

TROJAN TODAY

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USING SOCIAL MEDIA to Promote Your Practice

by Rita Zamora



Are you looking to attract more sleep dentistry patients to your practice? Many dentists are.

Whatever services you'd like to promote, it's likely you'd like to grow your practice. However, some teams are still fixated on old-school marketing methods to attract patients. If you want to get different results from your marketing, you may need to implement new tools.

Social media is often overlooked due to the misperception that it will be seen only by younger patients. According to a 2018 Pew Research Center Social Media Fact Sheet, adults use Facebook extensively.

**SPECIFICALLY,
Facebook users include:**

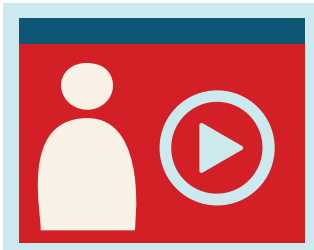
78%
AGES 30-49

65%
AGES 50-64

41%
AGES 65+

Below are a few tactics you can leverage on Facebook.

(And keep an eye on Instagram as that platform continues to grow in popularity with various age groups as well.)



Interview-style video

There is no better way to connect with your target audience than to allow them to see and hear you. You need nothing more than a smart phone and perhaps a tripod or an assistant with a steady hand to record a successful interview-style video. According to Social Bakers, video is currently the most engaging type of media on Facebook. Video posts have 135% greater organic reach than photos, another highly engaging type of content.

Check out the many Facebook Live videos available on the Mayo Clinic's Facebook business page for excellent examples: www.facebook.com/MayoClinic.



Photos of you and your team

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, but the same may not be true for stock photography; authentic photos of the doctor and team are a great way to position yourself as experts in a specialty such as sleep dentistry. Schedule a day with a photographer to take candid-looking photos of you and the team.

For example, a photo of your reception team with flowers on the front office counter could be used with a post that reads, "We can't wait to help our patients with their sleep apnea needs." Or a photo of the doctor holding an oral appliance could be posted with text explaining what the appliance is and how it can help improve sleep. Photos can also be used to show your team's human side, which is beneficial in building trust with existing and new patients.



Social media ads

Social media is a pay-to-play tool. If you are active on Facebook or Instagram, you should be paying to expand your visibility and engagement (clicking, liking, commenting, sharing, etc.). Without a budget for social media, your results are likely flat or limited. The social media marketplace has become crowded and even a conservative ad budget of \$50 per month can be a game changer. Paying Facebook or Instagram, through boosts or sponsored posts, will help ensure your content gets seen by your current followers and allow you to target friends of people connected to your page and/or connect with those in specific zip codes or demographics.

When you begin to use paid options, you should notice a huge increase in the number of people who are seeing your posts and engaging with you. Take advantage of these opportunities to share video, photos, and other content highlighting your solutions and services.

There are a variety of tactics outlined above. If you are struggling to get started or improve your results, reach out to a social media consultant or trainer for help. Some practices are able to manage social media successfully internally, while others outsource. There is no right or wrong method; it's simply a matter of finding the best fit for your practice.



Rita Zamora is the author of **Get Found, Get Liked, Get Patients—Making the Most of Social Media**. She has over 20 years' experience in the business of dentistry.

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