



7 strategies to attract new patients to your practice

By Jay Geier, DrBicuspid.com contributing writer

April 26, 2017 -- Wouldn't it be great if you could harness the law of attraction -- in which you attract what you want -- to get new patients into your practice? Imagine every morning, you could just close your eyes, think really hard, and that same afternoon new patients would come flocking to your front door.



Unfortunately, many private practitioners are doing just that -- thinking, hoping, and waiting. Or at least the equivalent to that and not getting the new patients they need for their practice to grow. But if you dig deeper into the law of attraction, it "dictates that whatever can be imagined and held in the mind's eye is achievable if you take action on a plan to get to where you want to be."

If you want to bring growth to your practice, you need to be highly intentional about attracting new patients. To help get you moving, I've created a list of seven strategies that, when implemented, can be the keys to attracting new patients to your practice.

1. Amp up your patient experience

Take some pointers from the Ritz-Carlton model and really roll out the red carpet for your new patients:

- Give out new patient gift bags.
- Offer complimentary refreshments.
- Provide a comfort menu with spa amenities, such as a heated neck pillow or eye mask.
- Send out personalized cards, such as for patient birthdays and anniversaries.

If you aren't constantly seeking new ways to create an unforgettable experience for your patients, you risk losing them to another practice that does.

2. Create a dynamic culture

This is what will set your practice apart from the competition. Creating a culture takes time to develop, and it is mostly done outside of the office. Take your team on an appreciation outing or clarity retreat. Invest in their potential by training them quarterly. Share your vision and create exciting goals.

These things will make them want to work for you. The happier and more engaged they are in the success of your practice, the better experience they will provide your patients.

3. Give your practice a face-lift

When was the last time you looked at your practice from a new patient's perspective? Here are a few simple design tips that will make your practice more appealing to new and returning patients:

- Reduce clutter in your reception area.
- Replace worn carpet or upholstery.
- Maximize natural light and minimize use of fluorescent light.
- Put a fresh coat of paint on the walls using a combination of neutrals and cool, calming colors.
- Play soothing music, or set the TV on a neutral station (like the HGTV channel).
- Update your reading materials.

4. Make sure your sign is big, attractive, and visible from the road

A lot of practice owners seriously underestimate the importance of a good sign. And by good, I don't just mean well-designed. It doesn't matter how brilliant, attractive, or expensive your sign is if it isn't visible.

5. Don't make the patient jump through hoops to schedule an appointment

Do everything you can to make sure scheduling is smooth and easy for the patient. For example, overstaff your phones or create a call center to make sure calls are never missed or put on hold. You should also keep appointments available to allow for same-day treatments, emergencies, or new patient visits.

6. Make the most of your marketing

The best marketing is fun and engaging. Get creative with direct mail, online offers, and social media. Consider throwing a referral contest or a community event to increase your visibility. But make sure you carefully track your marketing so you know exactly what's working and what's not.

7. Hold your front desk team accountable

While marketing is a great tool to attract patients to your office, you need to get them on the schedule. Your front desk team's first priority should be to increase the number of new patients who actually walk through the front door. Do they know that? More important, do you know that? Do you know how your front desk team handles patient calls? Most don't. But these team members are the first interaction with your new patients and must be properly trained to schedule new patient inquiries.

Jay Geier is the founder and owner of the Scheduling Institute, a dental training and practice consulting company. To learn more new patient strategies that yield long-term results, register for the two-day Ultimate New Patient Attraction Event.

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Last Updated hh 4/25/2017 3:22:45 PM



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