

A how-to guide to in-house marketing

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Dr Grant McAree¹ shares his in-house guide to marketing for the dental team.

Marketing has been key to the success of all my dental businesses, from my practices to my training courses.

It's something I have always enjoyed and been passionate about, right from the early days of my career, so doing it myself came naturally to me.

On my Dental Marketing and Business Course, one of the first things I tell people

is that marketing 'ain't rocket science', and I really believe that to be true. Marketing is an extremely powerful tool for your business, but most people don't realise that it's something they can easily do for themselves.

When I tell people this, it is often met with disbelief. At first. This is because we have been thrown off course by the smoke, mirrors, and technical jargon some marketers use that led us to believe that marketing is something we should just leave to the big guns. Don't get me wrong, they have their role to play; however, I believe that 60% of marketing is something you can easily do yourself.

Why do your marketing in-house?

So why would you do your own marketing in-house rather than hiring an agency?

In-house marketing is becoming more and more popular across many industries, however a lot of dental practices have traditionally shied away from marketing.

Doing your own marketing can be really empowering, and here's why. In-house marketing puts you and your team in the driving seat and in control of the messages you are putting out there. No one knows your business better than you and your team.

Your team already knows your brand, philosophy, and culture, so they are far better placed to know the best topics to post about, what your patients' needs are, and your target audience. You, or someone who works with you, will be much better placed to put out relevant content than someone who is doing it without that insight.

Marketing is a really powerful vehicle for building relationships, and I believe that every professional needs to try and do at least some of it for themselves.

Another factor is, of course, cost. It is far more cost-effective to do your marketing yourself. Many dental professionals end up paying out huge amounts of money on stuff

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they could do themselves, and that would take up just ten minutes of their time.

How to market in-house

Here's my how-to guide to getting started with in-house marketing.

1. Identify your unique selling point (USP)

The first thing you need to do is identify your 'why'. Why are you providing this service? It's usually a passion, something that's within you. That's your USP, and if you get that nailed down, you can develop a strategy around it. Your USP is marketing gold and needs to be featured within your messaging. Always keep your core 'why' in mind. That is what will build your business and get patients through the door.

next stage. But, for now, I advise making it a team exercise.

3. Make marketing a priority

When I am asked how much time I suggest people should spend on marketing their practice per week, they are shocked when I say, '100% of the time'. Marketing is just the vehicle for sales, and sales are happening every time you walk through your clinic door. Every time your team picks up the phone, every time they talk to a colleague, every time they smile at a patient in the corridor.

4. Be consistent

Consistency is essential when it comes to marketing. The first part of consistency is brand awareness, and your logo is key to that. Your logo is what people associate with you, so if you put an advert out, people know it is

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2. Get the whole team involved

In my practice, marketing was ingrained. I put automated systems in place from day one, so that my staff were all trained from the beginning. It is simple stuff that can be passed on to new members of the team. It is a mindset more than just training. The concept is that your customers are king and your colleagues are your best friends, so respect both.

I don't believe there is one team member who is better placed to deliver certain marketing roles or functions over another. Every team will be different, but you can all muck in and help each other to know and understand the aims and objectives.

If there is a team member who is particularly keen to get involved in marketing, then you can nurture that, but every one of my team members has their role to play and all work towards the same outcome. It isn't about one person stepping up. The entire team should know the objectives.

Eventually, I think more dental practices will start employing someone in-house specifically to do the marketing. That's the

you. So, keep that branding message strong. I also make sure that I include the same information on any post I do: my website details, telephone number, what the treatment is, and the area I work in.

5. Respect is key

Respect is absolutely key to making in-house marketing work. Respect your colleagues. Respect your manager. Respect your patients. Support each other. There should be no bullying and no nastiness. Be the best you can be and always try to see it through the other person's eyes. Learn to appreciate the others in your team. We all have problems. You are not number one, no matter who you are. You are part of a team no matter where you sit.

Doing your own marketing in-house can actually be something that bonds your team together. It is something tangible you can see the results of, and when your marketing is successful, your business is successful, and your team can share in that.

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