

12 Ways to Supercharge Your Practice in 2012: #11 Get to Know SEO

Is Your Practice Struggling?
Click Here for 12 ways to
SUPERCHARGE IT!



What's your website doing for your practice?

If your website is providing information to future and current patients, that's a good thing.

More importantly, though, your website should be

1. Driving new patients to the practice.
2. Driving established patients to return to the practice.
3. Keeping patients attached to you as their provider.

Your website should be providing B2C (business to consumer) marketing for you. How does a website accomplish these things? In a web search, being the first or one of the first unpaid results that appears in the search is the way to ensure searchers find your practice. The way to get to page one, even number one on page one, is through SEO.

SEO stands for Search Engine Optimization.

Search Engine Optimization is the way you market your practice on the internet so that you show up in internet searches as high on page one of a search as possible. Wikipedia defines SEO as

the process of improving the visibility of a website or a web page in a search engine's "natural," or un-paid ("organic" or "algorithmic"), search results.

Everyone has seen the flesh-colored box at the top of Google search results. These are companies that have paid to be listed in this primo spot. Below the flesh-colored box are the search results that have appeared based on their relevance to the search terms entered. Everyone wants to know how a company arrives in that treasured first page of real estate. You need to know how to get your practice listed on page one. But first, let's look at some statistics provided by Search Engine Journal on the importance of appearing high in the list of search results.

1. 70-80% of users ignore the paid ads, focusing on the organic results.
2. 75% of users never scroll past the first page of search results.
3. A study by Outbrain shows that search is the #1 driver of traffic to content sites, beating social media by more than 300%
4. 93% of online experiences begin with a search engine.

How do you use SEO to rank your

practice first on search engines?

You or your webmaster need to follow tried and true SEO rules. Even if you've had your website for years, you can rework your website to make sure you are following these rules:

1. Optimize your website by making sure it has a strong structure, an easily navigable flow, and that everything is titled and tagged appropriately. Just like a well-organized cabinet of medical supplies, first-time visitors should be able to figure out how to find the they want.
2. Create useful, interesting and high-quality content that reflects who your practice is. Good content will positively affect your ranking on SERP (search engine results page.) Your content should be targeted to the interests and concerns of your patient demographic, as well as giving insights into office activities and news.
3. Utilize images. Everyone loves images, both to illustrate information and to introduce readers to the people and activities of your practice.
4. Utilize videos. Everyone really loves videos.
5. Make it easy for readers to search your website for information by offering a search box.
6. Make it easy for readers to share information they find on your site with others via email, Twitter, Facebook and Google+.
7. Make your website available for mobile users.
8. Keep your website fresh. Adding a blog and posting content (it doesn't have to be lengthy) is one way to keep readers informed, entertained and coming back for more.

How do you know if your SEO efforts are paying off?

There are lots of ways to track the activity on your website and quantify the benefits your practice reaps from ranking high in search results. Everyone should be using Google Analytics (free) for tracking website activity. Google Analytics has been improved to the point where it has many of the same features of products that you pay for. Google also has Webmaster Tools (free) available for even an even deeper dive into your website.

The most basic information you'll want to know is what words visitors are entering into the search box to find your website. Pay special attention to questions patients ask, such as "Who is the best primary care physician in (your city)?" or "Where to go for a weight loss doctor" and make sure your content, titles and tags relate to the services you offer and want to be known for and answer the questions your patients have.

For more information on SEO, try the **Search Engine Optimization Starter Guide**.

**Is Your Practice Struggling?
Click Here for 12 ways to
SUPERCHARGE IT!**