

Marketing Momentum, Newton's First Law Of Motion And Your Dental Marketing

Here's the scenario: You're booked 1 and a half months out, new patients are calling (about 1 a day) you just can't seem to catch up with all the treatment you have diagnosed...What do you do? Well, the answer I get most often is to STOP MARKETING. Why have patients call when they have to wait 2 months just to get in for their first appointment. It seems better to stop marketing, and start up again when you need patients. There is one very important thing to consider when you decide to stop marketing. Some call it the snowball effect, we call it MARKETING MOMENTUM. Newton's First Law of Motion States: Every object in a state of motion tends to remain in that state of motion unless an external force is applied to it. This simply means if something is moving or standing still, it will continue moving or standing still unless a force is applied. A force like friction, gravity, or a physical push. When a doctor starts up a marketing program like our Simple Green Postcard Program, we talk about average results, the momentum, and what they will see happen in the next few months. They'll see schedules start to fill up, and patients will seem to "drop out of the sky." These same patients can't wait to start treatment, and pretty soon you're booked solid, whether it is directly traced to the Simple Green Program or not. When you put a marketing program in place that is hands free, simple, and consistent, it creates a buzz, an excitement both inside and outside the office, and things start gaining momentum. You've put an object in motion, and as long as you continue that object will stay in motion. Think of your marketing as a playground swing. You push at timed intervals and the swing goes higher and higher. Finally, you've reached the highest the swing will go, so you stop pushing. The momentum of the swing dies down until eventually it comes to a stop. It takes a lot more energy to get that swing back up to the top again rather than the small amount of effort it took once you had things going. Back to dentistry, you still have a problem with booking people 2 months out. This is a problem many many practices would love to have, and frankly, it's not a problem at all, but another marketing tool. One of the biggest selling points of a practice is its exclusivity. You now have a schedule that is booked solid for two months, it doesn't get more exclusive than that. When patients look at it, they'll ask themselves what dental practice they would rather go to the one that has no patients, or the one that is so good, it has patients lined up at the door. I personally would choose #2 because that practice must be good and must be doing something right. And trust me, people don't mind waiting to go to the dentist. In fact, people love to wait for anything, just look at the line for Starbucks every morning. So you want to stop the marketing to catch up with your schedule. Here's what happens: The patients that would have called your practice, scheduled, and waited to be seen are now going to the dentist across the street (your direct competition). This does accomplish your goal and your schedule empties out. Congratulations, the patient flow has now ceased to exist, and now, not only are you not booked out 2 months, but you now have the openings to schedule same-day appointments (if a patient calls) because you stopped marketing for new patients a few months ago. Now you struggle to fill a days schedule, pay a front office worker and hygienist full time pay to sit around through the empty appointments, and, to top it all off, the dentist across the street is booked 2 months out, and everytime you look out the window they have new patients coming in. The worst part is, your marketing momentum has now stopped. In order to increase the new patient flow to the same level it was, you'll have to make a big push. Just think how great it is to show up at the practice and know you had a full schedule every day for the next couple months. Sounds like a perfect practice to me. Why would you want to stop it? So, instead of stopping the new patient flow, what is the answer to the problem? Well, you could hire some help, or add a day to the schedule. If it got really bad and you really didn't want patients, you could even refer them to another practice. Do anything but stop the flow of new patients, there is no quicker way to kill a practice.

About the Author

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