

How to Market Your New Podiatry Practice

Embrace these strategies to attract more patients, build your reputation, and grow your practice.

BY SHAUN ZAKEN

As a podiatrist, you've spent years honing your skills and earning the qualifications necessary to provide top-notch foot and ankle care. However, connecting with new patients and growing a successful practice requires more than impressive credentials and a physical location. In fact, to establish a new practice in today's competitive environment, you need to actively and strategically market your services and physical location. Here's a comprehensive guide to help jumpstart your new practice and ensure it gets off on the right foot.

Start With a Great Website

Your **website** is the first interaction most patients will have with your practice, so it should clearly represent who you are and what you do. You'll want to consider your ideal patient profile and lead with relevant images and content to highlight the conditions you hope to attract. Naturally, a tech-savvy sports medicine practice

website can and *should* look very different from a practice targeting diabetic foot care patients, but that's not to say you can't market your services to both profiles on

ensure your website represents you and stands out from your competitors. To be sure you're selecting the right creative partner, ask to see 3-4 examples of podiatry-specific web-

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the same website. Think about the services and treatments that will be most enjoyable and profitable for you, and be sure to highlight those specifics on your website.

Pro Tip: *Beware of website builders who offer the same design template to every one of their clients to*

sites, and make sure your designer can accommodate specific requests, since some stock designs are limiting, which can also lead to a less personal website.

When laying out the content of your website, avoid long sections of dense copy (no one wants to read a textbook!). Instead, feature bright photos, personal videos, and "Book an Appointment" buttons throughout to allow visitors to get in touch or fill out a form when they're ready (not just at the top or bottom of a page). Additionally, mo-

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mobile devices are responsible for over 60% of website traffic today, so be sure to review the user experience across all displays.

Pro Tip: *No matter how many pages and SEO (Search Engine Optimization) keywords you include on your website, there's no foolproof way to ensure your new website ranks at the top of a Google search without paying for the privilege. In fact, it can take weeks, months, or even years to dramatically improve your practice's search ranking, especially if your competitors include popular practices with established, modern websites. To improve your web traffic and "rankability", include a blog page on your website and add new, informative content on a weekly or monthly basis. Your goal should be to establish authority so Google prioritizes your website (Google Business Profile) in its local search results.*

Record Personal, Short-Form Videos

Informal, *personality-driven videos* can have a significant effect on your search ranking and website traffic, so consider recording videos (even on a camera phone, as long as you're well-lit) and post them to your website and social media channels to boost engagement.

Pro Tip: *In addition to recording videos about foot and ankle conditions, treatment options, and educational content for your website service pages, consider including a walk-through of your physical location to demonstrate a patient's in-clinic experience.*

Remember to keep your videos short (~10-30 seconds), and make an effort to smile and have fun. Personal videos not only offer prospects the opportunity to see you and your office before committing to a visit, but these videos can also increase the amount of time a visitor stays on your website, which in turn suggests to Google and other search engines that your website (business listing) should be prioritized because you feature engaging content people want to read.

Write Blogs

Like recording videos, *blogging* can be a valuable tool to boost your SEO and help you establish credibility as a DPM, especially if you have extra downtime in the months leading up to your grand opening.

Pro Tip: *Perform a simple search online or use a chatbot to generate ideas for content, but be sure to include your perspective or specific treatment options available at your practice for each blog topic.*

Be sure to optimize your blog posts with popular keywords to improve search engine rankings and maintain a consistent posting schedule to keep your website fresh. Of course, an agency can perform tasks like these on your behalf, but amidst all of your other

Google and other local directory sites. Link your profile to reviews (especially on Google) and encourage satisfied patients to leave positive feedback.

Pro Tip: *If you've worked at another practice before opening your own clinic, it's likely there are remnants of your previous experience in older listings that should be cleaned up to avoid confusion. An agency can be especially helpful in coordinating these efforts (typically referred to as managing your Local Directory Listings), but you can certainly attempt to address these on your own.*

It's vital that patients find the correct location and contact details easily online; otherwise, you risk losing a new patient who travels

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start-up costs, this may be a feature you can prepare on your own until you have a more consistent schedule.

Claim Your Google Business Profile

Since a beautiful, functional website alone is not enough to get you noticed in your local community, a well-managed **Google Business Profile** (GBP) is critical for local search visibility. You'll want to decide whether to promote your DPM's name as the primary listing for your practice, and/or highlight the name of your practice as its own listing (more common if you intend to employ additional DPMs and/or practice locations). Regardless, your profile(s) should be complete and accurate, including your up-to-date business address, phone number, hours of operation, and services. Additionally, make sure the pin indicating the entrance to your practice is placed accurately on Google Maps, and add both interior and exterior photos to enhance your listing(s). All of these details should align with the information on your website, or this can create discrepancies on

across town to your old practice and decides to seek medical attention there instead.

Solicit Positive Reviews

Patient reviews, especially on Google, play a significant role in building your online reputation. To encourage positive reviews, be sure to ask satisfied patients after their visit—*ideally before they even leave your practice*—to rate their experience before leaving.

Pro Tip: *Print and frame a QR code that links directly to your Google Business Profile to collect Google reviews at your check-in/check-out desk.*

You can also solicit reviews on your website, over email and in text messages. Be sure to engage with reviewers by thanking them for positive feedback and addressing any negative comments professionally within 24-48 hours of receiving it to mitigate those outlier low star ratings. Positive feedback is now an important part of Google's algorithm for ranking, since Google wants to prioritize business listings that other consumers and patients suggest provide exemplary service.

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Post on Popular Social Media Channels

Building a following on **social media** helps establish your brand and boost credibility, so start on community-focused platforms like Facebook and Instagram to share updates, patient success stories, and educational content.

Pro Tip: Use LinkedIn to share industry-related news with peers and connect with other professionals—especially in your local market—to grow your referral network.

While an agency can handle this creative process for you, you may also consider trying a free DIY tool, such as Canva or Adobe Express, to craft your own social media posts. Like your website, be sure to focus your content on the conditions and types of patients you hope to attract. Additionally, remember branding and posting consistency is key, so consid-

agency fees and Google's ad budget, should help improve listing visibility and drive website traffic almost immediately, which makes this potentially revenue-generating service especially attractive. Bear in mind, your Google Ads are only as good as your practice website, so don't invest

building these relationships, so send thank-you notes or updates to help maintain these relationships and remain top of mind.

Pro Tip: Consider hosting a free foot health workshop at a local community center or sports facility to reinforce your position as a community

Don't underestimate the power of strategic networking and cold outreach through good old print marketing collateral.

in Google Ads until you feel confident in your website's ability to convert prospects efficiently (otherwise you'll risk over-spending with Google without actually converting prospects to new patients.)

Pro Tip: Even the most successful ad campaigns can take 1-3 months to see optimal results, so be patient and

health resource and attract new patients to your practice.

You may also wish to work with an agency to create and distribute an E.D.D.M. (Every Door Direct Mail) postcard to send to local residents in your community, segmented by zip code, to inform locals about your new practice.

Pro Tip: Don't overstuff your postcard with too much information. Instead, include a QR code that links directly to your website for more detail (and an opportunity to request an appointment immediately).

Naturally, building a successful podiatry practice today requires more than just opening your doors and hoping for the best. It demands strategic marketing efforts and a commitment to building your brand. While these initiatives take time and investment, partnering with a marketing agency can help ensure they pay off in the long run. Embrace these strategies to attract more patients, build your reputation, and grow your practice. **PM**

Since it's unlikely your new practice website will immediately rank at the top of page one on a Google search, you may find it worthwhile to pursue Google Ads to gain immediate visibility and attract local prospects.

er plotting out a content calendar and do your best to post at least a few times each month to begin to build a community. While creative inspiration can come from anywhere, a few relevant foot and ankle-focused dates to keep in mind include: **April**—National Foot Health Awareness Month; **June**—National Flip Flop Day (third Friday of June); **November**—American Diabetes Month).

Consider Investing in Google Ads

Since it's unlikely your new practice website will immediately rank at the top of page one on a Google search, you may find it worthwhile to pursue **Google Ads** to gain immediate visibility and attract local prospects. While ad campaigns and budgets (and performance!) can vary by location and competition, a starting budget of \$750-\$1,000, including

try not to scrutinize these campaigns every day. Alternatively, a lot of work goes into crafting and managing successful ad campaigns, so you should likely leave this service to a professional agency.

Introduce Your Practice to Your Community

Lastly, don't underestimate the power of strategic networking and cold outreach through good old print marketing collateral. Create a packet or folder to drop off for local dermatologists, pediatricians, sports facilities, chiropractors, and/or senior communities (depending on your practice focus) to promote your services and introduce yourself to other professionals in related fields within your community. Instead of just a one-time visit, remember that follow-up communications are key to



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