

First class internet marketing for dentists

Krishan Joshi is the Project Manager at Dental Focus Web Design. This series of four short articles will discuss marketing to existing patients, attracting prospective patients and search engine optimisation

PART 1 OF 4: Introduction to the web

Web marketing to existing patients

Recent statistics indicate that 14.3 million households use the Internet and 69% have a broadband connection. 78% of London households with Internet access actually have broadband, which is approximately half of all households in the London region.

A website is essential for any private dentist that is serious in marketing to their existing patients, especially in London. The website should convey professionalism in both its design and content. Patients should be immediately impressed at first sight and want to recommend your website to family, friends and colleagues. Flash animation should be considered to bring the site to life especially as most households have broadband.

The website should be mentioned on all stationery, signage and reminders. Each patient should be shown the website by the dentist on a surgery computer before starting treatment. By personally going through the website with your patients, not only do you have an opportunity to personally inform them of the various aesthetic treatments you offer but you are also teaching them how to demonstrate the website to others; an important training session for your free 'word of mouth' marketers.

Once the website design and animation has captured the patient's immediate attention, the usefulness of the site's content is extremely important. Content needs to be educational but not boring. Professional photographs of the building, reception, waiting room and surgeries should be available, especially to show off new or refurbished practices. Brief descriptive text should be complemented by well cropped before and after photographs. Morphing the before and after photographs in a gentle flash animation provides an exciting, visual impact to the patient's understanding of the treatment.

Attracting prospective patients

The general public is now used to watching smile makeover programmes on television and reading various articles on cosmetic dentistry in newspapers and magazines. Everyday, people turn to the most popular search engine, www.



Dental Focus Web Design
www.dentalfocus.com

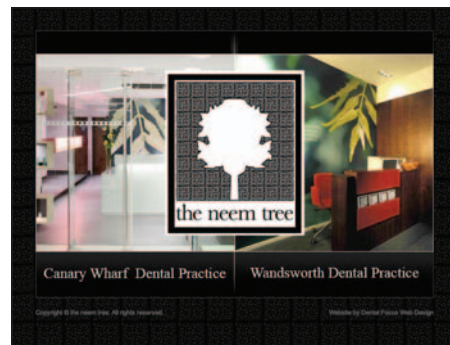
The Dental Focus website showcases its portfolio of dental websites. All our dental practice websites have their own bespoke look and feel to match their existing branding and identity. Beautiful websites have elegance and style with professional photographs. Gentle flash animation is used for the logo, photos and music to bring the site to life

google.co.uk, and search for a dentist in their location, either near their home or work.

A popular search phrase is 'dentist clapham'. Surprisingly, statistics show that this phrase is used twice as much as 'clapham dentist' and is four times busier than 'dentist in clapham'. The first page of results for 'dentist clapham' has over 20 different website descriptions and links out of a possible 108,000 web pages.

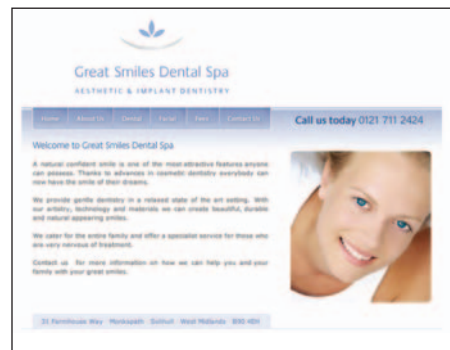
The top three websites on the natural, free listing of Google.co.uk are dentistsw4.co.uk, tendental.com and dentalclinique.co.uk. All these websites are search engine optimised by Dental Focus Web Design who continually strive to improve the websites' credibility, relevancy and popularity in the eyes of the search engine i.e. improving the site's content, inbound and outbound links, structure and accessibility. Flash animation should be used carefully as flash is not search engine friendly.

Some prospective patients are willing to travel to see a cosmetic dentist anywhere in London so they may search for 'cosmetic dentistry london'. This keyphrase is nearly eight times more competitive as 'dentist clapham' as the results provide 827,000 web pages. The no.1 website on the natural, free listing is cosmeticdentistrylondon.co.uk, an information portal and directory of dentists, which is owned and search engine



The Neem Tree
www.theneemtree.co.uk

The Neem Tree website is dark and chic. The home page allows the visitor to choose the location of their 2 practices easily.



Great Smiles Dental Spa
www.greatsmiles.co.uk

The Great Smiles Dental Spa is minimalist and white as well as gentle and calming. A photo of a beautiful smiling model is used.

optimised by Dental Focus Web Design.

On Google there is the free, natural listing and the paid sponsored listing. Whether your website is the main free listing or in the pay-per-click listing, it is essential that it is visible at the top of the 1st page of Google.co.uk for the key phrases related to you.

The benefits of Pay-Per-Click advertising are that high rankings can be achieved immediately and the wording for the link description is fully customisable. On Google AdWords Pay-Per-Click advertising, you create an advert with your chosen wording and link, specifying



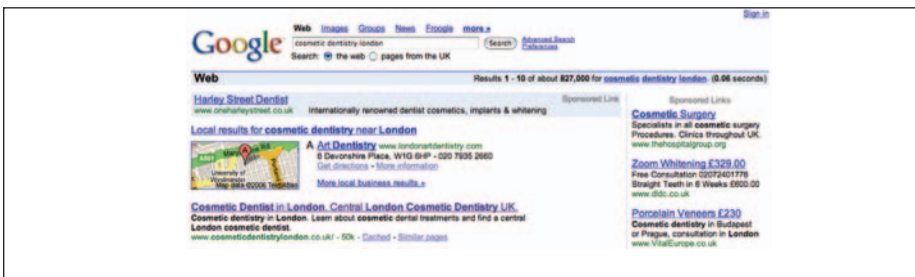
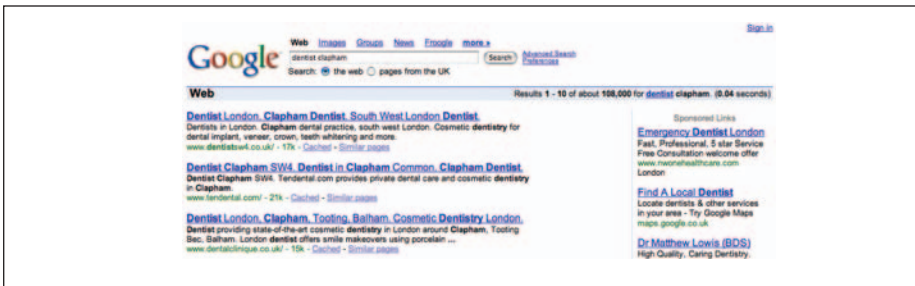
The Neem Tree
www.theneemtree.co.uk
Large professional photographs are animated at the top of the website to provide a virtual tour of the practice.



The Rosebank Dental Practice
www.rosebankdental.co.uk
Written testimonials are complemented with full face and close up before & after treatment photographs, flash animated.



Whippendell Dental Clinic
www.watforddental.co.uk
Your website should use an online form as the means for visitors to email. The form should request simple contact details, information on how they found you, as well as preferred day and time of appointment with space for additional comments. Online forms make emailing you easy whilst allowing you to capture relevant data, which may not be provided otherwise. Emails should be checked at least once a day and genuine hot enquiries should be responded to as soon as possible with a phone call to secure and confirm an appointment. Prospective patients are likely to email more than one dental website. Thus new patient leads need to be acted on immediately otherwise there is no point in even marketing the website.



the keywords you wish to target. You set a maximum Cost-Per-Click (CPC) e.g. 20p per click or £2 per click and adverts are then ranked like an auction. Other factors besides CPC can affect your ranking on the sponsored listing but generally you need to set a higher CPC than your competitors to be ranked higher than them. You set a daily budget and your advert is shown until the budget has been used up with the equivalent number of clicks.

Contact by prospective patients

A professional and user friendly website that can be found on the 1st page of Google.co.uk is essential for any facial aesthetic dentist that is serious in attracting new patients. The website's home page should instantly capture the visitor's attention by immediately conveying that you can provide the outcome that he or she is looking for through appropriate wording, photographs of smiling models as well as before and after shots. Once the visitor knows that you can

provide the smile he or she desires, it is important to build your credibility. The website needs to build credibility through real patient smile galleries, testimonials, dentist profiles showing qualifications and memberships, photos of the dentists and the practice. Gaining the prospective patient's trust and confidence in your abilities will encourage that all important move to contact you.

The website needs to provide clear details on how to find, telephone and email you. Your telephone number and address is best placed on every page. Visitors should be able to email you especially if they are surfing whilst at work or at night when you are closed. The main email address should be professional and go hand-in-hand with the web address, i.e. a web address www.dentalfocus.com should promote the email address info@dentalfocus.com. It is important not to use a personal or free email address such as @hotmail.com or @btinternet.com. This simple consistency is important for credibility.

Website's need advanced web statistics, which at the very least show the key phrases used on search engines to find the site as well as the number of daily unique visitors and details of referring websites (allowing you to monitor the value of purchasing advert links from sites like Yell.com).

Five tips to remember

Your website should:

1. Be attractive, educational and impressive, not boring
2. Be easily found on Google.co.uk through the natural or pay-per-click listings
3. Increase credibility using dentist profiles and testimonials
4. Allow you to be contacted easily, especially by email
5. Have advanced web statistics

For further information contact Krishan Joshi at Dental Focus Web Design
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