

Use Instagram to Promote Your Dermatology Practice

Instagram can help a practice promote products and services without incurring significant expenses for advertising.

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When it comes to keeping audiences engaged, Instagram leads the race with more than 700 million active users every month. It is also less competitive than other social media front runners like Twitter and Facebook.

This provides businesses and professional practitioners the chance to promote their services and products to an interested audience without having to incur significant expenses on paid advertising. Since January 2018, Instagram has modified its API (Application Programming Interface) to permit users to post photographs to Instagram Business Profiles through a third party platform. This has further helped brands capitalize on all that Instagram has to offer.

It doesn't matter if you are new to Instagram or simply need to update your strategy. The following tactics can help you publicize your dermatology practice on Instagram.

1 MAKE THE MOST OF FREE INSTAGRAM TOOLS

Of late, Instagram has begun to provide business profiles that are similar to those seen on Facebook. These profiles are equipped with a massive "contact" call-to-action that lets users call, text, or email the establishment.

Besides the contact option, these types of business profiles also have something called "Insights." Insights give access to analytics, letting users access engagement and impression data. If you have been using your personal Instagram account for business purposes, you might do well to switch to a business profile and use these options to the fullest. Knowing more about your users' involvement with your content can help you improve it.

2 CROSS PROMOTING IS THE WAY TO GO

One quick way of adding new Instagram followers who already have an affinity for your brand is by cross-promoting across various social media platforms. Just post across all of your other social media profiles, such as Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, and invite people to follow your Instagram profile. As they are already tracking you on social media, it is evident that they are interested in what you have to offer. So, provide them the chance to socially align with your brand.

It is not necessary that your posts will reach all who are connected to your brand on social media. A lot of people tend to lose touch with some social media platforms while others are not so active on certain networks as they are on others. For your reach per post to widen, it is important that your followers be connected to as many of your social profiles as possible.

3 DO NOT GO OVERBOARD

It is important to make regular posts to keep your brand in the spotlight. But too many posts can mean overdoing it, and this can even result in loss of followers just because they feel they are seeing too much of you.

When it comes to social media posting, there is no single formula that can be applied to every brand. You will have to test and gauge your audience's responses.

It might be a good idea to post twice daily at different times of day to pinpoint the time when there is highest engagement. Then, increase and decrease the number of posts each day, all the while assessing engagement. Once you figure out what works for you, you will have to keep adjusting, as the number of followers increases. There is no end to post frequency optimization.

4 RESPOND TO FOLLOWERS AND ENCOURAGE GROWTH

If someone makes the effort to comment on a post you make, spare a few seconds to respond to it and thank them. This simple move can garner you a loyal customer as well as an enthusiastic promoter of your brand.

You can also come up with ways to encourage your followers to interact with your posts. For instance, asking them to “tag friends who would love this” can take your brand to a much wider audience besides gaining new followers. The fact that a friend is directing them to your Instagram profile means lower resistance and can lead to a good number of tagged users turning followers.

5 A CATCHY HASHTAG CAN HELP

Coming up with an interactive hashtag can lead to instant engagement if you are using hashtags correctly. One strategy that works with larger brands is to create a hashtag that clients can use to tag their photos featuring them alongside a product they just purchased.

Doing this can help you accomplish two aims: It will lead your followers to post pictures with the product using this hashtag as they want to be featured on your page. Also, you get free advertising, because when an individual uses your hashtag to make posts, he or she will be directing all of their followers to your company and products.

6 RECYCLE CONTENT YOU USED ELSEWHERE

If it is getting difficult for you to generate sufficient

content to keep up with your audience’s requirements, you can use repurposed content sourced from other related Instagram accounts. Ensure that you give credit to the original source. You can do this by tagging their profile and also stating it in the caption.

You can choose one of the apps that let you download and save Instagram photos for easy reposting. Use recycled content from those profiles that have the type of followers you would like to garner. A good many accounts will repay the favor by doing the same with your content.

7 CHECK OUT INSTAGRAM STORIES

The slideshow format on Instagram Stories, which goes live for only 24 hours but can be saved and used later, is offering direct competition to Snapchat’s Stories. Some advantages of using Instagram Stories are:

- Useful for displaying behind-the-scenes content which need not be as high quality as usual posts.
- These stories are featured prominently at the top of the follower timelines just below the Instagram logo.
- They are easily discovered through story searches for locations and hashtags.
- It is convenient to test out various types of content like short videos, Boomerang (GIF-like image), photos, live videos, and videos filmed backwards or in rewind.
- You can edit images on-the-go with text, stickers, and face filters.
- The tagging option makes it perfect for influencer and collaborator marketing. For example: @instagram.

8 CREATE SUSPENSE WHILE PROVIDING EXCLUSIVITY

Retaining client interest is at the heart of a successful marketing campaign. You can give your loyal followers exclusive content by letting them be the first to know of new events, products, and services. Use teasers to generate curiosity for your office openings or new product releases. Such previews keep your Instagram followers returning for more and also make them feel special. ■

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