

MAXIMISING Your Clinic's Virtual Potential

Knock knock.

You know that familiar yet pleasant sound, especially when each knock means business with patients passing through your clinic door.

To analyse the business nature, how have times changed the way these patients are coming through?

With the digitisation of all aspects of the trade – from patient cards to client management systems, the way in which potential patients hear about your medical expertise faces change as well.

Gone are the days when people keep mum about their symptoms until they hear of a reputable doctor to visit. Information is now readily available within a few clicks; giving patients more privacy and pro-activeness when seeking information about their medical conditions.

As such, having a good website works like an “online clinic”, drawing in virtual knocks and allowing them to become a reality during consultation hours. Furthermore, it caters to international visitors surfing for medical information at varying hours with its 24/7 presence. Your “online clinic” can now act as an informative channel highlighting your achievements, qualifications and clinic facilities – various push factors for visitors to leave an enquiry or book an appointment.

How does one go about building a good “online clinic”? The main factor to consider would be that of the overall user experience. To do that, here are 6 easy steps for consideration.

| | |
|----------|--|
| D | <i>Design</i> |
| O | <i>Objective(s)</i> |
| C | <i>Content & Consistency</i> |
| T | <i>Timeliness & Traffic</i> |
| O | <i>Optimization & Organization</i> |
| R | <i>Retention</i> |

Design

More often than not, design is the first element that captures the attention of the potential patient when he or she enters your “online clinic”. It communicates a part of you as the esteemed doctor, at the same time reflecting your personality on top of your credentials. Hence, a striking design allows you to differentiate yourself from others, and essentially works well for your branding.

However, design can be a tricky issue. We advocate sticking to the simple rules. For one, creating an eye-catching header would leave an impression on your potential patients, somewhat like the front door of your clinic.

Adopting a clean and simple layout that complements your trade, logo and yourself would do just fine. Remember, avoid dorky colours.

Objective(s)

What objective do you have in mind for your “online clinic”? Consider the end goal of attracting these virtual knocks – is it to increase enquiries or appointments? Or making it more interactive than an information portal? How about the inclusion of announcement boards and blogs?

With a proper set objectives in place, the website could then work towards building upon a bigger O, the opportunities, which would be covered later on. Use these objectives to plan the website’s content, and things would start to fall in place.

Content & Consistency

Now that the objectives have been set, the next step remains to build on the content. To avoid information overload on the visitors, highlight the key information to draw their attention. Is it a particularly significant achievement? Is there redundant information that the potential patient may not be interested in? Conduct your diagnosis and decide what to keep or not.

Just to share, an interesting personal profile would also create a personal touch and leave a deeper impression in the eyes of the visitors.

Once the content has been finalised, the next step is to have a standard look across the various pages. Some ways to go about it include the use of smooth transitions and similar fonts and colours on a consistent background texture. This helps to reinforce the identity of the site, and pushes the visitor on a journey towards your end objective(s).

Timeliness & Traffic

One key problem with many websites is the lack of updates. All things being constant, a website that is not updated regularly would gradually lose its appeal to potential patients, since they are not exposed to your latest medical breakthrough or recent accolades.

Thus, much as we understand the hectic schedules of doctors, having an updated website would build upon your esteemed credibility, thereby engaging visitors on a



Advertorial



regular basis. (Not to worry, you do not have to do it yourselves all the time!)

With that in place, the “online clinic” also requires a healthy stream of traffic into it for it to work for your business. In the next issue, we will cover extensively how that can be done, using a simple and cost-effective tool called Search Engine Marketing.

Optimisation & Organisation

Did you know that your website can also communicate the intangible aspects of your business and services? The trick is to optimise the user experience when they enter your “online clinic”.

For example, having a website that loads fast creates an impression on the visitors regarding the efficiency of the business in general, and that could symbolize a shorter waiting time at the door.

To do that, reduce the website’s loading time with minimal graphics, flash and scripts. The proper use of meta-tags in your HTML coding is also important to boost your ranking on search engine results pages. (We’ll go into more details in subsequent issues.)

Good organisation of the web content is also important. Include a link back to the home page and menu tabs on every page. All these tips help to increase the opportunities for your business.

Retention

Do also consider including Google Analytics in your HTML coding, which allows you to do data mining and examine your visitor behavioural patterns in your “online clinic”.

How much time are they spending on your site? Where do they come from? Are there any pages that do not interest them?

All these questions can be answered with this tool; which provides vital information on how to fine-tune your site to attract and retain valuable visitors.

Conclusion

The web-site is a multi-faceted tool that if used properly, can be leveraged effectively to reach out to your audience for greater engagement. Having an online marketing consultant would be beneficial in helping you comprehend the data for effective business strategies.

About the Author

With a strong background in advertising and public relations, Jessie hopped onto the bandwagon of online marketing to gain a holistic picture of integrated marketing communications.

As such, she often brings value add to her clients by offering both online and offline marketing solutions. Jessie is now handling PurpleClick’s partnership with the SMA, reaching out to doctors to deliver the most cost-effective marketing solutions.

Her aim is to set up a full-fledged agency within 5 years.

Promotion

Get a Free Website Health Diagnosis with consultant recommendations on how to improve your “online clinic”. Please call PurpleClick (Jessie) at 6533 8655 and quote “SMA001”. You can also send your queries to sma@purpleclick.com.



About PurpleClick Media

PurpleClick Media is the official IT vendor and Web Consultant for the Singapore Medical Association (SMA). Being the sole authorised reseller for both Yahoo! and Google in SEA, the agency offers cost-effective and result-oriented solutions reaching out to both small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and multinational companies (MNCs) alike. As a one-stop online marketing solutions provider, the agency adds value to its clients with its expertise and creative input to suit their needs.

PurpleClick Products – Your One-Stop Online Marketing Solutions Provider

1. Search Engine Marketing (SEM)
2. Web Analytics
3. Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)
4. Email Marketing (EDM)
5. Web Design & Hosting
6. Online Display Media Advertising
7. Social Media Optimisation
8. Advertising & Public Relations

