



Caring for your #1 Asset – Your Reputation

Your online reputation is of critical value, and far too often overlooked by healthcare professionals, says **Jason Borody** of Vividus. Luckily, there are a number of things that can be done to boost your reputation with minimal hassle and maximum benefit to your practice – and a good online reputation can be an invaluable asset to your online marketing.



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REPUTATION MARKETING REVIEWS

Ironically, the idea of reputation marketing itself has a bad reputation. We tend to associate it with damage control, negative press, and even covering up serious wrongdoing. However, what many people fail to realise is that reputation marketing is so much more than just an attempt to

reconcile issues: it's an invaluable tool which can be used to project a business's positive reputation through subtle actions which don't scream 'promotion!'.

PEOPLE ARE LOOKING

Our world is becoming increasingly digital, and potential patients no longer have to physically ask around to find out whether

or not you have a good reputation. All they have to do is type your name into Google to be met by a wealth of different reviews: Google and Yelp both provide marks out of five and commentary, social media sites provide a sample of standard customer interactions, and websites such as RateMDs can even rank individual doctors based on their best traits.

As a physician, you are undoubtably aware of the importance of creating and maintaining a good reputation. However, a good reputation is becoming increasingly difficult to keep thanks to the rise of online communication platforms. With the ease of access to testimonials and reviews skyrocketing, it is now more important than ever to ensure that the information your clientele is exposed to is the information that best conveys the views and ideals of you and your practice. There are a number of different ways to do this online, many of which are relatively simple actions which can make all the difference to your online reputation.

1. CLAIM YOUR LISTINGS

As many as 86% of potential clients use Google to find a business, but only 56% of local businesses have claimed their Google Business listing (let alone their listings on other popular business listing websites such as Hotfrog, True Local, and Foursquare). Still more fail to update their listings following a change of address, phone number, or doctor's names, leaving behind a steaming pile of confusion for anyone hoping to find the business

they're looking for. This provides an excellent opportunity for anyone who has claimed their listings to swoop in and provide a reliable, hassle-free alternative to the confused patient or referrer.

Claiming your listings also gives you another promotional outlet: in most cases, claiming a listing allows you to edit its content to best provide a description of your business and its services. This creates an additional reliable, reputable source which also serves to boost your advertising by providing an accessible reference to your website and services on a frequently visited website.

2. YOUR BUSINESS VOICE

Is your business more conservative or personable? Are you more focussed on providing once-off services or fostering repeat patrons? Deciding on the most important traits of your business and choosing the right language to convey them is a crucial step in developing a reliable reputation in your online presence. Around 80% of people want to hear from brands that are honest, friendly, and helpful, but many are also turned away by businesses they feel to be inconsistent with their online persona. Carrying out a conversation with a person who routinely switches personalities can be difficult at best and a negative statement about reliability at worst.

Your business's tone of voice (rather than voice itself) can be changed according to the platform you use to reach out. Think of the way you

use your own voice: you likely address your patients in a very different way than you address your close friends, and you probably address your family in a completely different tone yet again. However, your voice is still your own despite the circumstance, and your personality is still the same regardless of the context.

Your business's voice should be no different: its personality should still shine through, regardless of whether you're using a more professional tone for referrer targeted articles, a slightly more relaxed tone for patient educational emails, or prompting a casual conversation through social media. This helps to establish a reliable reputation by reassuring your client base that the same practice is talking to them, regardless of the way you reach out (even if it isn't the same person).

3. WORK YOUR SOCIALS


A social media presence not only provides an opportunity to engage with patients, it provides a sample of your direct customer service and what to expect from your business. If questions, comments, and complaints addressed to your business go unnoticed and unanswered on your socials, the natural assumption for a potential patient is to assume that their concerns will likely not be addressed either. If the response they receive is dismissive, they will deduce that their concerns will not be taken seriously. This is the perfect opportunity to reassure the patient that you care, by providing easily

accessible records of great, meaningful interactions which can instantly boost their opinion of you and your business.

4. RESPOND TO REVIEWS

Perhaps the most critical step in creating a good reputation is having a high response rate. Research has now shown that although the vast majority of people who reach out to a brand expect a response (53% expect it within a week) only 1 in 10 messages actually receives one , and only 37% of consumers have ever received a response to their review. This provides a stand-out opportunity for any practice willing to take the time to address the potential concerns of their patients. Addressing feedback (both positive and negative) helps your business establish reliability and show the value it places in their patients.

IT'S WORTH TAKING ACTION

Having to deal with negative feedback is inevitable, and it can feel difficult to work through due to the strain value inevitably placed on your reputation. However, research indicates that if a business takes the time to address and correct an issue quickly, up to 95% of consumers are willing to give the business a second chance. 

Marketing solutions for medical practices

To help ease the stress, Vividus provides a free downloadable ebook full of tips and tricks for responding to negative reviews, which may be downloaded **here**. For more information or assistance with tailored reputation and referral marketing strategies, please **contact us** for an introduction to Jason Borody.

This article has been prepared by Vividus Pty Ltd (ABN 25 086 684 884) because we want to see more doctors benefitting from successful practices and enjoying life more. Contact us if you would like to discuss this article or find out how Vividus can help your business.

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