

The **DENTIST'S GUIDE** to
MORE PROFITABLE
MARKETING



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Stand out dental marketing requires a solid Unique Value Proposition for your practice. Learn how to create winning differentiation with this fantastic new resource from Patient News.



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Introduction

Because of the way insurance companies have communicated dental fee coverage to their policyholders and due to a lack of consumer education, consumers – including your existing, lapsed, and potential patients – perceive that *all dentists are the same*. This can be the kiss of death to your dental practice.

Clear and consistent communication of how you are unique is critical, but it can be a daunting task if you are not armed with the information you need to make your practice stand out in the sea of sameness.

The only way for your dental practice to stand out is to differentiate your *Unique Value Proposition* (UVP). This means you need to know your audience and what they want and serve it up in a way that's unique, relevant, and memorable to that audience.

By helping to clarify how you are different from your competition, in a way that matters to your ideal patients, **The Dentist's Guide To More Profitable Marketing** will help you develop your **UVP** and show you how to communicate it effectively to your target market.



At Patient News, as we continue to collect more data-driven business intelligence. We are able to help our dentist clients make better evidence-based decisions supported by a wide range of technology and processes. This provides decision makers with the best possible intelligence about patients, prospects, and their market.

The Dentist Guide to More Profitable Marketing addresses several questions that dentists face when they want to develop a UVP to ensure that their dental marketing and advertising investments make their dental office stand out and grow.

Identifying your UVP will allow you to summarize readily why the people who live in the market area surrounding your dental practice should use your dental services. A strong and consistent UVP will drive the marketing messages you will use to convince your prospective dental patients that your dental office and your team will add more value or solve their problems better than your dental competitors, whether they have similar offerings or whether patients simply perceive they do.

Your UVP needs to:

- Be easy to understand
- Solve a patient problem
- Communicate specific value that is unlike your primary competitors'
- Be succinct and appeal to your strongest decision makers
- Be the #1 reason your practice is distinctly better than alternative practices.



You already know that once people find out that you're a dental practitioner (i.e., "Oh hi Julie, and what do you do?", "I'm a dentist ... I'm a dental hygienist") ... that they rarely follow up with "oh tell me more" or question what it is you actually do. Consumers think they know because people perceive that all dental offices offer the same thing. You also recognize that all of your competitors are vying for the attention of your patients and prospects. Consumers are being bombarded with conflicting messages and "noise."

To take your practice to the next level, you need to clearly cut through the clutter and ensure your practice doesn't blend in with other dentists or become irrelevant to prospects and patients.

STAND OUT
FOR A MORE
SUCCESSFUL
DENTAL
PRACTICE



In *The Dentist Guide to More Profitable Marketing*, we'll walk you through the steps of UVP development and give you tips on how to bring it alive at your dental practice, with your team, and in all of your patient and community communications.

Developing a UVP requires a bit of legwork. You need to know your business, your ideal target patient, your competitors, and how your practice meets a specific market need. You also need a strategy: where do you want to drive activity, how are you going to do that and how fast, how will you win (differentiators), and what is your expected return on investment (ROI).

Use this handy guide to define your dental practice's unique position in your neighborhood based on what you do best, get your team's buy-in, and teach your ideal patients why they need you and how your dental practice is their best option for a lifetime of excellent oral health. As a small business, it can be difficult to craft a UVP, but by taking the time to identify who, where, what, why, and when, you can completely redefine your practice future.

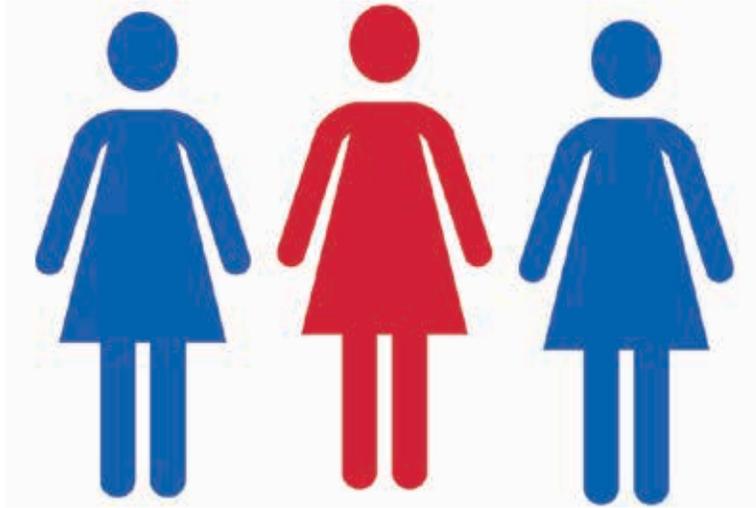
This guide will take you through the steps required to attract the high-quality new patients you want by putting the spotlight on your most important practice attributes ...and then you'll increase your bottom line.



Chapter 1

Understanding Who You Are Selling To





Who You Are Selling To

A. The female head of house

Women drive over 90% of all healthcare buying decisions through a combination of their buying power and influence. Women have always made the majority of household spending decisions, but they will have even more purchasing power as they contribute more money to their households from a variety of sources. Winning over women is the result of differentiators.

According to *Time*, women are rapidly increasing their spending power to impel changes in the way companies operate:

- Women hold almost half of the jobs in the United States and own nearly a third of companies. More women in the workforce mean changes in the female head-of-household buying patterns, along with those who live in her household.
- 64% of mothers with children under the age of 6 work outside of the home.
- Over the next decade, women will control two-thirds of consumer wealth in the United States and be the beneficiaries of the largest transference of wealth in our country's history.
- Just to show you the power they have – women buy more than half of the new cars in the United States *AND* influence up to 80% of all car purchases. They also request 65% of the service work done at dealerships.
- 66% of women feel misunderstood by health care marketers.

What Does This Mean To A Dental Practitioner?

Opportunity. If your practice is the one that understands what women value while developing your strong UVP, you can ensure it will resonate with this powerhouse buying and influencing group.

Above all others, the women that reside around your dental practice are the people you want and need to be attracted to your services. Think about that when you're creating your UVP. Women are increasingly engaged with the brands they choose. They are by far the biggest users of social media, and they are more likely to respond to personalized relevant messaging. Will your brand position, story, and focus capture and keep their attention? Will it engage them and ensure they become brand champions?

As one of the most influential buying groups, women like to choose brands based on personal referrals. And that means online reviews matter. Over 80% of people respect a review as much as a personal referral. That means if you're going to successfully capture your market, you must factor in meeting the needs of the female profile in your market neighborhood. Women need and want quality information and they do research in order to make good decisions for themselves and their families – particularly before committing to a high-value service like dentistry.



**Some bunny is going to Stand Out & Grow.
Make it your practice by developing a strong
unique value proposition (UVP).**

What Does This Mean To A Dental Practitioner?

The well-regarded business article *Are You Sure You Have A Strategy?* (Hambrick and Frederickson, 2001) confirms that there is good news. In it, the authors conclude that you don't have *"to be at the extreme on one differentiating dimension; rather, sometimes having the best combination of differentiators confers a tremendous marketplace advantage."*

It's more than just about women as a gender. You must gather all of the information and knowledge you can to understand your primary target market demographics, buying behaviors, preferences, and any possible barriers in order to determine how you will meet the specific dental needs in your marketplace ... and how you will craft your value proposition and marketing strategies.





Who You Are Selling To

B. Your neighbourhood

Unless you have yet to select your practice site, your primary audience is the one that resides around your practice. You must understand the demographic landscape and the specific type of female decision makers that live around you.

Your area demographic will guide the decisions you make when developing the services you will offer and how you will market them.

- Are you dealing with affluent upscale adults, cozy seniors, midtown singles, or family landscapes?
- Does the majority of your audience have children or are they empty-nesters?
- Are your prospects double-income families? Do they mostly walk or drive?
- Are there physical barriers or competitors that would prevent certain segments from choosing your practice?

A myriad of questions like these must be answered to determine how you operate your dental practice... and where to target your dental marketing.

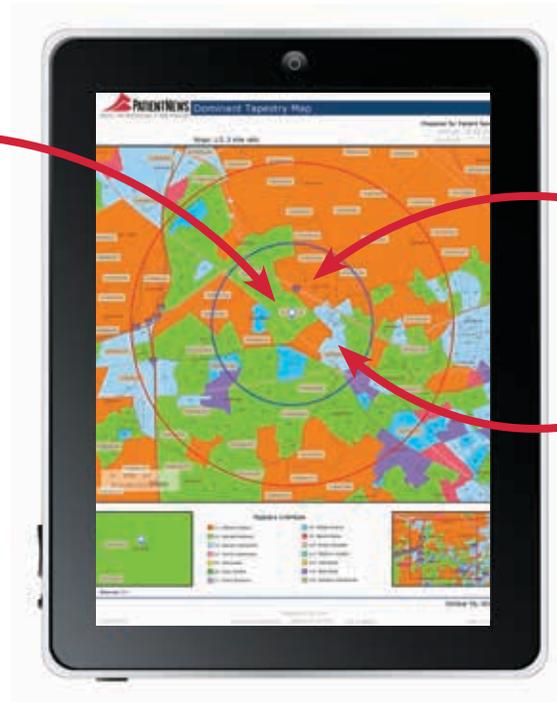
There will be segments surrounding your practice that include prospects that you would deem ideal and some that you won't want to cater to. As a business owner, you must identify your ideal targets and understand precisely what they want from a dental service provider. Create your ideal patient profile based on your CORE patient personas and demographics in order to make the right decisions about the products and services you offer.

Regardless of your area demographic, **more than 90% of healthcare decisions are made by women.** By understanding your practice neighborhood and the geographic, psychographic, and demographic data, you can create a service offering, your UVP, and the marketing message that resonates with your target demographic and their preferences. This is your winning combination.

Every Location Has A Mix Something Like This:

THE CORE

A large number of your patients come from this area and the industry indicates they are more likely to return. **Own this area.**



DEVELOPMENT AREAS

A lot of patients come from this area but you aren't reaching this audience well enough.

LOCATIONS TO AVOID

You aren't likely to draw patients from this area so invest marketing dollars elsewhere.

Chapter 2

What Are You Selling?





Developing Your Unique Value Proposition One Step At A Time

In a world where information is just a mouse-click or finger-tap away, consumers think they are well-informed about what products and services are available to them, but are they really?

**Adult dental visits have dipped to 35%
down from a high of 41%.**

Why? Because adults between the ages of 18-64 “think” they’re healthy. Consumers widely don’t understand the connection between oral and overall health. And let’s face it, dental visits are not high on the bucket list.

Establishing and maintaining differentiation will ensure you **STAND OUT** in the crowded market of dental care providers. It’s more important for dentists than many other professionals to ensure their competitive advantages are clearly identified and consistently communicated. An effective UVP can subtly and effectively educate patients and prospects about why your services are needed and why your practice should be the one they choose.



In marketing terms, a value proposition describes both the practical and emotional benefits of a product or service. For example, the practical benefits of an intraoral camera are that it takes great images so the patient can see what you see, which positively impacts treatment acceptance. The emotional benefit is trust in the dentist.

And dentistry requires trust. Half of the population has some fear of visiting a dentist. When crafting your UVP and subsequent marketing materials, remember that most people don't care how it works, only how it will benefit them. For example, consumers don't want to see an implant promotion that features an image of a titanium screw with messaging about how it will fuse to the jawbone. Instead a good value proposition could state that your practice can replace lost teeth quickly and gently, give the patient the confidence to talk, chew, and smile without covering their mouth, which will lead to better job or relationship prospects.

So, how do you educate the consumers in your practice neighborhood about the benefits of choosing your practice over the one down the street without having to be tempted into a price war? At the end of the day, educating consumers about how your practice is different allows you to be paid fairly for your time and effort while increasing your patients of record.

And it doesn't matter if you have the latest and greatest technology, if all of your staff has been with your practice for 20 years and have had advanced training at LVI, or if you are a sole practitioner who does all of the work yourself.

Every dental practice has a point of difference from the one down the street. Neighborhood seniors might appreciate the convenient street level access or others your historic location. 85% of people don't want dental appointments that take them away during work hours, so moms will appreciate after-school and weekend availability. That doesn't mean your practice needs to work more hours, you might just need to adjust them.

Your dental practice has unique differentiators and *The Dentist's Guide* will help you find them ... regardless of where you are located, how long you've been in practice, or what style of dental practice you have. Determining your dental practice's UVP is the first step in developing a killer marketing plan and it should always be the number-one resource you turn to when deciding how, when, and where to market your dental practice.



85%

of people don't want dental appointments that take them away during work hours.



A Rock-Solid Unique Value Proposition Is More Than Flower Power.

It Will Help Your Practice Stand Out.

1. Defines your dental practice's unique position in your neighborhood.
2. Sets you apart from other dentists in the area.
3. Lets you pinpoint the products and services your ideal patients are searching for so you can keep your continuing education focused on what matters.
4. Allows you to effectively allocate spending by targeting your services to those patients who want them.
5. Helps you stand out from the crowd of dental offices by providing something the competition doesn't.
6. Helps determine which high-cost purchases make the most sense for your dental practice.
7. Builds your brand image. A unique stand may alienate some (for example, Medicaid patients if you don't participate), but by creating a strong stand out brand image, you attract the patients you want and increase the overall strength of your practice brand.

Increase your reputation as the local expert with a rock solid UVP.



Patients Aren't Always Like Penguins

They Don't Chose A Dentist For Life

Unless you are the only dental office in your community and your patients never move away or die, you must attract more new patients than those you lose, and you must retain the majority of the ones you have.

Due to naturally occurring attrition (relocation, death) every practice will lose 15-20% of their patient base each year. In a practice with 2,000 patients, that's 300 patients that need to be replaced ... just to maintain current production levels. There is also intentional attrition (switch to another provider) that the practice can control with effective use of a strong UVP.

Having a UVP that clearly differentiates your dental practice from your competition makes patient retention, referrals, and acquisition marketing easier and more effective. When you communicate your UVP in a manner that builds awareness and brand recognition consistently, patients will know what to say to their referrals and staff will know what to say to prospects. This consistency in messaging will build trust ...and that's one important key to success.



Chapter 3

Why Should I Choose Your Practice?



Why You?

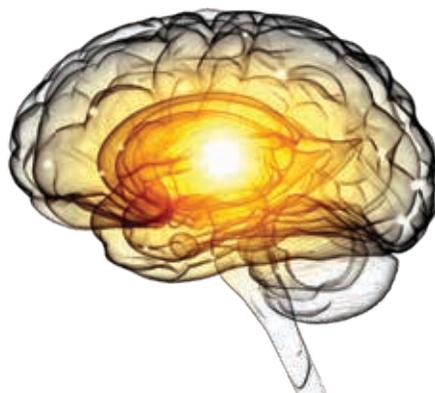
In *Creating Competitive Advantage*, Jaynie Smith writes about giving your prospects concrete terms with regard to why you are better than the competition.

The female head-of-household makes over 90% of all dental purchasing decisions for her family and she makes them based on relationships, research, warmly written educational content marketing, and a stellar customer-service experience.

Now that you know who, where, and what, you need to understand why patients should choose your practice. Why do you offer the services you do and what is the benefit of those services to your patient and your practice?

Providing a clear concrete message as to why your practice is the female head-of-household's perfect choice helps her make the decision because it increases the trust she has in your practice ... before she even picks up the phone to call you.

The latest neuromarketing brain research proves that people make emotional decisions that they later rationalize. Increasing your marketing success requires a combination of both physical, rational, and emotional components.



Without a clear concise Unique Value Proposition (UVP), giving concrete reasons why your practice is her family's perfect choice becomes a hit or miss proposition, and finding the right tone, terms, and messaging can be daunting.

Your success relies on your reputation and your relationships.

By developing a clear UVP, you'll ensure that your communications – print, digital, and in person – are consistent. This will support and enhance the reputation you want to have and it will build the trust that strengthens relationships.

Don't wing it!



Answer The Question “Why Should I Choose Your Practice?”

Help your target audience understand who you are and why you’re different.

Without a strong UVP, marketing and internal communications become watered down, and when patients and prospects have less and less knowledge and understanding about your practice, you’ll find that you may start to blend in with other dentists in your area.

Help your target audience understand.

How can you beat the constant “I’d rather do X than see the dentist” stereotype? Use whatever you have to help build your UVP. Each of the benefits you come up with can be used to influence your patients and prospects in all print and repeated in your scripted key verbal communications.

Become “the dentist” in your area by establishing leading differentiation.

It’s likely that everyone on your team may each have a different idea about why your practice is different or special. They may each have a different answer when asked what’s awesome about your office or maybe they don’t have an answer at all. You may have covert critics on your team or latent supporters who could be massive ambassadors if they clearly knew and understood why your practice is the best choice. A dentist must have a team that is able to consistently reinforce practice differentiation during every client or prospect interaction. By defining a clear UVP and constantly evaluating and adjusting messaging, you’ll ensure you maintain the leading edge in your practice community.



Chapter 4

8 Steps To Create Your Dental UVP



As you move through these steps always consider “WHY.” Your UVP must address the benefits your target audience will receive by visiting your dental practice.

1) ANALYSE your practice neighborhood by conducting a thorough market area analysis that includes demographic, geographic, and psychographic factors.



Mapping your existing patient draw area will not only confirm your current market share, it will also help identify who is most likely to purchase your services. There will be plenty of households even within your high penetration areas who are not coming to your practice just yet. Those like-minded people are most likely to do business with you. When you understand your patient profile and the demographics associated with this buying group, you will be better prepared to work through the steps to create the UVP that this group – your primary target audience – will respond to.

Not every group surrounding your practice is going to be a perfect fit for you. When you identify current core draw areas, it will be clear that you won't want to create a UVP that would appeal to consumers outside of your stomping ground... especially if you don't have an extensive marketing budget for testing. You must identify those “most likely” to respond to your offerings and craft a UVP that will resonate specifically for that group.



Are We There Yet?

Your market analysis requires location analysis including drive time, and maximum tolerance in order to precisely predict which consumer households will match your offering.

The following 3 questions will help you determine what your best patient values most.

1. Who are my ideal patients?
2. What are their service preferences (convenience, access, niche services, insurances, etc.)?
3. Do we provide it? If not, can we provide it?

Examine all key points in your neighborhood, such as barriers, major employers, and competition to identify who your ideal patients actually are. For example, if you practice in an area where a large number of your prospective patient base has a well-paying job with excellent company benefits, you can take advantage of the fact that 30% of North Americans with dental benefits still fail to attend regular dental appointments.



30%

of North Americans
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regular dental
appointments.



Why are adults skipping on dental health?

1. They “think” they’re healthy
2. They worry about cost – even when they have insurance
3. They’re a little bit (or a lot) nervous.

Adults are living healthier lifestyles and taking care of themselves. They think they’re educated and don’t understand the importance of regular dental care and the “silent” disease. Consumers are leading busy lives and don’t always prioritize dentistry even when they can afford it.

FEAR is a big reason!

If your ideal patient is one who has not had adequate dental care in the past and who may be in need of extensive care, identify your practice as one with sedation options, a warm and caring non-judgmental team, and vast experience with calming fearful patients.

When you create a UVP that can be used to educate these avoiders about the impact of oral neglect and the link to systemic diseases, you will elevate your practice reputation to “expert in the field.” Many of these folks will need big-ticket repairs and have the insurance coverage to support the cost.

Did you know ... while **75%** of dentists feel that the public holds them in high regard, according to a consumer study, patients don't even rank them at a **10%** trust level.

By establishing clear and defined differentiators for your practice and reinforcing these in all practice communications, you will continue to build trust with your target audience. Consistency is key.

2) IDENTIFY what sets your practice apart from the competition.

To separate yourself from your competitors, you need to know who they are and what they're saying in their marketing materials. This is what they are communicating to your patients and prospects about what's special about their services. You can only stand out if you know what choices your patients and prospects have.

Have all your staff bring in competitive marketing and start a drop basket that is reviewed at your monthly huddles. Hone in on competitors that are located within 5-10 miles, check their websites, and know how you rank against them.

Look at things like new patient offers, cost, insurance participation, products, technology, and identify staff training/specialties that your practice provides and the competition doesn't. Browse social media pages and make a list of items you do differently. Focus on poor reviews to identify areas where you do a better job so you can emphasize those things in your UVP.

Not every practice in your area will be true competition. Establish your top 3 to 5 competitors and clearly identify how you differ. Arm staff with that information so they're ready to overcome any objections. You must know your competitors inside and out if you plan to compete on price.



3) COMPLETE a SWOT analysis – practice Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

The more you know about your practice and those around you, the more effective you will be at being a unique choice for your target market. Involve your entire team and whiteboard EVERY POSSIBLE STRENGTH, weakness, opportunity, and threat.



Strengths and weaknesses are internal and are things you can control. Opportunities and threats are external and are happening outside your practice. These are market conditions you could mitigate with a strength or take advantage of.

SWOT can be anything from features, speed, conveniences, reliability, expertise, to the area economy, employment, etc. For example, do you have a new group practice opening in your area that will be open 24/7? This is a huge threat to your income, but it could also be a big opportunity to focus your UVP on the fact that you provide personalized care and that patients will see the same team and the same dentist every time... Remember, people like to do business with people they know and trust.

Identifying your **SWOT** will allow you to find more ways to set your practice apart. Using this information, you can find the gaps in your practice's market and fill them.

4) ASK your current patients what they think.

If you're not sure what really matters to your patients, ask them. Conducting a formal survey isn't costly or time-consuming and will give you the insights and business intelligence you need, not only to create a stronger UVP, but to also create stronger and longer-lasting relationships with your existing patient population.

In addition, a Patient Satisfaction Survey will help find areas of improvement, determine what you're doing that works for your existing patients, how you are delivering on the basics, what's expected, and what additional services they desire that you can offer or add to your services. It may also reveal that you've added cost centers to your process that the market doesn't value. This will allow you to reallocate resources to the components patients truly value.

You'll find that patients can help you pinpoint the practice benefits they're getting from you, and once you know what resonates with existing patients you'll know what to communicate to new patients. Make a list of these benefits (rather than just the technology you have that excites you) for consideration when developing your UVP.



★★★★★ 5) REVIEW your online patient reviews.

When a happy patient leaves a 5-star review on one of the many online review sites, you have at your fingertips a wealth of valuable information. For the development of your UVP, you want to specifically look at these two things:

- i. What is the prevailing message about what you do well? Is your team the most compassionate in the area? Do your service and product offerings make you shine? Where do you consistently get high ratings and positive comments?
- ii. For those patients who came to your practice after having a bad experience somewhere else but had a wonderful patient experience with you, how was it different? What did the competition lack? What did your team offer that made up for it? These reviews are a wealth of competitive advantages for you and it serves you best to see what your team is accomplishing that other teams aren't.

In addition to assisting with your value proposition creation, this will also provide a great opportunity for team training. Regular review of reviews is critical if your practice wants to grow. You need to work on generating reviews, which help with search ranking and building new patient trust, and you must also respond appropriately to poor reviews, follow up with patients to correct their experience, ask patients to add 5-star reviews, and talk to team members about adjusting the patient experience to eliminate any further poor reviews.

Remember that the key is to get as many 4-5-star reviews as possible, and when you create a terrific – and unique – patient experience, you will get them. In a sea of dental professionals perceived as the same, it's critical to point out how your dental practice is different from the one down the street by providing the benefits patients can expect when visiting your practice. And again that may be the whole of what you offer, it doesn't necessarily need to be one spectacular differentiator.





6) READ the competition's reviews.

Look for the 1- or 2-star reviews. What do people dislike about your competition? If your practice is performing better in these areas, this is a perfect opportunity to stand out as being a unique option for your community. Just like your competitors, you can't be all things to all people, so this will guide your UVP to focus on the things you do best.

And how do their top reviews stack up? These will show you what patients appreciate, want, and value in your market area, so you can work on incorporating these into your value proposition if they fit with your practice style and appeal to your target market.

7) DISCUSS your team's observations when dealing with new and existing patients.

Is a patient pleasantly surprised at something that happened during their visit? Were they expecting to be referred to a specialist, but because of your expertise, you performed the treatment yourself, saving them a trip to an unknown practice? Sometimes it's hard to extract information from patients yourself, but they may open up to your team.

Regular team huddles can help reinforce your UVP with your team. Not only do you need it to resonate with your target market, but also with your team and other partners, like referring doctors. With a clearly defined UVP, with messaging that is carried through every part of your operation, from patient interactions, to marketing, to referring offices, you will build and strengthen the image that you desire.

Regular brainstorming has many advantages. It helps your team stay involved and engaged, allows you to communicate your professional vision, and can often uncover practice strengths you haven't thought about.



“You have to differentiate yourself with price, quality, or service – and continually upgrade your services to increase your market share and meet demand.”

– Howard Farran, DDS, MBA



8) USE CAUTION.

You always want to develop your UVP based on what you do best. You need to have a vision for your practice and be careful not to go to market with the wrong UVP or one that you can't maintain (e.g. the lowest rates or fastest service). You need to be ready to deliver on the promises you make, so know your numbers, even if it's just for internal purposes. Your team needs to know that you've placed 1,000 successful crowns or that 98% of all hygiene appointments are completed in 45 minutes. Some of these "numbers" will be useful in setting your UVP – particularly in today's busy world where consumers want fast information and fast service.

Your practice personality and tone should be the foundation for your key differentiators and they will be strong UVP factors when they are authentic to your practice philosophies and goals. By using these steps, you can ensure you're developing a UVP that your prime consumers really want and that your practice can really deliver.

Chapter 5

Identifying Your Top 3 To 5 Practice Differentiators



And Make Them Memorable To Patients



When it comes to winning in dental marketing, clarity is essential. We're dealing with consumers that are skeptical, fearful, and don't exactly trust dentists. So even if you and your team have identified dozens of ways you are different than the competition, you really must narrow down that scope to your top 3 to 5 – with clear benefits for patients.

Three to five items on a list are the maximum most people recall.

More than five will water down your message and make communicating them regularly more difficult. This is a great opportunity to reinforce the value your practice brings to patients with your own team. Communication and involvement breeds engagement, accountability and responsibility. Pull everyone together to work as a team to determine which of your practice differentiators best fit your style, philosophies, and your ideal patient's needs (and needs of your community).

This will help you motivate and excite team members who are your KEY practice community ambassadors.

If you're struggling to narrow it down, pick the things you do best AND love to do most. The passion your team has for these areas will energize you and your patients will notice. Dental offices that are able to clarify their Unique Value Proposition do have the best potential to build a strong reputation and yield long-term financial results.

Don't get complacent.

You may have been successful in the past based on now outdated "great customer service" attributes. Stay competitive in the competitive world of dentistry and dental marketing by taking this extra step. And do it regularly. If you don't want your dental practice to plateau, stay stagnant, or even decline, then getting clear on your top 3-5 differentiators and what your competitors are up to on a regular basis will allow you to market your dental practice effectively and continue to stand out and grow.

Stay current with technologies. Those you need and use for treatment and those you need in marketing. Staying on top of technology reinforces to patients that you are modern and abreast of the latest treatments.

An engaged team who is involved in the development of your practice style, philosophies, and of what makes your dental practice special will be happier and more satisfied with their positions within your practice. And happier staff means happier patients which means more referrals, more treatment acceptance, less attrition, and more overall success for the practice.



Chapter 6

How To Communicate Using Your UVP



When you and your team have done the work to determine your Unique Value Proposition (UVP), you also know the who, where, what, and why – with clear benefits. Now it's time to communicate it in a manner that the household decision makers in your practice neighborhood will respond to.

Simply knowing your practice differentiators is one thing.

Knowing how to communicate your differentiators to your target audience is another.

As the decision-makers in their families, women need to be marketed to differently. They are more interested in the purchasing experience than the transaction itself, and they are driven by empathy, relationships, and communication.

Building relationships takes time and effort as you well know, and you work hard to build relationships with your patients by giving them an excellent experience while visiting your practice.



Build Patient Trust

Your team is warm and friendly and you make a concerted effort to educate your patients about the benefits of excellent oral health. To increase treatment acceptance, you work with your patients to ensure they understand how they can maximize their benefits, take advantage of financing options, and explain the benefits of the treatments you recommend. Your marketing efforts need to be an extension of this experience, and the message you communicate needs to resonate with the female head-of-household's need to obtain quality compassionate care for her family.

When communicating your UVP, using a warm and caring "voice" that women will respond to while educating them on the reasons your practice is their family's perfect choice will take you further than telling them about your state-of-the-art dental practice. While you may be thrilled with your new CBCT scanner because it makes your job easier and it is a sweet piece of technology, your prospective patients want to know its benefits – that it improves treatment outcomes, allows for comfortable scanning with no goopy impressions, and speeds up their treatment time, all while using less radiation than traditional methods.

Take the leap!



**Move your
practice to the
next level.**



Using phrases like **“warm, caring, and family-focused”** is more appealing to women than phrases like “exceptional dentistry.” Always avoid using technical terms and industry jargon.

This will help your dental practice marketing **STAND OUT**.

Once you’ve identified your key phrasing, it must be consistently used and reinforced in all marketing collateral, and in your patient communication scripting and team talking points... “Our practice has been in your neighborhood for more than 17 years, which means we have treated hundreds of patients and understand the importance of gentle treatment and on-time appointments” ... “unlike <other dental offices or your past experience>, what makes our practice different is...”

And remember first impressions count.

Do the following reflect your established Unique Value Proposition?

1. Office building, exterior areas, and entrance
2. Practice signage, billboards
3. Marketing materials – direct mail, website, reviews, social media sites, etc.
4. Reception – cleanliness, friendliness, enthusiasm
5. **VOICE MAIL** – if this can be avoided – answer live for superior **UVP** performance
6. Appointment timeliness, treatment rooms, team personalities
7. Services, payments, follow up.



**Hot Dog!
You've Got
This!**

Chapter 7

Emotionally Engaging Your Target Audience



The Patient Journey

Now that you have identified the Unique Value Proposition (UVP) that your dental practice has to offer ... and you've scripted your top differentiators ... it's time to consider the various patient touch points and what should happen at each stage to better engage your patients and prospects.

This includes ensuring that the following all support the UVP you intend to sell:

- Your practice office environment from front entrance to treatment rooms
- Internal & external signage
- Team presentation – dress code & mouth code (does everyone have a straight white smile?)
- Marketing & advertising campaigns – for new, existing, lapsing, and inactive patients
- Event presentations – fairs, schools, exhibits
- Responders, reminders, and email campaigns
- Payment processes, invoices, and thank-you notes.

You can emotionally engage with your target audience by supporting your UVP in all of your patient touch points ... in-person, on the phone, in print, and online. Consistency of this messaging will build trust in your brand.

With your clearly documented UVP, you then need to determine how to spread the word in your practice draw area with a strategic marketing plan. There are a wealth of research studies that show that formats can be as important than the content itself. For example, when it comes to written communication – online and off – heavy text with little whitespace can overwhelm and confuse prospects and leave them feeling anxious.



Understanding The Patient “Brain”

The largest study of its kind about neuromarketing called *A Bias For Action* revealed that emotionally engaging content that educates readers on the benefits of a product or service is the clear winner. In addition to confirming that consumers want to build relationships based on a foundation of trust, the study confirmed that consumers make decisions to pursue or avoid based on their instinctual reaction to a message.

Creating warm and inviting content draws a warm and accepting response. And don't forget your phone – script talking points that always refer back to your UVP, and have everyone on the team practice and use it every time.



Generic strategies aren't good enough. People do business with people they like ... and trust. Women need quality information and confidence-building before committing to a high-value service like dentistry.



Chapter 8

Dental Team Involvement



Creating (Giving) Ownership & Accountability

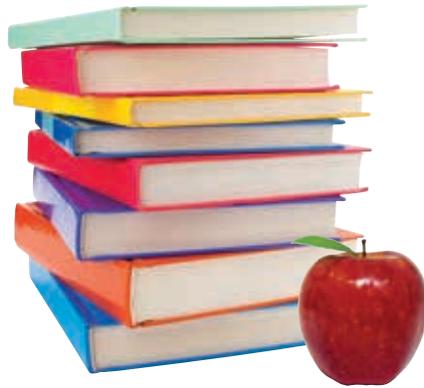
Did you know that up to 50% of all new patients are lost at the front desk?

Between hello and goodbye, you have the opportunity to interact with patients and prospects on the phone and in person in a manner that leaves them feeling good about your practice.

When you involve your team in brainstorming sessions to develop your Unique Value Proposition, you will also find that they not only buy into your message, they own it. When your team is all on the same page, everyone will walk the talk ... and those who don't will be evident.

This increases enthusiastic representation of your practice, more confidence in the messaging, and it will increase owner confidence that the messages being communicated to patients are the same ones you all worked so diligently to develop.





Once your team owns the messaging, you can develop a practice playbook using your UVP work. These scripts or talking points won't feel like constricted scripts that must be followed to a T, but rather – because your team has taken responsibility for who you are and what you're going to hang your hat on – these will simply be outlines of conversations that team members will have with patients throughout the day that will consistently reinforce your differentiators.

These scripts, talking points, and playbooks will also become the basis for onboarding new team members, ensuring a smooth training process and adoption of your practice values and goals.

The playbook idea has been written about in many famous business books. If we operate our businesses like a sports team, then everyone on the team will know exactly what is expected of them.

Like a sports team that has that one player who hasn't studied the upcoming game plays, the player on your team that doesn't buy into your UVP can sink the chances for success for everyone. Having a firm mission statement, practice philosophy, and clearly written UVP will alleviate team stress, will clearly identify who and what you stand for, and will assist you in achieving a higher level of productivity.

By establishing a clear UVP for your dental practice, supporting it with effective scripts and talking points, creating great dental marketing campaigns, and following through on your vision, you will put your team and practice in control and you'll continue to maintain leading differentiation in your practice community.

When everyone on your team reinforces your dental marketing messages, and the things you're saying are the things you're doing, patients will begin repeating the same messages to their friends, family, and in your online reviews.

Chapter 9

Relationship Building Using Your UVP



Saddle Up!



Service is a key differentiator for a dental practice. That's why elevating your patient experience will elevate your practice. This is where you apply your Unique Value Proposition (UVP) to relationship marketing.

Is your current UVP helping or hindering your dental practice success? Or, could your UVPs be dropped into a competitor dentist website and make no difference?

While you can't try to be different for everyone, you can if it's relevant to your practice situation. Your dental practice UVP should always lead to better relationships overall. That means you may have a slightly different UVP message for the patients you're attracting from the new home development on one side of your practice versus the senior community on the other – and your UVP should definitely be different than your top 2-3 competitors (alternative solutions for your primary target market).

Generally speaking, a dental practice will require a core UVP for dental marketing campaigns to be as effective as possible. In those cases where you need to tweak for different demographics, always make sure there is value, differentiation, and relevance for each.

**DO NOT TRY TO COMBINE
DISCONNECTED VALUE
PROPOSITIONS.**

While the number-one reason adult dentistry is in decline is cost, the number-two reason is because patients "think" they're healthy. Gum disease is the silent disease which means your dental practice has a unique opportunity to stand out. Since your patients and prospects don't know the importance of their oral health, it's pretty likely that they don't know why you're different or important either.

With a firmly established and clearly defined UVP, your marketing messages can reinforce why patients need a dentist in the first place and why you should be their first choice.

Women respond better to educational content. This is your perfect opportunity to augment your UVP message with reasons why they need to ensure their family's overall health with regular dental appointments and how your dental practice is their ideal choice.

Even with your patients-of-record, you have lapsing patients that may not know about all of your services and why they should be loyal to you, maintain their visits, inquire about elective services, or refer family and friends to you. While they may understand and appreciate your team's gentle treatment when and if they come in for their semi-annual recare appointment, they may not understand what else you can do for them. Regularly presenting your UVP will remind your patients why they chose you in the first place and why they should continue to choose you for their dental healthcare needs.

In addition, a strong UVP will move your prospects toward your practice. As we know change is hard, and whether that includes changing dental providers or seeing you after a long period without service, making a change is work and it's stressful. But if your UVP is compelling and consistently presented, you will generate more awareness, interest, and ultimately more patient contact with your office.



The best way to cover your target market is to ensure you have a great online presence including website, listings, reviews & social, signage, and a strategic direct mail program – and this is another way that your practice can stand out as unique.



How Does Your Marketing Stack Up?

Are you approaching it with a synergistic mindset?

Visit your website landing page.

- Does it reflect your UVP and clearly communicate why your practice is a better choice than the one listed next?
- Will patients and prospects easily comprehend your service and be able to determine how to contact you?
- Is it responsive. Are you accessible online?

Review your print campaigns.

Direct mail is the only way to reach 100% of your target market and this includes existing, lapsing, and new potential patients. But not all direct mail is the same. (FYI – dental newsletters are proven to drive 70% higher call volume than postcards AND to be almost twice as effective at engaging the consumer brain.)

- Does your piece **STAND OUT** and reflect your quality and reputation?
- Will patients get to know you and your team and truly understand why your practice stands out?

Is your social marketing consistent?

- Does your facebook account entertain and engage?
- Do you have industry average likes? If your last post was 3 months ago you're losing engagement.
- Are you monitoring your practice reputation?

Pull all of your dental marketing initiatives together, along with your staff scripting and internal messaging, to review your overall brand strategy. Every patient touch point, from new-patient marketing to reminder calls and in-office visits, should support your UVP.

Content Is King. It's That Simple.

Because consumers are not being educated and because they are complacent over static flyers and postcard offers, dental patient **newsletters drive 70% more new patient calls than postcards** and are proven to be nearly twice as effective as postcards at engaging the reader's brain. In fact, just using a direct mail format like an educational newsletter can become part of your practice UVP (unlike static postcards or promotional offers).

You want to pique the interest of your target audience, and to do that you must get their attention with a strong UVP and an effective multi-channel marketing mix that consistently reinforces your message.

When developing your dental marketing strategy, remember that 81% of consumers read their mail the same day they receive it and report that it's the most effective way to get them to remember a product or service. It's also a great way to drive online engagement. And when your UVP is consistent across all channels, you will increase overall practice marketing results.

It all starts by knowing your target audience and creating a synergistic marketing message that will resonate via the work you've done creating your UVP. This ease of understanding will result in a higher brand recall ... making your name the one to trust.



Chapter 10

The Dental Marketing Wrap Up: Pulling It All Together





When you have clearly mapped out your Unique Value Proposition (UVP), those practice differentiators will become a standard part of everything you do at your dental practice. This is how you create sustainable differentiation for your dental office in your market area – your community – the "backyard you should own." Repetition of your key attributes will build awareness and recognition and strengthen your reputation for the qualities and characteristics you want.

Consistent use of your UVP will reinforce your position as the dental practice of choice.

These are the benefits you offer to patients that you and your team will constantly repeat and boast about in both your internal and external marketing campaigns, in print, digital, and on social channels. This will increase practice visibility and have a positive impact on all of your communications at all patient touch points.

Now that you've reviewed where you are and where you want to go, you can define your future brand vision and direction. When you and your team are armed with your precisely crafted, targeted UVP, you can ensure that everything you do is properly guided, including having all marketing and brand investments focused on the right prospects with the right message.

This is how your dental practice
will be able to not only establish,
but maintain,
WINNING DIFFERENTIATION.



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