

ENDO INC

ROOT CANAL SPECIALISTS

NORTH SHORE

A publication of Drs. Maloff, Makkar, and Tsai

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3 NO-COST SECRET MARKETING STRATEGIES

by Dr. Mike Abernathy

I was flying back from visiting with a coaching client and daydreaming about the marketing we have done over the last forty years in our offices. I began to smile as I remembered three strategies that I tripped over in my quest to insure never having a year that we did not increase our production (and profitability). Not only have you never heard of these - they don't even cost anything. Here is what I came up with and they have worked for decades.

Keep in mind that with each of these three strategies I am assuming you are trying to attract every patient within 4-5 miles of your office, and even further out if you are in a small town or rural setting. This 5 mile radius needs to be the center of every marketing outreach you use. All three of these strategies were used to help doctors who were on the verge of financial collapse and had almost nothing to spend on marketing. They were desperate, broke, and facing losing their practices. Each strategy was perfected in my main practice in McKinney, and each one of them was responsible for turning the challenged client's practice to new growth and new profitability.

1 The Pharmacist: If you were my age, you could remember a time when all of the pharmacies were owned and operated by someone who lived in your town. Now they have gone the way of vision and medicine: Corporate owned businesses with the pharmacist or doctor a paid employee.

Note: In case you haven't noticed, dentistry is heading down the same road - fast! At one time, pharmacists were highly trusted professionals.

I was trying to figure out a way to increase my referrals and new patients without adding to the existing marketing budget. This is how it went... I dropped by the closest pharmacy to my office on a day and at a time they would not be busy. For me, that was my day off on Wednesday about mid-morning. I just waited until they hit a lull and introduced myself: "Hi, I am Michael Abernathy, a dentist just down the street. I wanted to stop by and thank you for taking care of my patients. It seems like whenever I write a prescription, a lot of my patients come here to get it filled. I just wanted to meet you so I would have a name and a face when I call."

So we visited for a few minutes and then I said: "As a professional courtesy, I would like to extend a 25% discount for you and your family if you do not currently have a dentist. Just drop by any time and we will take care of you. Also, if you run into anyone looking for a dentist, we are available evenings and every day of the week for their emergencies." I provide two or three business cards and leave saying: "Glad to meet you! I look forward to seeing you in our practice in the near future."

I then let a week or ten days pass by and I show up again with a plate of home-made cookies and just wait until they have a

**Continued
on page 2**

3 No-Cost Secrets.....	(1, 2)
Word-of-Mouth Advertising.....	(3)
Platelet Rich Fibrin (PRF).....	(4)

3 NO-COST SECRET... CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

minute and say, "Hi, Mike Abernathy here, the dentist down the street. I just wanted to thank you for the two patients someone here sent me. We took great care of them and I wanted to drop off these homemade cookies my wife made, along with her great-grandmother's secret recipe. Thanks again, and I would love to see you and your family in our practice someday." This time I leave a stack of cards, and a few newsletters. You get the idea.

Whether you get a new patient or not, you go back and reward them for the behavior you want from them. I continued to cultivate this relationship and before long I had almost every pharmacist in McKinney in my practice. Keep in mind that all day long they direct consumers with toothaches to over-the-counter remedies. It is just natural that if you become friends, they will also recommend you for their dental care.

2 Nail and Hair Salons: I had a dentist friend that was struggling to get new patients into his practice. Nice guy, average dentist with lots of competition in the city where he lived. He was just held back by a below average number of new patients.

He was a jogger and all I did was suggest that he start at his office and jog clockwise on the streets around it, moving outward in an ever widening spiral block-by-block while jotting down the names of any hair or nail salons along his path (you can drive and record the names on your smartphone or take a photo). I had him do this for a distance of about 3-4 miles radially from his office. By the time he got through, he had 5-6 of these places on his list and was ready for the next step.

I had him go in on his day off and introduce himself to the owner and the employees. All he had to do is explain that he wanted to whiten every employee's teeth. When asked why, he merely said that he knew how much his wife loved and was loyal to the salon she went to and that he knew that when his wife and the person that took care of her nails or hair spoke, they really listened to one another. He was basically communicating that he wanted to whiten everyone's teeth that works there so that if he did a great job and they liked the results, they would mention his name and he would get new patients.

The strategy worked great and before you knew it he had

the salon owner handing out his cards left and right. He also bought plastic covers for their magazines with his name on them and installed an LED picture frame with before and after pictures on the wall. This created a steady stream of patients and referrals from the patients that originated from a simple bleaching. I figured up the cost to be less than \$10 to bleach the original employees teeth, most of who became patients (along with their families and friends). Add in all of the referrals and it cost almost nothing.

3 Emergency Care Facilities: I will have to give credit for this one to a client that literally pulled herself out of bankruptcy by taking an idea I gave her about calling every dentist in her large city and offering to see their emergencies on the weekends and middle of the night. She just called these doctors and explained how she had just opened a practice, was struggling to make ends meet and would gladly see those patients that they did not want to see and then return them to their offices once the emergency was under control. She built her practice doing this and continues to play the emergency card with all of the practices in her area.

Here is the rest of the story and the tactic that you need to look at: She took my original idea and really added steroids to it. She went in person to every Emergency Medical clinic and hospital ER, met the decision maker, and laid out the fact that she was available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to take any and all dental emergencies. She even offered to help train the staff on how to handle small emergencies until they could reach her. Not only has she built a multi-million dollar practice, but she currently has three doctors working for her in two locations, all growing at 30% a year.

Quick and easy, except that you have to get off your duff and meet these people, layout your offer, follow-up, and repeat forever. This is how you succeed.

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THE UNTOLD TRUTH ABOUT WORD-OF-MOUTH ADVERTISING

by Graig Presti

The bad news is in... "word-of-mouth" just isn't what it used to be. Allow me to clarify. Recent studies have shown that a large number of potential new patients may start their search with a word-of-mouth recommendation from a friend or family member. However, that's just a starting point of their research.

Forty percent of respondents then vetted those word-of-mouth recommendations online – the majority using Google's local search function.

So what were they looking for?

These potential patients wanted very specific information:

- *Practice hours?*
- *How close is it to where I live?*
- *Good reviews?*
- *Will my insurance work with you?*
- *What does your office look like? (Is it modern/clean, or old/dingy?)*

And if these potential patients didn't get the answers they were looking for within a reasonable read (15 seconds or less), then they were on to the next practice. You may detest the fact that the patient acquisition process has changed, but there are some irrefutable truths about modern new patient and referral generation that you have to accept.

ONLINE PERCEPTION IS REALITY!

Your online presence represents your business as a first impression. So if your Google reviews are non-existent, sparse or negative, potential patients will click away fast. Roughly 99% of our dentists, when they first come onboard, no matter who've they worked with in the past, have multiple business listings on Google filled with misinformation, their name spelled backwards, old contact info or office information, and no images or branding on these internet listings. Remember, these prospective patients are giving you less than 15 seconds to establish trust, and if they don't see an organized consistent professional brand online they're gone in the "blink of an eye" to the doctor down the street.

Think of your patient attraction process like dating. If you go on a date with someone who is putting up a false personality, trying to be someone she/he is not, would you go out with them again? The same goes for your online presence. Whether it's fake reviews on Google, incorrect information, stock photos on your website, etc., today's patients can smell a fake a mile away. Be real. Be Professional. Be awesome.

FOCUS ON EDUCATIONAL SELLING:

I've said it before: Marketing and selling are good things. If done properly, they will grow your business. It's time to shift your mind set and stop looking at them like they are evil or bad. Frankly, that's a limiting belief that will just hamper your production and ultimately shorten your walk away point for your retirement.

Hire a firm to perform quality online marketing and learn education-based selling strategies and at the very least, get inside the mind of your patients. Speak their language (not dental speak). Determine what they fear when it comes to procedures, what they dream about when it comes to their smiles, and how to facilitate making those dreams a reality no matter the road blocks in front of them.

In the end, what worked before doesn't work now. Word-of-mouth is not reliable on its own, so remain savvy and agile when it comes to marketing your practice. After 7+ years of data analysis and testing I have confirmed that almost every type of new patient, no matter where they come from, goes directly through your practice's google local listing and Google reviews.

Weak Google listing = fewer new patients

Little to no Google reviews = fewer new patients

Reviews and local ran kings impact every form of new patient attraction:

- *Word-of-Mouth Referrals*
- *Reactivations*
- *Direct Mail*
- *TV*
- *Radio*
- *Newspaper*
- *Public Relations*
- *Billboards*

Now that you're armed with the most recent data that you can leverage into more production, go out there, hire a firm and fix your brand to be the best brand in your entire community!

If you'd like to learn more about how to get 5 Star Google reviews and protect your practice and your hard earned revenue, you can visit this site just for The Profitable Dentist subscribers go to www.localsearchfordentists.com/woody

Graig Presti is Founder & CEO of threetime Inc. 500/5000-recognized company Local Search For Dentists™ Graig's Google patient review attraction "cheat sheet" system has helped 1000's of dentist get more 5 star reviews in as little as 7 days!

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PLATELET RICH FIBRIN (PRF) GROWTH FACTORS STIMULATE EARLY REPAIR

By Dr. Fagin

One of the most troublesome complications following third molar surgery is a Dry Socket (localized osteitis). A dry socket occurs two to four days after surgery and presents itself as a sudden increase in pain in the area of the extracted lower third molar that can radiate to the side of the face and ear.

Normally, a blood clot forms at the site of the tooth extraction. This blood clot serves as a protective layer over the underlying bone and nerve endings in the tooth socket. The clot also provides the foundation for the growth of new bone and soft tissue over the clot. Dry socket occurs when the blood clot has been dislodged or has dissolved before the wound is healed. Exposure of the underlying bone and nerves results in pain in the socket but also along nerves radiating to the side of the face.

There have been many clinical studies to test ways to prevent dry socket. Despite these efforts their incidence has persisted to be between 8% and 15% until the use of Platelet Rich Fibrin (PRF). Multiple recent studies have shown a remarkable reduction in dry sockets ranging from 0% to 4%. I have been using PRF this way for almost two years and have tracked similar results.

In normal healing, white blood cells (leukocytes) and growth factors from platelets are sent to the surgical site over a period of three days. This is part of the reason swelling occurs during this time period. PRF is a concentration of your normal healing and growth factors that are applied to the healing socket at the time of surgery to provide an immediate boost to its healing capacity. Essentially giving a jump-start on the healing process thus providing a more robust and stable blood clot. With the use of PRF we have been able to virtually eliminate dry sockets.

What is Platelet Rich Fibrin?

Platelet Rich Fibrin (PRF) is a by-product of blood (plasma) that is rich in platelets and leukocytes. Until recently its use has been confined to the hospital setting. This was due mainly to the cost of separating the platelets from the blood and the large amount of blood needed to produce sufficient quantity of platelets. New findings and technology permit doctors to harvest and produce sufficient quantity of platelets with only 20cc of blood, which is drawn from the patient while they are having outpatient surgery, and then placed into the surgical site.

PRF has been used for years in bone and soft tissue grafting to improve healing and reduce complications.

Platelet Rich Fibrin Has Many Advantages:

Safety: It is a pure by-product of the patient's own blood therefore, disease transmission is not an issue.

Convenience: It is generated in the doctor's office while the patient is undergoing the procedure.

Faster healing: Growth factors produce an immediate robust healing response allowing for faster healing times and less need for postoperative pain medicine.