

# Marketing Your Practice on the Web

**W**hen patients look for a doctor they can trust, they often search the internet. Can your patients and referral sources find your practice on the World Wide Web? Incorporating an internet presence into your practice marketing plan broadens your market reach, regardless of your practice size, budget, or goals.

Unlike print material that can be outdated quickly, a practice website allows you to maintain the most current information about you and your practice and have it immediately accessible to your audience. An effective website contains a good design with frequent updates, information about your practice offerings, and user-friendly applications and navigation.

Depending on the complexity and size of your website and the human resources available within your office, you may decide to hire a website company to take charge of your website project. But, thanks to many affordable online website development services, you may choose to save thousands of dollars and create your own website.

## **www.yourpractice.com**

The first step in creating your own site is to purchase a domain name or uniform resource locator (URL). Select a name that reflects your business and is easy to remember and communicate. Domain names can be purchased through sources such as Network Solutions ([www.network-solutions.com](http://www.network-solutions.com)) or GoDaddy.com ([www.godaddy.com](http://www.godaddy.com)) for less than \$10 per year. These same sites also offer the ability to host your site for a monthly fee.

## **Mapping Your Site Content**

What information will your website contain? Begin by making an outline (site map) of the information you want provided to your patients and referral sources. Your main website tabs or headings will dictate how your information is categorized for the user. At a minimum, provide a brief description of the services offered, biographies and photographs of each physician, plus appointment and insurance information. You may want to include a section that describes commonly performed procedures or disorders that you frequently treat and another section that provides information or forms that can be accessed by patients

before their appointments. Your website content should provide helpful tools for your practice, your patients, and referral sources.

## **Looking Good**

Your website should project a professional image. While a website can entertain, its main purpose is to deliver the information that your prospects want. Don't let your site become bogged down with Flash and moving objects that will make it potentially slow to load. The design of your website should mimic your practice and existing promotional material to present a consistent visual brand. When it comes to navigation, execute the "KISS theory" (Keep It Simple, Stupid). Navigation should be intuitive, and users should be able to move from one section to another on your site with one click.

## **Marketing Your Website**

Once your domain name is secured, take an inventory of the promotional opportunities you can use to get your website in front of your audience. Common promotional items include adding your website address on your business cards, stationery, brochures, print advertising, email signature, and in your newsletters. Look for outside opportunities where other businesses or referral sources may benefit from including a hyperlink to your website. Announce the launch of your website or even the redesign of your existing website with an email, letter, or postcard to your referral sources to raise awareness of your Web presence.

**Get on board. Get online. Get on  
the World Wide Web!**

### **10 Quick Places to Promote Your Website**

1. Office voicemail message
2. Business cards
3. Stationery
4. Email signature
5. Facebook or Twitter accounts
6. Print advertising
7. Practice brochures
8. Email announcement to referral sources
9. Postcard or letter to referral sources and/or patients
10. Office signage