest.

Once you've verified your business, you need to add as much detail as possible to your profile. Go to the Google My Business dashboard, click the listing you'd like to work on, select "Info," and then choose a section to fill out or update.

Add additional information such as your logo, photos of your office, your operating hours, and any other information you have available.

According to Google, businesses with photos see 35% more clicks to their website and 42% higher requests for driving directions in Google Maps, so make sure you show off your unique office!



Imagination Design Studios ids

Website Save Call

4.8 ★★★★★ 25 Google reviews

Hours: **Open** - Closes 4:30 p.m. ▾

Phone: +1 888-884-4102

[Edit your business information](#)

Questions and answers Ask a question

[Be the first to ask a question](#)

Reviews from the web

4.7/5 Facebook · 8 votes

Reviews ? Write a review Add a photo

"Amazing **company**/team to work with."

"They bring imaginative design and great **quality** to every project they undertake!"

"Elizabeth and the IDS Team Simply delivered for our **office!!!**"

[View all Google reviews](#)

From Imagination Design Studios

'Imagination Design Studios reduces child patient anxiety with experiences of wonder that encourage positive medical visits. We deliver themed environments, 2D and 3D themed products, and interactive experiences that are award-winning, proven to... [More](#)

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*For reference, this is what the IDS business page looks like on Google.*

# Get Online Reviews



Reviews matter for small businesses, especially if you cater to the public.

Online reviews bring the benefit of “social proof”. Social proof is the influence that the actions and attitudes of other people have on your own behavior and decisions. 84% of people trust online reviews as much as the recommendation of a friend.

So we all know reviews are important, but how do you get them? Here are a few tips and tricks you can use to get ahead of the competition.

## 1. CLAIM YOUR ONLINE PROFILES

If you want to have control over your reviews, be sure to claim your online profiles. This means either setting up a profile or claiming the default listing created by review sites. Make sure you have a presence on Google, Facebook, Yelp, and any industry-specific sites, like ratemds.com, where your business can get reviewed.

Prioritize and begin by taking control of your Google Business Listing. Google reviews are the most important type of review for a dentist. Unless being referred, the first place a parent is going to go is Google to search for dentists in their neighborhood. If there are a number of options in an area, they will begin looking at reviews. For a small business competing against similar establishments in the same area, Google reviews can often be an important tiebreaker.

## 2. MAKE IT EASY FOR YOUR CUSTOMERS TO REVIEW YOU

Add links to your review pages on your website. Include links with your email correspondence. Make it easy by making it accessible.

## 3. OFFER INCENTIVES

This is helpful especially when you are a new business and do not have a lot of reviews. Offer a \$5 gift card to a local coffee shop if they leave a review. Or create a contest where every good review is an entry into a prize draw – make sure you announce the winner on social media to create excitement.

## 4. ASK THE RIGHT PEOPLE

When looking for reviews, ask the right people. If you have a referral program set up and are able to track referrers you now have a great resource at your disposal. If someone refers someone to your office they are obviously happy with your services. Send them a thank you for the referral and a link to leave a review.

## 5. EARN YOUR REVIEWS

If you want good reviews, then you'll have to earn them. Have great services, a friendly staff, and an amazing themed office that makes their kids calm and happy! Our clients often have excellent reviews talking about the fun environment created by adding games and themed decor.

*“We also love the play area - lots of things to do while the kids are waiting.”*

*“Super clean and decorated beautifully – it made the kids more excited to be there. Would recommend without hesitation.”*

*“Had a TON of eye candy for the kids (awesome decor and video game screens all over the place!)”*

If your clients genuinely like your business, you'll get the reviews you want.

# Respond to Bad Reviews



The majority of review sites will not allow you to delete a bad review, so be prepared to deal with them and use them to your benefit. Handling a bad review in a professional manner can actually be just as helpful as a good review as it can show how you handle negative situations. Plus bad reviews are a 'gold mine' of useful information that can help you create a better patient experience for future clients.

Here's a quick rundown of points you should remember when you get a bad review:

**1 RESPOND QUICKLY!** Respond to a bad review as quickly as possible so that other people are not able to read this angry review without your side of the story. But be cautious! Don't respond in the heat of the moment or you might type something you may regret.

**2 DO SOME INVESTIGATING.** Make sure you are informed and know your employee's side of the situation before you craft a response to the negative review.

**3 APOLOGIZE.** Take responsibility for your part in the problem and offer a sincere apology. Even if the review is unjustified, be empathetic to the reviewer's complaint to help calm them. Let them know you understand their frustration and will help them with their issue.

**4 SAY THANK YOU.** Thank the reviewer for taking the time to bring this issue to your attention. Let them know you pride yourself on your excellent customer service and appreciate the opportunity to make things right.

**5 OFFER TO TAKE THE CONVERSATION OFFLINE.** You don't want to start a debate with an irate customer on your wall of reviews, so offer to have to call or email to further discuss the issue.

If you're dealing with an online troll, just walk away. That's a fight you'll never win. Anyone reading the review of a troll will know when someone is just being a bully compared to leaving a legitimate review.

With these tips and tricks, you have the know-how to get you on the right path to gain more reviews.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Consumers trust a 4.5 star review more than 5 stars as they feel an imperfect score is more truthful and reflective of the business. 5 stars are just too good to be true.

# SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

“It’s important to be where your audience of potential customers is today, and where they might be tomorrow.

— Andrew Delaney

Senior Manager of Social Media, HubSpot



# Use the Right Social Media Platforms



It is becoming increasingly important to market your dental practice through social media. Traditionally, mailed leaflets were the main sources of new clients. That has changed. There are approximately 247 million US social media users as of 2019. That is a massive market waiting to be tapped by your practice. By using social media, you are able to put a face and a personality to your business, plus quickly and effectively reach potential clients.

There are three main social networking sites that are best for reaching and interacting with your client base: Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Each serves a specific purpose and can be utilized in different ways.



## FACEBOOK

Facebook is the most commonly-used platform, so having a Facebook account is a must. Facebook is best used when looking to connect with audiences and to share information with those who are interested in your practice. You can post content such as:

- Photos of your patients who are cavity free
- Celebrate your staff during special events
- Promote events, like if you're setting up a booth at a local fair or doing a talk at a school
- Informative content, like articles on the latest dental technology
- Information relating to your practice such as contact information, hours, and location map
- Updates that are relevant to your clients, such as closures due to Covid-19

Post consistently; several times a week is best for reaching those who follow you.

Facebook can also help you to gather feedback and comments from your existing patients. Be sure to monitor patient comments and respond promptly to both positive and negative comments.



## TWITTER

While Facebook focuses on creating branded stories and finding friends, Twitter is about sending information and gaining followers.

Twitter, which allows you to post in 280 character snippets, is a fantastic tool for sharing tips and small bits of news. Twitter inherently lends itself to posting several times a day with information your followers would find interesting. Tips on brushing habits, child education, fun dental crafts, and online reviews of your practice all have a place on your twitter feed.

Tweets have a short shelf life, so unless you have the time and capacity to post multiple times a day, Twitter could be more work than it is worth for your practice.



## INSTAGRAM

Instagram is a platform that allows you to post and tag a single photo or a small scrollable gallery.

Instagram can be used as a tool for your staff to share office life, post photos of kids who are in the daily 'no cavity club,' and celebrate office events. It is less formal than Facebook and a great tool for connecting to your younger patient base. Instagram is the best platform for reaching millennials (your family aged audience) and other users who appreciate a fun picture or video. If you have a themed office that means you'll have an endless supply of visually interesting content to grab the attention of the cool, millennial parents in your area.

On top of attracting new patients, Instagram is a great place to attract good staff. Job hunters will often head to Instagram to find out the culture of a company they are looking to work for to see if they will be a good fit.

There are downsides to Instagram - there is no desktop app, and it can only be used on your mobile device. You also cannot schedule posts for later natively on the app like you can with Facebook. However, there are workarounds with third party apps.



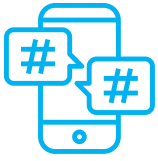
There are other platforms out there, such as Youtube, TikTok, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Pinterest, and more. YouTube is a great place to share video content, while TikTok can be a fun place to connect with your younger patients. However, not every platform will not be beneficial in promoting your business to potential clients. Research where you target audience likes to spend their time and focus your efforts on what makes sense.

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Social Media is about more than simply posting content. The content you create is also pivotal to your success. Featuring events in the community, educating patients on the importance of dental health and lifestyle changes, and highlighting opportunities for clients to interact with your practice are all key.

The great thing about social media is that you can let your patients market your practice for you! A themed office gives patients plenty of photo opportunities that they want to share to their social media profiles. Choose a hashtag that relates to your office and encourage patients to tag your practice in the photos they take. Not only does this increase word of mouth recommendations, it also makes patients feel connected and excited about your office. A happy practice is a social practice, and your patients will be happy to promote your dental office on social media!

# Use Hashtags to Get Noticed



You can create a hashtag by placing this symbol (#) before a relevant keyword or phrase in a social media post. Think of hashtags as a way to connect social media content to a specific topic or event. They also make it easier to discover posts around those specific topics, because hashtags group all social media content with that same hashtag together.

Using hashtags makes you a part of a bigger pool of content, which can lead to greater engagement by boosting your brand's social media engagement through likes, shares, comments, and new followers.

## HASHTAG BASICS

- Hashtags always start with # but they won't work if you use spaces, punctuation, or symbols.
- Keep your hashtags short. Don't string a whole sentence together.
- Use relevant and specific hashtags. If it is too obscure, it likely won't be used by other social media users.
- Limit the number of hashtags you use. More isn't always better. It actually looks a bit spammy.
- Create a hashtag unique to your business #[yourbusinessname].
- Use your location so you don't end up with followers on the other side of the country. If you were located in San Francisco you could use #SFDentist #SanFranciscoDentist #BayAreaDentist.
- Show support for social issues, such as #BreastCancerAwareness or #MentalHealth.
- You can use your hashtags with online contests.
- Create branded hashtags for events, staff use, or for your photo op.

Curious which hashtags are used the most in the dental industry? Take a look at this list. According to recent analytics, the following are currently the most popular dentistry hashtags on Instagram:

#Dentistry #Dentist #Dental #Smile #Teeth  
 #Dentista #Odontologia #CosmeticDentistry  
 #Tooth #Orthodontics #Odonto #Dentalcare  
 #DentalPhotography #DentalHygienist  
 #TeethWhitening #OralHealth #DentalAssistant  
 #DentistryLife #Braces #DentalStudent  
 #OralSurgery #DentalHygiene #DentistryWorld  
 #SmileMakeover #DentalClinic

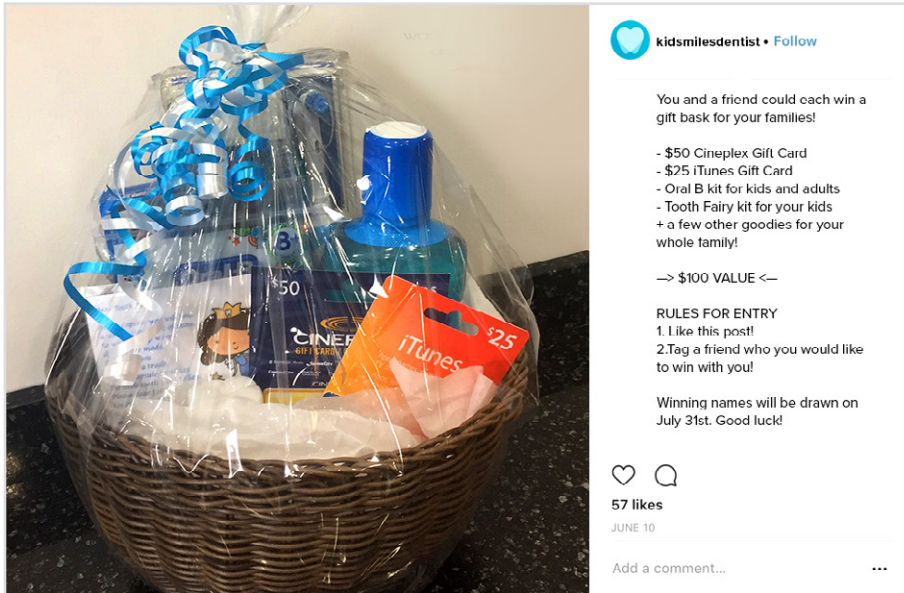
## HELPFUL TIP

Be aware of how hashtags read to others! The singer Susan Boyle had a catastrophic album launch party after using #susanalbumparty. Try capitalizing each word to avoid a similar faux pas.

# Get More Engagement with Online Contests



Create online engagement and customer loyalty by running contests on your social media pages to encourage engagement. When people like, comment, and share your posts, social media algorithms recognize this activity and more people are likely to see you and learn about your business.



*An Instagram post promoting a new contest.*

Determine whether you're trying to increase social media followers, generate more leads, or want to increase brand awareness.

One of the most straightforward ways to run a contest is for each time a parent tags the practice and uses a special hashtag, they get entered in a draw to win a fun family prize. Use a photo op in your office to create a shareable photo moment for your customers to tag. Let's face it – parents are always looking for an opportunity to capture an adorable photo of their kids and then share it with friends and family. The chance to win a prize is an added bonus.

The better the prize, the more activity you'll generate. Find some local products as a prize to support other businesses in your area. Aim your contest prizes at both kids and adults (adults are the ones who will be doing the majority of the posting, so make it worth it for them). Promote this prize while your patients and their families are in the office.

## ADDITIONAL CONTEST IDEAS INCLUDE:

- At the office, ask your clients to follow you on social media to be entered in a draw.
- Ask existing followers to share a specific post to promote your dental office on their own feeds.
- Ask followers to like and comment on a post to get entered in a draw to increase engagement.
- Get your followers to tag a friend in a contest post so both they and their friend are entered in a draw.
- Ask for name suggestions for your new office mascot! The person who suggests the winning name gets a prize.

# Promote Your Office with Photo Ops



With social media playing an ever more critical role in marketing, it's no surprise that photo ops are becoming a trend in clinic waiting rooms all over the world. It's a great dental office promotion idea for using your physical office space to drive social media activity (like posts and shares) and can really help a practice gain organic traction in the online parent community.

Here are 5 tips to ensure you are getting maximum value out your photo op:

## 1. MAKE SURE YOUR DENTAL OFFICE PHOTO OP IS 'SHARE-WORTHY'

Parents are always on the lookout for the next moment that will produce an eye-catching, adorable photo of their little ones. Make sure that your photo op features vibrant colors and something that will really make kids smile. It's all about curating that perfect social media moment.

## 2. CREATE A SUBTLE BRAG FOR PARENTS

Beyond the adorable moment, parents are secretly looking for the opportunity for a subtle brag. For example, "Look at how much fun my kid had at the dentist... Oh, and no cavities!"

To play into this desire, add some props to the scene that allow kids to proudly advertise 'Cavity-Free Today!', 'Had a Great Appointment!', or 'I was Brave Today!'.

## 3. MAKE SURE YOUR BRAND IS VISIBLE

You get the most marketing value from a photo being posted to social media if those who see it know where it was taken. We suggest a combination of two things: your logo included in the scene somewhere – it can be incorporated in the background scene, on a signpost that's in the shot, or perhaps on the t-shirt of the photo op character. Next, utilize hashtags and encourage parents to tag your office when they post the picture. Make this easy on them by ensuring your hashtags and social media handles are easy to find and are included on any take-home paperwork.





#### 4. RUN A SOCIAL MEDIA CONTEST WITH YOUR PHOTO OP

One of the best ways to nurture parent-driven activity online is to run a contest. Weave this together with your photo op by allowing the posting of the photo as entry into the contest. Use a unique hashtag to easily identify entries online and make your prize something family-focused such as passes to a local amusement park or a family picnic prize pack.

One thing to note here – not every parent will be open to posting photos of their kids on social media, so be sure to supplement the above with an offline entry ballot as well. This way parents have the opportunity to enter without being ‘forced’ to post pics of their kids online.

#### 5. MIX IT UP SEASONALLY

Parents don’t want to look like they are posting the same photo more than once, which is why you’ll need to put some thought into keeping your photo op current. It can be as simple as adding some seasonal props like a Santa hat on your character or adding some pumpkins and cobwebs around Halloween. The trick is to make the photo op reflect what’s current now.



*Santa hats during the holidays and cobwebs at Halloween will help mix up your photo ops.*

# EVENT TIPS

“Do what you do so well that they will want to see it again and bring their friends.”

— Walt Disney

# Host a Grand Opening or Theme Reveal Party



Once your office has been completed and is ready to open, the importance of a Grand Opening or a Theme Reveal Party should not be undervalued. Whether you have themed an existing office or built one from the ground up, a Theme Reveal is a perfect opportunity to connect with the community and gain new patients by showing off your kid-friendly office decor.

## 1. SEND INVITES! ALERT THE MEDIA!

- Send a press release to your local newspapers and invite them to bring a film crew to your event.
- Advertise in local school newsletters.
- Send out a notice to your existing patients.
- Invite Mommy Bloggers and local influencers – [email invite template](#)
- Create an event on social media and advertise it to your local area.

## 2. SPECIAL GUESTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Your event can be as big or small as you want!

- Invite sports mascots and local sports celebrities to sign autographs for your patients.
- Have someone dress as the tooth fairy to entertain kids.
- Hire artists to paint children's faces and clowns to hand out balloon animals.
- Get a band to play some music for children and adults to dance to - this will also draw attention to your event as people who can hear your party from a distance will be curious and come check it out.
- Rent a bouncy castle for kids to jump around in.
- Never underestimate the fun kids can have with a bubble machine.







### 3. SERVE FOOD

Nothing brings in a crowd faster than a BBQ or a pancake breakfast as part of your reveal. Kids looove hotdogs, and they are an inexpensive option when serving a large crowd.

### 4. HAVE A PHOTO OP READY FOR GUESTS

Whether it's an IDS themed prop, pictures with the tooth fairy, or a basket full of kid sized costumes in front of your logo, make sure your name is getting shared on social media by the people attending your event.



### 5. RUN A CONTEST

Everyone loves prizes! Have a draw where attendees must write down their name and email to sign up for your newsletter. Or run a social media contest for the best photo op image tagged with your party hashtag.



By hosting an event for families, it is considerably easier to draw in potential new patients and get everyone in your community excited about the theme you've created. Plus, existing patients will get a sneak peek at the office before they come in for an appointment. Kids have the chance to explore and get comfortable in the office, helping alleviate anxiety and getting them excited about visiting your dental office.

### HELPFUL TIP

If you missed out on a party when you first opened your doors, don't forget about anniversary or 'installiversary' parties as a reason to celebrate and get your name out there.

# Stay Organized with a Party Checklist



## GRAND OPENING CHECKLIST

### PRE-PLANNING

- create a budget
- pick a date
- create guest list
- research entertainment
- research rental companies
- research photographers
- brainstorm party games
- brainstorm prizes
- create a schedule of activities
- create a blueprint of your event area

### PARTY TIMELINE

#### AT LEAST 1 MONTH BEFORE

- book entertainment
- book equipment rentals
- invite the media
- send invitations - digital and physical
- create Facebook event

#### 1 WEEK BEFORE

- confirm with booked entertainment
- confirm with equipment rentals
- remind invited guests

#### 1 DAY BEFORE

- purchase food
- assemble prize and party favors
- decorate interior

#### DAY OF PARTY

- decorate exterior
- coordinate entertainment

#### AFTER THE PARTY

- send thank you notes to special guests
- post social media thank you
- send photos and press release to news

### PARTY SUPPLY LIST

#### FOOD

- hotdogs, buns, condiments
- pancake mix, syrup
- snacks - chips & cookies
- water & pop
- plates, cups, napkins & cutlery

#### NECESSITIES

- decorations (balloons, streamers)
- BBQ or pancake griddle
- tables - for food and sitting
- chairs
- tents - for rain or shine
- portable toilets
- AV equipment - mic & speakers

#### FUN & ENTERTAINMENT

- musical entertainment - band or DJ
- face painter
- balloon animal twister
- tooth fairy
- business or sports mascot
- photo op/photo booth
- bubble machine
- bouncy castle
- ballot box for prize draws
- prizes and party favors
- ribbon and giant scissors

#### NOTES \_\_\_\_\_

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# Utilize Local Influencers



The importance of the authentic voice in marketing has grown significantly in the past few years, with influencers of all shapes and sizes sharing promotional messaging with their followers. Take advantage of this unique marketing resource. Reach out to local influencers and host a special event just for them and their children. Turn them into brand advocates who are genuinely excited about your business and you will gain them as a new client along with their followers.

Google local mommy blogs, hop on Facebook to find parent groups, search local hashtags (#yourcitymomblogger), even look at your own followers and try to find local influencers with children who would be interested in getting some content for their own blogs and social media feeds.

Offer snacks, a tour, and have other staff or your mascot provide child-friendly entertainment to the kids while you give a Q&A to give your blogger guests lots to write about.

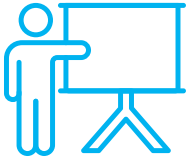


Make sure you have a photo op with your office name and hashtag ready to go.

Hire a professional photographer to capture the day to do your own promotion after the fact.

Make sure you offer freebies or a prize to thank your guests for their time. You can offer additional freebies or a prize they can share with their followers to incentivize them to promote their visit to their followers.

# Attend Local Trade Shows and School Events



Trade shows are important because they offer you a platform to market to your customers and create awareness in your community. Plus nothing develops brand loyalty faster than education, so get your name out there by attending events and giving educational demonstrations for kids. Don't forget to hand out informative freebies they can take home and remember you by.

It's easy to set up a simple booth and promote healthy smiles at local events, schools, sporting events, and trade shows. Here is a list of the basic necessities you'll need to get started.



## 1. TABLE

Bring a folding table and decor, such as table cloths, to dress up your spot. Remember to use your brand colors when decorating a booth!

## 2. SIGNS

Signage, including a hanging banner or pop up banner, help draw attention to your booth from a distance.

## 3. PROMO MATERIALS

Business cards or post card sized promo materials are the most standard marketing materials to help clients remember and engage with you long-term. Add a referral code to your promo materials for future clients to reference so you'll know if they heard about you at a specific show.

## 4. PRESENTATION MEDIA

Slideshow presentations, short video clips, and demonstrations packed with visual aides (such as a giant toothbrush and a set of teeth) can go a long way to engaging potential customers and their children.

## 5. FREEBIES

Everybody likes free stuff! You can hand out shirts for kids, reusable bags, fridge magnets, branded toothbrushes, balloons, and anything else that you think would be a value to kids and their parents.

## 6. A MASCOT

Bring an office mascot - whether it's a toy or someone in a costume - and use them as a photo opportunity.

## 7. TRAVELING BILLBOARD

If there is an outdoor event use a [Traveling Billboard](#) to stand out even more!

## HELPFUL TIP

Bring a box of handy supplies including pens, tape, rubber bands, paper clips, scissors, zip ties, string, etc to help keep posters in place and displays intact.

# PROMOTIONAL TIPS

“

We need to stop interrupting what people are interested in and be what people are interested in.

— Craig Davis  
Co-Founder Sendlle

# Take Great Promo Photos



According to Google, businesses with photos see 35% more clicks to their website and 42% higher requests for driving directions in Google Maps. If you have a themed office, this is an especially great selling feature you need to highlight with photos. It's time to start spreading the word by utilizing social media, your business listings, and other offline marketing with great photographs of your newly themed office.

Here are 5 simple tips on how to make your office look as exciting in photographs as it does in real life:

## 1. USE PEOPLE TO ADD SIZE AND CONTEXT TO YOUR THEMED DECOR

Use a child or staff member as a model to give an idea of the size of your props. This will give viewers the right perspective on how large your prop is and convey how much fun it is for kids to interact with your decor.

Use your theming as a photo op backdrop for "Cavity Free Club" photos and post those on social media on a regular basis.



## 2. GET ALL THE ANGLES

Zoom in, zoom out. Take some close-up shots of unique characters, detailed shots of quirky characteristics of the props, and some wide-angle shots that allow the viewer to see the entire atmosphere of the themed room. Get down and see what kids see for some truly unique shots.



*A kids eye view from a log play tunnel looking out on a safari play area creates an intriguing shot.*

### 3. AVOID BAD LIGHTING

Try to avoid using a flash as flashes can cause unwanted glare and shadows. Using natural or artificial ceiling lights will give you a much better photograph and show off the colors of your amazing new office.

However, it is important to be aware of bright windows and harsh sunlight shining into your office when taking photos. Bright sunlight streaking across your photos can bleach out props and details on murals.



*See the difference good lighting can create!*

### 4. SOMETIMES MORE IS MORE!

Make sure to photograph each room and each individual prop from multiple angles. More photographs mean more stock images that you can use in ads, flyers, and social media updates.



### 5. HIRE A PROFESSIONAL

This is the easy option if you and your staff don't have an eye for photography. A real estate photographer will know how to shoot the interior and exterior of your building, but as we have learned over the years from sending photographers to capture our installs, they may not know just how to shoot the unique theming in your office without a couple of the tips on this list. Feel free to share these tips with your hire!

Now that you have some good dental practice photos you can market them to your potential clients. Share them to your website, Google business page, and social media feeds. Use a photo of your office on appointment reminder cards, especially if you have renovated an existing office. Add them to any flyers or trade show collateral you may have.

# Get in the Local News



Don't be shy, you have a cool and unique office that stands out, so get your office in the news! This is a great opportunity for some free marketing. Local news channels love to show off unique and exciting stories in the community. Whether you get in the newspaper or manage to bring out a whole news camera crew, any free promotion is welcome.

Contact a journalist directly if you can, not just the generic news station contact. Your story could get lost in the shuffle. Find someone who writes about topics similar to your business. Use our basic [email template](#) to help contact local news stations.

The subject line of your email pitch must contain your news hook – the one thing that makes your story stand out and demand a journalist's attention.

## Try one of these subject lines:

1. "Amazing kid-friendly [Jungle/Ocean/Etc] themed office comes to [local area]"
2. "A dental office kids can't wait to visit!"
3. "From fear to fun, how this local dental office is changing the way kids feel about the dentist."

## Include in the body of your message:

Reference another article they have written that you enjoyed to show that you are familiar with their work.

*[Journalist Name], I know you like to write about [local business/events/children/health] and thought this story would be of interest to you. Please find attached below a story about a unique dental office experience designed to reduce anxiety in children.*



Make it easy on the journalist you have contacted by providing details they can use to write their article.

- Tell them a bit about your history in the area.
- Any philosophies you have around treating patients.
- Talk about the problem you are solving for consumers - making going to the dentist easier for both kids as well as their parents.
- Describe your office and how it is designed to entertain and relax children, better priming them for their appointments.
- Feel free to mention any awards you have won for your services.

Attach a photo! A themed office is designed to sell itself and will help your request stand out.

Lastly, invite the journalist to contact you if they need any more information. Feel free to send a follow up email if you don't hear a reply. Good luck!



# Apply for Awards



Awards are an honor to receive, as well as a great way to boost the reputation of your business. Awards are a form of “social proof”. Social proof is the influence that the actions and attitudes of other people have on your own behavior and decisions. By showing that your business is recognized for its quality, you will help ease the minds of potential customers. Other examples of social proof are testimonials, ratings, and celebrity endorsements.

Here are some simple ways you can use an award to market your business:

## 1. GET YOUR AWARD IN THE NEWS

Send a press release to your local paper to announce your accomplishment. Local news crews are always looking for fun feel-good stories and will likely be interested in your story, especially if you have a visually interesting IDS themed office. You can also post these news stories to your own social media, so it's a win-win.

## 2. MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT ON YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA

Announce your award on social media or add it to the cover image. Social media is a great place to get excited about an award. Post a photo of you and your staff cheering to make it more personal.

## 3. PUT AWARDS ON YOUR WEBSITE BIO

Add the words “Award-Winning” to your company bio or list the award with your patient testimonials. We've seen many dentists add them to the footer of their website as well.

## 4. PHYSICALLY DISPLAY YOUR AWARDS

You've probably seen signs on your favorite pizzeria that say “Voted Best Pizza” or a Tripadvisor sticker at a tourist attraction. These are social proof that these are places you want to check out. Why not do the same for your dental office? A printed banner, plaque, or even a sticker on your front door allows old and new customers to see your awards.

## 5. ADD YOUR AWARDS TO YOUR MARKETING MATERIALS

If it's a big win, go one step further and add it to your printed collateral that goes out to clients: at the bottom of your letterhead, in the corner of your reminder postcards, or under your logo as a tagline.

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These are only a few ideas to get you thinking. Getting positive press for your unique office is easy once you get started. Good luck with your awards!

## HELPFUL TIP

Search online for industry-specific awards available in your city, state, or country. Magazines, newspapers, and websites often run “Best of...” contests. Suppliers like Patterson and Henry Schein feature spotlights on the offices they work with.

# Create Marketing Partnerships



Is there a local business in your area that isn't a direct competitor but offers a product or service to children and families? Consider working with them on a co-branded campaign where you promote each other on social media, in your monthly newsletter, in your office, or through promotional printed materials. It should be a mutually beneficial relationship - you can promote another kid-friendly business while you reach a new audience and their fan base gets to learn about you.

Plenty of businesses use co-branding as a great way to spread their names – GoPro & Red Bull, Taco Bell & Doritos, and Apple & Nike. You don't have to be a big name to find another company to work with.

A great place for you to start is to form partnerships with kid-centric businesses, such as daycares, indoor play centers, and boutique clothing and decor outlets for kids. We have a basic [message template](#) to help you start introducing yourself to local businesses.

Check out reviews, ratings, and overall web presence online. If you don't like what you see don't engage with that company. Don't let their bad reputation do the opposite of what you hope to achieve. If they are a good fit, you can share promotional items and coupons between your businesses.

For example, with each dental checkup, hand out a 10% coupon to a local indoor jungle gym, and vice versa, where you can offer a discounted service or free consultation to kids who attend a birthday party at the venue. As many dentists with a themed IDS office have told us over the years, patients often want to bring their friends or have their birthday party at their cool dental office. While you can't host parties in your waiting room, at least you can recommend a good place for parents to take their kids.

Co-marketing is a powerful marketing tool that can potentially let you generate twice the results with half the effort. Any parent who is already loyal to these other brands and stores you partner with will trust their advice, which gives you a foot in the door in convincing them that your service is best.

## HELPFUL TIP

To begin a relationship with a new business contact, try connecting with that person on LinkedIn. You can message them directly through the site, which is useful if you do not have their personal email or phone number to begin a dialog.

# NEXT STEPS

We hope this guide has helped you become more comfortable with the idea of marketing your practice. These are just a few of the countless marketing options available, so if these tips don't work with your business goals, you can utilize other methods to achieve success.

Want to keep up to date with the latest marketing tips for the dental world? Be sure to subscribe to our [newsletter](#) and our [blog](#) so you don't miss out on any opportunity to continue to grow your business.



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