



Start Hitting Your Mark

Your Dental Lab Marketing Playbook



Dental Lab Network

Develop a Unique Selling Proposition (USP)

Marketing is most effective when you are highlighting something special about your practice. Clients want to know what makes you different, and why? That's where coming up with your own USP can give you a leg up in the competition. Here are a few examples:

- *We are a full-service lab offering crown & bridge and removables.*
- *Our turn-around time is 1-2 days faster than other labs.*
- *We are implant specialists!*
- *As your local lab, we can beat any outsourced lab on speed and communication.*
- *We're a cutting-edge, digital lab that works with all STL files.*
- *We can supply you with an intraoral scanner, support and training if you partner with us!*

You get the idea. Once you find your USP, it's time to feature that in all of your marketing. Now, you are ready to start the process of external marketing.

Target New Practices Based on Data

Now that we have our USP, it's time to pinpoint our target audience. While most dentists use a laboratory, this doesn't mean that all dentists are your ideal client. So how do we find our prototypical dentist? An easy way is to review your current clients and look for similarities between them.

- How long have they been in practice?
- What is the typical distance?
- Do they take impressions, use a digital scanner?
- Do they expect on-site consultation (color, etc.)
- What are the most common concerns they have, such as rising prices, consistency or digital capability?

These are just a few ideas of similarities you may find.

The OneVoice marketing program builds campaigns based on the targeted practices you want to reach.

Secure a Mailing List Targeting the Profile You've Built

This step is very important. You need to make sure you've built a strong mailing list. Even if you have content worthy of a Super Bowl spot, it's absolutely useless if you are putting it in front of the wrong people. When you send direct mail to a **bad** list, you are throwing away **good** money. When you combine a great list, with a unique selling position, and a deliverability rate of 90% you have a solid external marketing plan.

Some food for thought as you go through the process:

- How are you qualifying that list you secured?
- Are you confirming these prospects are in operation?
- Are there any orthodontists, podiatrists or plumbers in that list?
- Have you confirmed the addresses and phone numbers?

Establish a Marketing Budget

How much is this going to cost me? This is the number one question and it's no surprise. Most common marketing budget recommendations fall in the range of 5% to 10% of your gross annual income for established businesses. Newer businesses may want to consider going above 10%. Finally, if your business is solid and you are happy with your current state, you may consider an amount closer to 5%.

Our Philosophy

If business is struggling, be marketing. If the economy is bad, be marketing as others might be cutting back. If business is good, be marketing – now you can afford to grow.

Calculate, designate, and initiate.

Once you've finished your calculations, it's time to make a commitment to designate those monies to help your business grow. To accomplish this, it is necessary to visualize spending that amount for the next 6-12 months. Sounds daunting, doesn't it? Believe me when I tell you that this strategy of consistent marketing is synonymous with successful marketing.

You are now ready for the next steps.

Analyze your budget quarterly to see what worked

Once you have begun to market it's important to focus on your ROI (return on investment) to perfect your strategy. Pay very close attention to how many leads and the amount of sales each type of marketing generated. Then, compare that sales number to how much you've spent on that marketing type. Once you've isolated the marketing types delivering the highest ROI you can now reallocate your budgeted monies to those most profitable avenues.

Create a Strong, Well-Designed Website

They say first impressions last a lifetime. That is specifically true when it comes to your website. The majority of your clients' first exchange with you will take place there. Your website needs to look and feel professional, be organized for ease of navigation, and also properly communicate your services, but without overwhelming viewers with too much information.

It does not need to be extensive nor should it be difficult to keep up to date, but it should present your USP as clearly as possible. It should also talk to your customers and make them the hero of the message, NOT your practice.

Check your website for these six lead-generating elements

Most often, lab owners view their website as an online storefront. Instead, think of your website as a tool. This tool's purpose is turning that prospect from an interested visitor or casual browser into a real, tangible lead that you can interact with and ultimately, become your new client.

You can sharpen this crucial tool using the following elements:

1. Lead capture forms to capture those who are not interested in more information
2. *Real* photos of you, your lab, and your staff.
3. An "About Us" page with tangible and personal information
4. Reviews with eye-catching five-star graphics, not just testimonial text.
5. Individualized video content that makes it easy for visitors to visualize your lab and get to know you.
6. Mobile-friendly design to keep your website looking professional on any device.

Link your website to relevant platforms

Making yourself seen is the name of the game. Creating a listing for your business on popular platforms is a way to ensure that people can connect with your business easily. Creating listings on social websites such Facebook and LinkedIn can become more valuable over time, and establish more trust in your business. Creating a Google Business Listing will also help build credibility and help dentists find your lab who may be searching for a new one.

Post supporting content

Once you have created your social and Google listings, it's to your benefit to post content to them. This can take the form of well done photos of your work, testimonials or videos showing off your start-to-finish process. Businesses with a lot of good looking content may appear more appealing and trustworthy than businesses with less. Not to mention that it can be fun and can be done right from your phone on your own schedule.

Consider Targeted Campaigns

Targeted campaigns utilizes words, phrases, interests and other information, such as location, to send your ad to the most relevant targets. Many platforms contain these metrics including Facebook and LinkedIn. The more specific you can be in your targeting, the greater the likelihood of success. For example, if you are only interested in prospects within 25 miles of your lab, you'll want to specify that in your ad when setting it up. You will also likely want to only target people within dental practices, so you may choose to target based on occupation as well, such as DDS or dental hygienist.

Search engines & keywords

Another powerful tool to use is Google Keywords, which utilize a robust database of search information to deliver targeted ads. This will help your ads “pop up” to the right people who may be searching for labs on the web. After all, what good is a website if your target audience isn't seeing it?

The key here is to use targeted keywords to increase the relevance for ad placements. You want to make sure that you are accurately highlighting and strongly describing what makes you stand out from the competition. If you do some research using Google Keywords, you can assign specific keywords to your lab's website and Google Business Listing that dentists are actively searching for so that your lab appears at the top of their search. For instance, it would be useful to assign keywords based on your services, location and production tools.

Regardless of which targeted ad platform you choose, remember to gauge your budget closely depending on the number and duration of your ads, and monetized keywords.

Train Staff to Handle Calls Well

Have you ever made a call to a business and become immediately turned off by the way the conversation was handled? Avoid that at all costs. Do you know exactly what is being said by your staff when a dentist calls? We hope that they are handling each call professionally and with care, but how can you know for certain? Below are a few tips to help.

Give your receptionist an easy call tracker sheet

It's not specifically your staff's fault if they don't know how you expect them to handle a call in the first place. This is where a call tracker sheet can be a game changer. You should list information that you wish to gather from the caller such as name, phone number, email address, and how they heard about your lab if they are a prospective client. Keeping track of these metrics and training your staff on how to use this call tracker sheet can be the difference between keeping existing customers or gaining new ones and not.

Generate Referrals

Here's another question for you, when was the last time you asked for a review or a referral? Have you made a way for your existing clients to review your lab?

Reviews and referrals the way many labs have built their business.

How can you get *amazing* reviews or referrals?

- Asking your current patients who you know love your work for a referral or to post a review.
- Consider placing a link or request at the bottom of your email signature to write a review on your Google Business Listing.
- Politely respond to every negative review from your Google My Business account.

The last point is so extremely crucial; no matter how difficult it is to hear criticism. Surveys show that nearly a third of prospects are looking to see how you deal with negative feedback when deciding to do business with you. Your response, or lack thereof, can be a make or break situation.

Remarketing Campaigns

Another strong form of marketing is a remarketing campaign. Remarketing is a way of reaching out to existing or prospective clients who have visited your site and are prompted to a specific call to action. Such as, inviting them to try a specific service or highlighting services you can provide.

This is an important way to reach out to prospects who have visited your website, but did not convert.

Market Year-Round

Did you know that on average it takes 7 times for someone to see an ad before they will take action? That is why consistent, year-round marketing is so important to your business.

Twenty percent of all dentists are looking for a new lab at any given time. You never know when a dentist might decide his current lab isn't up for the challenge and you want to be top of mind with an established rapport through marketing that will motivate them to give you a try when things aren't going well, or when they realize they need more support than they have been getting.

Track Your Responses

In business, cash is king. Spending money wastefully on ineffective advertising mediums is a quick way to run yourself out of business.

The first step in identifying wasteful ad spend is keeping careful track of what's working and what isn't. By doing this, you'll learn which strategies worked so you know where to reinvest your marketing dollars in the future.

There are many tools to achieve this goal. One in particular is Google Analytics, if you're using monetized keywords.

For each campaign, we create detailed reports that show you exactly what worked and what didn't. We then use this information to customize your next campaign and make each one better than the last.

Use Unique Call Tracking Numbers

What is call tracking? Say you send a postcard and you want to track how well that individual campaign does. Well, call tracking allows you to assign a unique phone number to that campaign and then track the length of each call, how often that number is called, and even records the call so you can listen to them whenever you choose! What's even better? This is an extremely affordable service!

The OneVoice marketing program can assign a specific call tracking number for each one of your marketing campaigns. Doing so allows for us to accurately track responses from your campaign.

Targeted Postcards with Offers

We've talked about digital advertising, but a multi-pronged approach will improve your success. You never know how a prospect will discover you so it helps to be seen in different places. Direct mail marketing is a great way to get in front of dentists at their own practice. As a Dental Lab marketing within your local area, you have a huge home field advantage when it comes to marketing. When you send postcards within a defined distance you can be certain you will be reaching practices you can service well and at a competitive advantage.

As you expand your geography, you may find there are areas where there is a high percentage of practices and few labs that can support the business. If you have configured your business to service dentists that are outside your local area, you can gain a competitive advantage.

Use a brilliant design for the postcard

People trust businesses more when their marketing materials are well designed. Image selection, for example, is imperative. Use individualized photos that capture the attention of the audience you are trying to reach, that make sense and show your best work. For example, don't use a photo of a young person when advertising dental implants. When showcasing your lab or your work, take the time to properly stage a good photo with an appealing composition and good lighting.

Keep it clean, concise and informative

If a potential client doesn't comprehend what is being said they won't be calling to ask. Direct potential clients to specific information – consider using a QR code or a unique URL. Avoid including too much information and stay on point or else they may not read it at all.

Remember, your website exists to offer them more detail.

Track your performance

Using the call tracking strategy listed above you can easily track the success of each postcard you send to help measure the campaign's success. While not necessary, you might consider hiring a team of professional marketers to aid you with this strategy.