

Going mobile in the waiting room

With the world becoming increasingly mobile, **Jason Borody** director of the healthcare marketing specialists Vividus, explains how your practice can stay ahead of the competition.

Look in any waiting room and what do you see? Almost everyone is on their smartphone.

Although the waiting room may be an inconvenient part of any doctor's visit, smartphones have given patients something to occupy their time.

As marketers, smartphones have also given us the opportunity to provide value to patients (such as convenient forms, mobile appointment booking, and health information), and in return, keep your practice front of mind when patients have healthcare questions or concerns.

PROVIDE FREE WI-FI

The best way to take advantage of patients using smartphones, is to provide free Wi-Fi in your practice. Doing so will allow your patients to browse the internet free of charge, while they're waiting to see a physician.

So how does this help your practice? Well, besides providing a more pleasant experience for your patients, you can also use free Wi-Fi to gain valuable information from your patients. For example, you might offer free Wi-Fi, but include an access page requesting that they check and update their contact details (especially email address), and invite them to receive your monthly e-newsletter.

Make sure you communicate the fact that you offer free Wi-Fi throughout your practice via posters, TV content management system, and reception staff. Include the network name that your patients should look for while they're waiting. This will ensure as

many patients sign up for your Wi-Fi (and newsletter) as possible.

SEND OUT A NEWSLETTER

Once you have a patient's email, and the permission to market to them in that manner, you can begin sending out practice updates, and other promotional and educational emails.

Of course, like any form of medical practice marketing, you should be wary of how you promote to your patients.

Constantly sending 'sales' emails is not a good idea, and will deteriorate the trust you have with your patients.

Sending your patients helpful updates and reminders, on the other hand, is a way to provide real value to your patients, and also get them in the door again.

For example, when flu season comes around, don't just let your patients know that you have flu shots available – also provide information about flu strains or recent flu statistics. When an appropriate amount of time has gone by since a patient's last check-up, let them know it would be advisable for them to make an appointment to get checked again – ideally the appointment could be made quickly and conveniently via the internet there-and-then.

By sending these types of emails, you make sure your patients are as healthy as they can possibly be - you also get them coming back as often as they should.



**Jason Borody is
Director of Vividus
Marketing.**



ENSURE YOUR WEBSITE IS MOBILE FRIENDLY

The latest Google update announced that the search engine giant would start favouring websites optimised for mobile devices from April 2015. Having a website that is mobile friendly will be key to the new mobile-focused algorithm, which means that practices without a good mobile website will lose potential patients to their competitors who have mobile friendly sites and provide the best possible mobile experience.

We recommend:

- 1. Making your website easy for customers.** The easier it is for patients and referrers to find contact, service, and treatment information on your website, the greater their engagement will be within your site, and the more Google will reward you through search results.
- 2. Measuring the effectiveness of your efforts.** Decide what the most important components of your website are and then make them easily accessible throughout your site. Make sure the components you're prioritising are equally accessible

on any mobile device. E.g. booking an online appointment, filling out pre-visit forms, or making enquiries.

- 3. Google favours responsive design for websites.** Responsive design allows your website to determine the screen size of the viewing device and optimise not just the size, but the entire layout and styling of your website to maximise legibility and user experience. The good news is that responsive design is also the most cost effective solution when converting your website to become mobile friendly.

SETTING UP A MOBILE MARKETING PLAN

At Vividus, we specialise in providing value to patients throughout their entire experience at your medical practice.

Our top priority is to provide patients with a unique, valuable experience that encourages them to come back to your practice often (as needed), and share word of your practice with others. ©

If you'd like to discuss a custom online marketing plan for your medical practice, that will attract new patients, improve patient communications and experience, and help you retain existing patients, contact Vividus today on 07 3282 2233 or visit www.vividus.com.au

THE PRIVATE PRACTICE SPECIAL OFFER

Does your website meet Google's mobile-friendly standards?
[CLICK HERE](#) order your free website analysis.