

Website investment

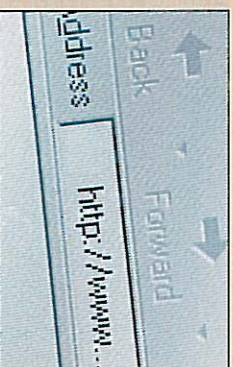
The Internet is an essential research tool so it's vital you have a well-maintained website that reflects your practice. Amy Rose explains

Once upon a time, patients would simply attend the dental surgery closest to them whenever they needed treat-

ment. These days this happens less and less frequently. Patients demand the highest standard of treatment at reasonable prices and they

are more than happy to shop around for it. The Internet is a research tool, allowing people to find out all sorts of diverse information

from the comfort of their home. Every industry is now embracing its potential, and there are many dentists doing the same thing.



Would you choose a business with a rudimentary web site?

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Back to basics
Even a very basic website can carry a great deal of important information. Visitors to the website can see at a glance the location of your practice, directions on how to get there (and perhaps a map), opening times and contact details. Most practices allow contact via email as well as by phone, for patient convenience. The site might also include helpful after-care tips for patients who have had dental surgery and detailed information about the treatments offered at the practice. This is very important – if a person looking for whitening treatment visited your site, but did not see any information of whitening, that person will probably leave your site and look elsewhere. The assumption will be that tooth whitening is not a procedure you carry out.

Presenting your site

With a website up and running, regularly updated with fresh content and with a thorough treatment list, you can develop a potent web presence. However, you need to pay close attention to the presentation of the site as well as the content.

Now, you don't want your prospective patient to think that you are behind the times. Put yourself in the position of this patient: you are looking for the highest standard of treatment from a dentist working with the latest in surgery techniques and technology. If you have yet to invest in a website, ask yourself, would you not be more likely to go with a practice that had an informative and attractive website, than one which has no website at all?

If you do have a site, but it hasn't been maintained for a while, ask yourself this: would you choose to go with a dentist whose website sported High Definition animations and distinct design, or a dentist with a rudimentary site that sported the bare minimum of features?

Creating an identity

A website is only part of an effective marketing strategy, and should be combined with a logo that is eye-catching, as well as an email account set up using your practice-specific domain name. With a coherent and strong identity, you can create a brand that will appeal to patients and illustrate your commitment to excellence. If your practice does not have a website, you need to make it a priority to have one designed. Technology is advancing all the time, and if you've already fallen behind, how are you going to keep up in the future?

For friendly advice on all your website needs, contact Dental Design on 01202 677277 or visit www.dental-design.co.uk.

About the author

Amy Rose is head of the design and marketing team at Dental Design Ltd and has over six years experience in the dental profession, working predominantly in a marketing capacity.