

TWENTY
affordable ways to
MARKET
YOUR DENTAL PRACTICE IN 2016

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About the Author:

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Chance graduated from the University of Maryland in 2015 with a Doctorate of Dental Surgery. He is the owner of [Proximal Contact, LLC](#) - a website design and hosting service for dentists. He authors a blog about marketing your dental practice at [OneLooseTooth.com](#) and published a white paper in 2013 titled: A Brief Introduction to Marketing Your Dental Practice.



You can learn more about the author and download his other publications by visiting [ChanceBodini.com](#)

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This document was created on November 14th 2015 and is based on the best information available at that time.

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Thank you for reading.

Here are twenty affordable ways to market your dental practice in 2016.

1. Create a Google My Business Page

As a dentist, you are most likely serving a specific geographic area surrounding your practice in your city or town. Optimizing for local search should be a top priority, as it helps you rank higher for geographically-delimited keywords, and creates a sense of trust. Create a [Google My Business](#) page to boost your visibility within Google Maps and Google's search results to help patients easily find your office.

2. Create a Yelp Page

Much like Google My Business, [Yelp](#) is a free business directory that lets you create a page for your dental practice. Yelp is great for local SEO, as Yelp pages are indexed by search engines which can increase your visibility in Google search results when someone is looking for a dentist in your area. Of course you know that if you have a Yelp page for your business, Yelpers can leave feedback and rate their experiences at your office. But what you may not know is that Yelpers can review your business

even if you have not yet created your own page. Basically, a Yelper can create a page for your business and write a review. Typically, a Yelper would be motivated to put in the effort create a page for your business when he or she has had a particularly unpleasant experience.

Since Yelp allows users to write reviews about your business regardless of your participation with their service, I believe it's a good idea to create your own page, own it, and take responsibility for the reviews your business receives.

3. Be Active on Social Media

Social media marketing is absolutely critical to any business. If you don't have an account on popular networks like Facebook, Twitter, and Google Plus, then now is the perfect time to set them up. Make sure you include contact details such as your office address, phone number, email address, and your hours of operation.

4. Use Facebook Ads to Boost Brand Awareness

[Facebook Ads](#) are probably one of the most underused tools in your marketing arsenal. With Facebook Ads, you can set your budget and run a

campaign targeting an audience based on location, gender, age, and other demographic factors.

5. Engage with Local Leaders on Twitter

Twitter brings a world of opportunities if leveraged correctly. One of Twitter's best features is the ability to follow and speak directly to local influencers who have already developed their own following on the social platform and in your community. Use Twitter's search features to find someone living nearby whose opinions are already respected by your neighbors - follow her, retweet her tweets, and when ready, open a dialogue and propose the mutual benefits of doing business together.

6. Send Out Email Newsletters

Email is a popular way to advertise your business. Electronic newsletters allow you to affordably share updates and discounts to generate interest in your services. [MailChimp](#) lets you collect email addresses and set up email newsletter campaigns for free, and you can choose from different templates or code your own. Promote your newsletter on your social media profiles to gain even more subscribers.

7. Post Great Content on Your Blog

Never underestimate the power of great content. In addition to helping you keep your site updated (which is good for SEO), blogging lets your audience discover your business by offering them the information they are looking for. Blogging also builds credibility as people turn to Google for answers and find your blog — from a patient's perspective, if Google recommended your content, it must be accurate.

8. Guest Post on Another Website

Guest posting is another great way to market your dental practice and reach a whole new audience. The most important thing to remember is that your post needs to add value to the other website. If you do not know what to write about, consider discussing industry trends, mistakes other professionals make, or provide specific tips for both dentists and patients that are actionable.

9. Accept Guest Posts on Your Own Blog

A guest post from a reputable person can capture their readership's attention and direct it to your dental practice.

10. Offer a Free Product on Your Website

People love freebies — so why not give them what they want? Create an eBook or other digital product, and give it away. Then, use the free product as an incentive for people to sign up for your email newsletter.

11. Be Featured in the Local News

Create an amazing story around your dental practice, and use savvy communication tactics to get people talking. If your story is interesting enough, you will probably receive media coverage. This can result in high-quality backlinks for your website which usually improves your ranking in search engines such as Google.

Note that finding your way into the news is easier to manage in a small market, but keep in mind that even the largest markets like Los Angeles and Orange County have neighborhood news outlets that are always looking for potential stories.

12. Create a Referral Program

Referral programs are an excellent way to reward your patients, but make sure you are operating

within the ethical guidelines provided by the ADA and your state dental society. In many cases, rewards may include event tickets, movie vouchers, gift cards, and free consultations.

13. Send Hand-Written Thank You Notes

Traditional marketing is still an effective way to keep your patients interested and show your gratitude. Send hand-written Thank You cards to patients who chose you to be their dentist or referred their friends and family to your practice.

14. Offer Free Beverages

This is more of a courtesy, but I am surprised by how many dental offices do not offer their patients **bottled** water or hot coffee while they wait.

15. Distribute More Business Cards

In 2016, handing out business cards may seem old fashioned, but this year commit yourself to handing out more cards than ever before. If done correctly, handing someone your business card can be a personal interaction that builds trust. When you hand out your card, pull out a pen and write your

cell phone number on the back and tell the person to call *you* directly when they need an appointment. First, this action implies that this relationship is special; second, this gives the potential patient no room for excuses like “I tried calling your office, but nobody answered” or “I tried to schedule an appointment, but none of the times worked with my family’s schedule”.

16. Offer to Be a Speaker

Local organizations, industry conferences, local business meetings and other such events represent an ideal opportunity to become a speaker and increase awareness. It’s also great for improving your PR and communication strategy, especially if you are trying to get attention from the local press.

17. Offer a Free, No-Obligation Consultation

Offer free, no-obligation consultations to people *you* meet **in person**. This is not a direct mail campaign or an advertisement. This is about meeting someone, saying you care about them, and letting them know if they need help or a second opinion, you are available. Empower your staff to do the same thing.

18. Run a Google AdWords Campaign

Google lets you advertise your services through their pay-per-click (PPC) platform, named [AdWords](#). You set up a campaign based on your desired keywords, create a budget, and wait. Google will send these prospects to your website.

19. Host an Event

Have you ever thought about hosting your own event? Well, in 2016 you should. Consider opening your home to hold a fundraiser or offer to auction off your services to help a local organization raise money for a good cause.

20. Start Asking for Testimonials

Whenever possible, ask your patients for an endorsement — they will probably be more than happy to help you out. Also consider handing out business cards with links to your website, Google My Business page, and Yelp page so they can easily leave feedback where it counts the most.