



WHAT NEW PATIENTS?

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If you're like many of your colleagues, you would be lucky if your Marketing Plan (what Marketing Plan?) hits anywhere near the patient who would most value the quality of dentistry you provide. New patients tend to fall into one of two categories: "A" patients, and everyone else. You may be attracting plenty of new patients with your current marketing efforts, but how many of those are the "A" patients -- the patients you truly want? Looking at the numbers, you may find only 1 in 10 qualify, so what do you do?

You were trained to provide quality dentistry, not to be a small business marketer. So it is not such a shock when even the best ideas are not utilized to their full potential or are done so sporadically. And unless you have a staff member trained in marketing working a good deal of time on your behalf, you need professional help.

While advertising "24-Hour emergency care", fast-paced cleanings or special discounts may bring bodies to your door, such promotions will not keep them there. Why? Because you are attracting patients who do not value their teeth, or you are attracting patients who do not value your dentistry. In both cases, you and the new patient are not suitable for each other and the relationship will not last or be beneficial to anyone. There is a reason why the lowest priced items are never the highest selling -- people attach value to cost. Quality dentistry comes from your confidence in who you are and the changes you can make in the lives of your patients. Why invest in someone who isn't buying what you have to offer?

Sit down and spend time to decide who your "A" new patient is -- what the qualities of that person are, where does he/she live, and what kind of job, house and lifestyle does that person maintain. An expert in marketing can help you solidify your list of "A" patient qualities and show you how to access the people who will most want what you provide. Then focus your time and energy on telling those people that you are just the dentist for them with a comprehensive and unique Marketing Plan.

To attract and maintain an "A" new patient flow, be willing to be yourself -- be willing to not please everyone all the time. And once you decide who your "A" new patient is and where they are invest in maintaining your image in your marketplace, making sure that every time your "A" new patient comes in contact with your image he or she finds it to be consistent. It may take time for them to come to you, but if you build it, they will come. Then work on keeping them.