Game Over: A Veterinarian's Guide to Google Domination!

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Chapter 1

Is your Veterinary Website Optimized for Google's Mobile-Friendly Search Algorithm?

In the last few years, Google has responded with increasing urgency to the exponential growth of mobile traffic, and continually adjusted itself to the new, mobile-led online search environment. Finally, it has done the inevitable and rolled out a full-fledged mobile-friendly search algorithm. This should be seen as the strongest signal yet of the leadership and future of the mobile devices that has now been fully acknowledged by Google.

Now the question remains: As a veterinarian with a professional website to represent your practice, have you incorporated this dramatic change to optimize your veterinary website for Google's mobile-friendly search algorithm?

The Reach of the Mobile

According to a 2015 Brightlocal study, 61 percent of the mobile users are more likely to contact a local business via a mobile website. A growing number of consumers are searching through their mobile devices on a more consistent basis. Seventy percent have searched multiple times in 2015 as against 54 percent in 2013.

This rapid adoption of mobile devices for online search can be attributed to the development of mobile-friendly websites, improvements in mobile browsing experience, and introduction of innovative mobile apps. The number of small and medium businesses (SMBs) having mobile optimized websites has consistently increased during this period.

Need for a Mobile Optimized Veterinary Website

If you haven't been working on making your veterinary website mobile optimized already, you should know that from now websites that are not mobile optimized are most likely to rank lower in Google search results than if they were mobile optimized.

Google has officially confirmed that the search engine will not remove your website or block it for not being mobile search optimized. However, you are likely to achieve reduced traffic of site visitors because mobile searchers, who increasingly dominate online search, will not be able to find you in the search results so easily.

In simpler words, if another competing veterinarian in your local area has a mobile optimized website, they will have an obvious search ranking advantage over you.

Need for SEO for a Mobile Optimized Site

It is important to understand clearly that a mobile optimized website only means that your website renders more naturally and efficiently on a mobile screen.

However, a 'mobile optimized website' is not the same thing as a 'search engine optimized' website.

The function of search engine optimization (SEO) for your veterinary website continues to be as important as before, following mobile optimization. If anything, the function only becomes more complex because now it must address both mobile search as well as the regular desktop search users. While traditional SEO is already challenging and requires professional management, mobile SEO will need still greater specialization.

In case of mobile search, Google search results are more dynamic, and will tend to change on the basis of location and other localized factors. Therefore, the rules of SEO will have to be more flexible and adaptive for mobile search optimization.

Difference between Local SEO and Mobile SEO

Local search and mobile search are fairly close to each other, but the difference lies in the orientation of location-based search results. In case of local search, Google search results will typically be related to your town or city where your veterinary practice is located.

However, in case of mobile search, the results will be "hyper local." This means that the search results will be adapted to the precise current location of the mobile searcher. In that sense, the crucial difference here is that mobile search focuses on the "person" while local search is less personalized.

The Right Mobile Site Configuration

Three types of mobile site configurations are currently recognized by Google:

Responsive Design

In this configuration, the desktop website content is automatically adapted to render efficiently on a mobile device. The URLs of the web pages remain unchanged and digital analytical reporting is simpler. However, when the same content is re-formatted or re-sized for multiple screen sizes, the results may not be up to the mark in some cases.

Separate Sites for Desktop and Mobile

In this case, when a mobile user visits your website via a mobile device, they are automatically directed to a separate mobile URL. The separate mobile website is optimized with different, mobile-specific code and content.

Dynamic Serving

In the case of Dynamic Serving, the web server automatically identifies the user's browser as desktop or mobile. It then serves up relevant HTML depending on the device information.

The right mobile site configuration for your veterinary practice will depend on several factors. Some of the key factors may be the range and depth of your website

content, your online marketing goals, your budget, your visitor experience and expectations, and the technological capabilities of your web designer.

A combination of all these factors will determine the most appropriate mobile site configuration for you. You may choose the services of a technical web design expert to guide you on planning and implementation.

Common Reasons for Low Mobile Traffic Conversion

If you have a mobile friendly veterinary website in place, but your analysis shows a consistently low or unsatisfactory conversion with mobile traffic, you need to review your mobile marketing strategy on various counts. Some of the likely reasons for this situation could be as follows:

➢ The formatting of your website content is not ideal for mobile devices. The readers may be compelled to pinch and zoom in order to read clearly. On some of the important web pages, it may be difficult for the users to click on various links or calls-to-action.

➢ Your web pages suffer from an excessive flow of information, which is called information overload. On some of the key web pages, the distractions may be numerous, resulting in the readers leaving the page before they convert.

➢ Some of the web pages may include elements that do not render well on mobile devices, such as Flash.

> ➤ Your mobile site may have issues with the configuration, tracking and reporting of web analytics, leading to a misplaced evaluation of the mobile site performance.

Correct Attribution Modeling

Many website owners and webmasters tend to miscalculate or under-estimate the extent to which mobile search impacts their sales. This happens due to improper attribution modeling. Google Analytics will count unique devices used in a sales journey, and not the unique number of users.

For instance, if the same individual visits your veterinary website from a smart phone while traveling, and then via a tablet at home, and finally performs a sales-related action from a personal computer, Google Analytics will report it as three separate visits, only one of which led to a conversion. On the surface, mobile devices may appear insignificant in this sales journey, but in reality it was precisely those devices that inspired and led the user to conversion.

Many web analysts and SEO experts estimate that it is only a matter of time before businesses that operate without a mobile optimized website disappear from Google's online search results on mobile devices. In a competitive online environment, a cookie cutter approach to putting together a formulaic mobile website will not deliver the desired results. If you have not done it already, it may be time for you to get your mobile search

optimization act together to promote your veterinary practice.

Chapter 2

Re-adapt your SEO Focus to Boost your Google Rankings

For many years, SEO specialists have based their search engine optimization strategies on link building. Link building has been traditionally considered to be the single most important indicator of a website's quality and authority. Google and other search engines have used it as a key determinant while assigning page rankings to websites in their search results.

While organic or natural link building continues to play a vital role till today, but search engine algorithms have increasingly begun attaching more weight to other key fundamentals. Google launched its onslaught against the misuse of link building through its major algorithmic updates Panda and Penguin. It has continued to impose new regulations to scrutinize the authenticity of inbound links, and repeatedly recommended against the over-reliance of search marketers on link building as an SEO strategy.

The new school of thought that has emerged from this churning process says that while organic inbound links continue to be necessary to support your SEO campaign, link building as a specific SEO tactic may no longer be essential to pursue. The SEO effort must be re-directed towards a high quality content creation strategy that will

naturally engage and attract high quality links. Therefore, the focus must shift from strategic link building to various other SEO fundamentals that now take precedence in the new search environment.

Optimized Website Navigation

Google has consistently advised webmasters to improve site navigation. You can expect to see higher search rankings for your veterinary website if it is optimized for navigation. Google rewards websites that make it convenient for the visitors to find what they are looking for. Your goal must be to present your important web pages in a sleek, minimalist navigation bar. The bar should include descriptive section headings and a comprehensive listing of web pages underneath.

It will also help to include a search bar in your website and interlink it in depth with your content. This will enhance visitor experience significantly and will ensure that any single web page of your site can be reached in no more than two to three clicks. The aim of efficient navigation is to lead the reader to their desired destination as intuitively and as easily as possible.

Regularly Updated Sitemap

Does your veterinary website include a comprehensive and regularly updated sitemap? When you create a sitemap, it will allow Google and other search engines to better crawl and categorize your website. A sitemap informs the search engines about the organization of your site content. Search engine web crawlers such as

Googlebot read this sitemap file in order to crawl your website more intelligently.

Google says that its web crawlers may overlook crawling some of your new or recently updated web pages. If the site pages do not reference each other naturally, their listing on a sitemap will ensure that they are not overlooked by the search engine. New websites or sites with limited external links run the risk that Google might not discover some of their pages. This risk can be addressed with a detailed sitemap.

Most importantly, your sitemap can provide useful metadata associated with the web pages that you include in the sitemap. Metadata lets Google know when the page was last updated, how often the page is changed, and the importance of the page in comparison to other pages in your website. You can also use the sitemap to provide metadata about videos, images and mobile content. This helps Google identify the most valuable parts of your site content, and rank them better in the search results.

Robust Social Network Engagement

Many veterinarians have set up their social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter and other networks, but most of these accounts stagnate with little or no activity. A mere token presence on social media cannot provide any benefit from a networking viewpoint or from an SEO perspective. Google, Bing and other search engines attach significant weight in their search results to

businesses that command robust social media activity and engagement.

You should find time to get involved personally with your social media networks, and post short but useful and effective messages with regularity. Respond to your audience, address their queries and doubts, provide latest information and facts, educate your potential clients about their common concerns, and improve engagement levels by conducting small contests, quizzes, surveys and polls. The more comments, shares, likes and re-tweets you garner over your social media accounts, the more it will support your veterinary SEO campaign in the long run.

Brand Presence on the Web

Google pays attention to the mentions of your veterinary practice brand name throughout the web. Google's approach to brand mentions is quite similar to what it used to be towards links pointing back to your website domain. The advantage with brand mentions as against links is that they carry little or no risk of attracting penalties. Authority is attached to your website according to the quality and reputation of the source that holds your brand mention.

Another factor that will influence Google in this case is the context of the brand mention. For instance, if the source mentions your veterinary practice as a leading authority, Google will attach higher weight to it. Therefore, you need to pay attention to your online brand

reputation and put together an effective brand promotion strategy in place to boost SEO.

Mobile Device Compatibility

Following the major Google algorithmic update that is popularly termed as "mobilegeddon," the balance has officially tilted in favor of mobile compatible websites. You need to ensure that your veterinary website is thoroughly optimized for mobile devices. Your website design should ideally be responsive, so that the site content can be viewed consistently across multiple screen sizes.

In absence of a mobile optimized website, you are likely to experience progressively lower search visibility on Google. In the era of the mobile, it is also more important than ever to optimize your site download speed. The mobile user will typically have a lower tolerance for web pages that download slowly or inefficiently. Google will rank your web pages higher if your website delivers a superior overall mobile user experience.

Shareable and Syndicated Content

To improve your veterinary website rankings, it will help if you focus on creating content that is designed to be shareable on blogs, social media and other websites. Provide social share buttons prominently along with such content on your site to make instant sharing possible. Encourage sharing of your e-books, white papers, research articles and reports, infographics, videos and images to promote your website.

If certain content items from your site gain popularity via social media, blogs or YouTube, it will be counted favorably by Google while determining your search rankings. Consider writing columns and professional articles for online publications, reputed blogs and leading websites to gain more in terms of content syndication. The more online brand recognition your veterinary practice earns, the more you are likely to be rewarded by Google.

Focus your efforts on strengthening these key SEO fundamentals in the prevailing online search environment. These fundamentals can seize precedence over any other ranking factors and direct link building strategies. A diverse and balanced approach to SEO will reap dividends from Google and Bing in terms of high search rankings for your website, rather than relying excessively on a single SEO tactic or technique

Chapter 3

How to Rank your Veterinary Practice on Top in Local Searches?

If you are a veterinarian operating from a single location, receiving clients from the local area, your focus must move towards building local SEO. A traditional SEO campaign and a local SEO campaign will be significantly different from each other. Local search has become far more important, particularly following the explosive popularity of mobile devices for online search.

Local SEO can be more challenging because local search results keep changing very rapidly. Link building strategies for your veterinary website must have a local bias too. Local online reviews, local NAP (Name, Address, Phone number) citations, and Google My Business signals will become more important for you. With a strong local focus, you can expect to achieve higher page rankings for your practice when a local client in your area makes a veterinary related online search.

Google My Business

Do you have a Google My Business page for your veterinary practice? Google My Business will put information about your practice on Search, Google Maps and Google+. Potential clients will be able to locate you online, no matter what device they are using. They will

receive the right information at the right time, which could be the driving directions to your office, hours of operation, or a phone number that they can simply click to call you via a mobile phone.

Google My Business will support your efforts to build a loyal client base. Your clients will have the opportunity to show their appreciation with reviews and ratings, re-share your Google+ postings across the web, and use the +1 button to endorse your content online. Make sure to create a unique description for your practice, opt for the right business categories, include appropriate images and links, and add a local business address and phone number that is consistent with the contact details on your veterinary website.

Local Reviews and Client Testimonials

One of the great ways to improve your local search rankings can be to have authentic local reviews on sites such as Healthgrades.com and ZocDoc.com, apart from Google and Bing. These websites can provide substantial local business exposure and positive reviews and client testimonials will help build your online reputation and credibility. Studies have shown that three out of four consumers rely on online reviews as much as recommendations from friends and family.

Local reviews typically make a strong impact on Google local search rankings. You can make an effort to generate good reviews by reaching out to your existing clients with a questionnaire or requesting them to write a review. Some veterinarians also choose to offer incentives to

their clients for taking time to provide a review or testimonial. You can also create an online review button on your veterinary website, inviting visitors and clients to review your practice online.

NAP Consistency

NAP stands for Name, Address, Phone, and NAP Consistency implies that the contact details of your veterinary practice are listed consistently in an identical manner throughout the web. To go a step further, you should also ensure that your veterinary website address is also listed in a consistent way. NAP Consistency can prove to be fairly useful for your local SEO. Search engines prefer valid and verifiable business entities over those which are anonymous or with inconsistent contact details.

NAP Consistency helps to build the confidence of the search engine crawlers about your professionals practice, and any variations in NAP can hamper that confidence. You can periodically verify your NAP Consistency by searching for your practice name with your city on Google. If the search results show variations in NAP, you need to take corrective steps. Online tools such as GetListed.org will also help you check for NAP Consistency.

Local Citations

A local citation is an online reference to the name, address and phone (NAP) of your veterinary practice. The citation may be with or without a link to your

website, but it is important that the source using the citation references NAP in consistency with your standard NAP. To check the consistency of your local online citations, you may use a tool such as BrightLocal.com, and make updates wherever necessary in order to achieve consistency.

Tools such as BrightLocal.com may also be used to track the citations of your local business competitors on various major websites. Once you have identified these valuable sources, you can work to add your own citations to them. Private local citation finder services such as WhiteSpark.com can identify and upload local citations for your practice. You may also run through the comprehensive listings of citations on Moz.com and submit your citations manually.

On-Page Local SEO

Local search listings on Google and Bing attach a significant weight to on-page content. Therefore, conventional SEO techniques can be used to optimize the on-page content for local SEO. One of the most effective tactics to improve your On-page local SEO is to add your city or area where your veterinary practice is located, along with an important keyword, in the title tag, H1 tag, and URL of your targeted landing page.

The local city or area along with a relevant keyword should also be introduced within the page content as well as the image ALT attributes of the same landing page. You should also embed in the landing page a Google map with your business marker. These simple efforts will

help to optimize your important landing pages on your veterinary website for local search.

Localized Link Building

To build local SEO, you should target links from various local online sources and websites that are directly relevant to your practice. Local link building is not so much about garnering authoritative links as it is about links from local sources. One of the valuable resources for local link building is local online directories. You should also engage with local press and media to receive coverage and links in their local publications.

Check out online tools such as Meetup.com to discover local event listings relevant to your practice. You can contribute to or get involved with these events in innovative ways, and in return, receive local links from their websites. You can also hold your own local webinar or another event and promote it on local websites. Exercise local PR, enter local awards or even start your own, and offer special rebates on your veterinary services to local organizations in exchange for a mention on their website.

These efforts with a strong focus on local search will gradually ensure that your veterinary website is featured among the top search results on Google and Bing with a large number of localized keywords. You can expect high conversion rates for your practice when the majority of people visiting your website are from and around the area where your practice is located.

Chapter 4

Search Analytics: Ensuring Long-term Success of your SEO Campaign

Online veterinary marketing and SEO are complex and time-consuming activities. Sometimes your marketing team or SEO specialist may tend to get so engrossed in strategy execution that they may forget to take a pause and review the direction in which the veterinary SEO campaign is going. Search analysis will also provide you insights about the actual content experience of your potential clients who visit your website or blog, and allow you to raise the bar and deliver an improved experience.

Need for Search Analytics

Your veterinary practice operates in a dynamic environment. The needs and preferences of your clients keep changing, new techniques, procedures, technologies and products are introduced regularly, competition gets continually redefined, and the online search environment also gets continually impacted by new trends and algorithmic updates made by the search engines.

For instance, if you are considering an expansion of your veterinary service portfolio by introducing new technology, procedures or product offerings, it will be a good idea to analyze how would the resulting changes to

your website and content impact the organic search performance of your practice. In order to ensure that the new changes only boost your search engine rankings and not bring them down, it makes sense to perform a search analysis and introduce the changes logically and achieve better leverage in search results.

Search analysis will provide you useful information and insights in crucial areas such as:

➢ What type of content is likely to deliver optimal organic search results for a new set of keyword targets
➢ Whether the user experience will be enhanced with the introduction of new content assets
➢ Whether the organic results are likely to provide unique exposure or the local competitors will also be a part of those search results

A strategic search analysis before embarking upon a new SEO initiative for some new services or products will help ensure that your efforts are made in the right direction. The same practice of search analysis is also applicable to your ongoing SEO campaigns as well.

Crucial Steps in Search Analysis

Consider the following three steps when you are ready to perform a comprehensive search analysis for your veterinary practice SEO campaign:

List the Relevant, Localized Keywords

Before anything else, identify the most current, trending and relevant localized keywords for your veterinary practice. To create this list, you may consider the phrases, words and themes that are prevalent on websites, blogs, online forums and social media that can be associated with your core practice needs, procedures and product lines.

Once you have developed a manageable list of, say, 15 to 25 keywords, you should rank them in the order of relevance or priority. To perform this prioritization exercise, you can consider the metrics provided by the Google Keyword Planner, such as the total number of monthly searches and the degree of competitiveness for a particular keyword. Tools such as BuzzSumo.com can provide you social popularity metrics for these keywords.

Assess Organic Search Results for these Keywords

Once your set of keyword targets has been prioritized, the second step should be to assess the organic search results for each keyword. In this review exercise, look at the following checkpoints to ensure that your content marketing goals are being met as desired:

- ➢ Which specific web pages are listed in the results
- ➢ What is the type or purpose of content in each result
- ➢ What are the inbound link metrics
- ➢ What are the social sharing metrics
- ➢ Whether blended results are showing

Moz Analytics, LinkDex.com and SEMRush.com are some of the useful online tools that you can employ to perform organic search analysis effectively.

Assess Blended Search Results for these Keywords

A traditional Search Engine Results Page (SERP) will show results in typical blue link along with a brief page description. However, Google has been promoting blended search results, which can include website results, video and image results, news results, blog results, and book results. Some experts estimate that one in four search queries now shows a Google Knowledge Graph based result. It is important to analyze these results with an aim to stand out among competitors and create a differentiation for the search users.

Google provides increasingly dynamic SERP experience due to the integration of structured data. Therefore, search users can find a variety of results ranging from reviews and ratings to YouTube videos to website specific cross-links within organic as well as paid search listings. Savvy online search users are now increasingly looking beyond the proverbial 'golden triangle' of top three organic results when they perform a Google keyword search.

With an in-depth analysis of blended search results, you can strategically improve the website and web page structure to achieve higher rankings. Content quality continues to be most important, but website and web page structure also plays a vital role now. A periodic analysis of blended search results will also provide you

an improved understanding of how Google is likely manage the user search experience and open new possibilities for advanced SEO development.

Drawing Logical Inferences

Once a detailed search analysis has been performed, it is time to draw logical inferences and conclusions in order to develop and improvise SEO. For instance, the analysis may reveal that a particular type of content, such as blogs, articles, columns, videos, or infographics, has been garnering maximum exposure for a majority of search results received from the keyword targets. You can redouble your efforts to develop and promote this type of content to optimize value.

For your ongoing veterinary SEO efforts, the inferences will enable your content creation and SEO tech teams to collaborate more effectively. They can add more punch to your regular site pages, articles, and blogs and help improve their search visibility. In many cases, it will be found that just two or three types of content attract 70 to 80 percent of the results. Therefore, time and resource allocation can be made more logically with accurately drawn inferences.

The overall search analysis process will also gradually help to automate the data collection and research techniques. Efficiency and return on investment (ROI) will improve, and you can expect to achieve consistently high search rankings for a large number of relevant keywords with progressively reduced time and effort.

Chapter 5

Use Google's Comprehensive Search Analytics Report for Marketing Insights

Google's Search Queries report has now been replaced with a new and much more comprehensive Search Analytics report. As one of the most popular and useful features of Google's Webmaster Tools, the new report can provide valuable marketing insights to promote your veterinary practice more effectively online. A number of innovative features are incorporated in the new Search Analytics report, such as the ability to compare metrics in multiple regions, and the ability to compare mobile and desktop traffic.

The new report allows you to organize and review data practically any way you wish to in order to create a tailored analysis of your local search traffic according to your needs. You can even determine how your search queries and traffic have been impacted after the introduction of Google's new mobile-friendly search algorithm. In comparison to the old Search Queries tool, the new tool is more precise and intuitive. You can use the results offered by the tool to improve the search performance of your veterinary website.

Site Visibility in Search Results

With the Search Analytics report, you will be able to learn how frequently your website appears in Google search results. The tool will allow you to filter and segment data into multiple categories such as the type of search query, the date of search, and the search device used. You can evaluate how your search traffic patterns change over a period of time, where your site visitors are coming from, and what type of search queries are more likely to show your web pages in search results.

Once you know what kind of search queries are being made from mobile devices, you can use the information to improvise your mobile targeting. Search Analytics will show you which pages on your website in Google search results have the lowest and the highest CTR (click-through rates). This will enable you to take corrective action for the poorly performing pages, and capitalize on the strengths of the successful pages in a more focused manner.

Customize your Analytics Display

The Google Search Analytics tool will let you customize the type of metrics you wish to review at any given point of time. For instance, you can choose the number of clicks as a metric of importance. This will show you the count of clicks that a user made from Google search results to arrive at your website. Another important metric may be the number of impressions. This indicates the number of links pointing to your website that were visible to a user in Google search results on a given search results page.

Click-through rate or CTR is a very important metric that you may like to review in your Search Analytics report. This rate is computed by dividing the click count by the impression count. Another very useful value that the report can provide is the "Position." This refers to the average position of the highest Google search result from your website. For instance, if your website has four results showing at positions 1, 3, 7 and 9, the position will be reported as 1.

Compare Data between Values

With Google Search Analytics, you can make a comparison of the data between two precise values in any single grouping. For instance, if you have grouped the data by query, you can make a comparison between clicks achieved this month and last month, or between clicks received from two different geographical locations. A dropdown menu will be provided below the grouping categories, which will let you choose a comparison value.

The comparison ability will help you determine which queries are achieving relatively significant new activity. You can also compare the number of searches via mobile devices on your desktop site and the number of searches via mobile on your mobile site. If you have two separate sites for desktop and mobile, you can retrieve a separate search analytics report for each website. At a given point of time, you are allowed compare data in a single category.

Data Aggregation by Web Page or by Website

If you segment, compare or filter data by web page, the report will aggregate all metrics by web page. Alternatively, it will aggregate all metrics by website. In case of impressions, when aggregating by website, if the site shows twice in the search results page, it will count it as one impression. However, if you are aggregating by web page, it will count it as two impressions.

Similarly, in case of clicks, when aggregating by website, if the website shows twice in search results, and the user clicks one of the links, backs up, and then clicks the second link, it will count as one click only because the final destination is the same website.

In case of position, when data is aggregated by website, the report will show the topmost position of your site in search results. When aggregating by web page, the topmost position of the particular web page will be reported. Due to these divergent accounting approaches, the average position and CTR are higher when aggregating data by website if multiple web pages from the site show in the search results.

Search Analytics vs. Search Queries

The accuracy of the data in case of the new Google Search Analytics report is superior to that of the erstwhile Search Queries report. The computation of the data is done quite differently now. In the new report, the individual page impression counts have been merged, whereas the old Search Queries would count every

individual web page in the search results as a unique impression.

The old Search Queries report allowed data filtration by type of data, such as web, mobile, video and image. However, in the new report, the search type and the device type are separate. Data coverage in both reports is different, and the aggregate values may be different as a result. The new report counts an image click only on an expanded image, whereas the old report used to count any image click, expanded or not.

In the new Search Analytics, the data consolidation is done by using the full domain. For instance, if you own xyz.com and w.xyz.com as multiple hosts in a domain, the new report will assign impression, click and other data by the full domain name, even if it technically has multiple hosts. This way you may see the impression and click counts go down overall, but double counting will be avoided as was the case with the erstwhile Search Queries report.

   These changes ensure that the new Google Search Analytics report is more meaningful and delivers more objective information to act upon. The click count, page impressions and other metrics may show lower results in the new report, but you will be able to take more accurate and logical decisions for your veterinary SEO program for your practice.

Chapter 6

Strategies for Successful On-site Business Blogging

Many veterinarians and other professionals attempt to create a blog to improve their online exposure, but more often than not, the endeavor fizzles out at some point. It can be discouraging when you spend time and effort to create a blog post, but it does not really have readers flocking to it, as you would have expected. However, abandoning the blog is not a solution because blogging is a powerful tool to support your veterinary marketing and SEO program, and to help you build reader loyalty.

Rather than quitting, it is better to dissect the problem and identify where your blogging effort may have been going wrong. On the other hand, if you are among the ones who have yet to try blogging, it may be time to give it a serious thought. Learn about the basic rules and ideas to follow in order to build a successful veterinary blog. Remember that your prime goal is not merely to generate readership, but to achieve the desired long-term effect in terms of new visitors to your veterinary practice.

Assess the Audience Needs

Your average audience profile is likely to include potential clients who wish to seek solutions to their veterinary problems. They have doubts, queries and concerns, and every blog post that you create should be tailored to address those needs. Make sure that you provide useful information in a client-friendly language. Your blog should be targeted at the average client, and not your average peer in the veterinary field.

Use Keywords Strategically

A great veterinary blog makes sense only when your target audience gets a chance to read it. To achieve this goal, the most effective way is to focus on SEO, while creating high quality blog content. Perform detailed research with the help of the Google Keyword Planner and other tools, and use the latest and relevant localized keywords in a limited but strategic manner.

As far as possible, include a keyword in the headline or in the introductory paragraph. Add to the keyword the name of the area where your veterinary practice operates. This will ensure more exposure to your blog in local search results.

Be Creative with your Blog Titles

Studies in the past have shown that almost 80 percent of the online audience will check out a blog heading, but only about 20 percent will go further to read the body of the content. When this happens, it is clear that the blog headline was not compelling enough to excite the

readers' imagination or arouse their curiosity enough to make them check out what was in the blog.

Online readers are spoilt for choice, and they have an extremely limited attention span. Therefore, your blog headline must be compelling enough to captivate their attention and urge them to reader further. Make sure the headline is not too vague, misleading or irrelevant to the content, and yet does not give away the entire message to deflate the readers' curiosity.

Differentiate your Content

If your blog appears no different from the content that is already available over countless websites, blogs and social networks, you cannot create a niche for yourself. Choose topics that are relevant, but offer new insights, a latest piece of news or update about technology, product or procedure, or put forward a new idea that is different from the prevailing views or beliefs.

Online tools such as BuzzSumo can let you understand what type of content is likely to be appreciated more for a particular topic that you have in mind. Do not shy away from taking a different stand on controversial or debatable areas that impact the lives of your potential clients, and provide your original perspective.

Focus on Client Education

From time to time, introduce blog posts that are exclusively geared towards educating the clients about various latest developments, techniques and solutions in

the veterinary field. Provide in-depth, accurate and professional-looking information backed by adequate research, evidence and data wherever necessary.

Make use of images, videos, infographics, slide shares, and other formats to make sure such blog posts do not appear dull or bland to the readers. When you provide real value to the readers and help in their decision making process, they will attach more weight to your blog and increasingly rely on it.

Encourage Content Sharing and Distribution

As a professional, you will be able to find opportunities to syndicate your blog content with certain other leading blogs, websites and forums. This is a win-win proposition because your blog post can add value to the host website, and it can drive targeted traffic from their website to yours. Include content sharing social media buttons with every blog post, which makes it convenient for a reader to share your post instantly. Use your own social media accounts to promote your latest blog posts and multiply exposure.

Include an Effective Call to Action

You need to build an authentic, informative and relevant blog to help your audience gain new knowledge and insights. However, this must not come at the cost of ignoring your key business goal of achieving more traffic and conversions for your veterinary practice. Therefore, every blog post that you create should include a subtle but effective call to action (CTA).

The CTA should be in tandem with the blog content, and woven seamlessly towards the end of the blog post. Over time, the CTA will produce the desired effect to support the marketing goals of your veterinary practice.

Balance Quality and Quantity

Quality of every blog post must remain consistently high. No compromise can be afforded on this account because your name and the reputation of your practice are attached to it. Verify the accuracy of the information and data to ensure that your credibility remains unimpeachable. At the same time, you will have to pay attention to the volume or frequency of your blog posts.

If the posts are too few and far between, the readers are likely to lose interest. To build repeat viewership and reader loyalty, you will have to provide them with fresh content at regular intervals as frequently as possible.

Use Automation to Improve Efficiency

As a busy veterinarian, one of the challenges you are likely to face throughout your blogging activity is the paucity of time. In your journey from the germination of an idea for a blog post to publishing the post, you can use automation at a few stages to improve efficiency. You can create an advance list of probable topics, and whenever you have free time, you can prepare a pool of blog posts ready to be launched as per a defined schedule.

You may consider deploying professional marketing automation software, which can support time-intensive tasks such as resolving SEO issues. The software program may also be used to set up automated notification mails to let your subscribers know about the launch of a new blog posts. Advance scheduling and publishing of the posts can also be automated.

Professional blogging also involves active engagement with your audience. Encourage them to provide comments, feedback, and queries, and respond to them wherever necessary. A successful blog can go a long way in putting your veterinary practice on top in the local search results, and eventually make a positive impact to boost your bottom line

Chapter 7

Tips and Tools to Generate New Content Ideas for your Veterinary Website

Major Google updates in recent years have already made it clear in no uncertain terms that content overrides every other factor in today's search engine optimization strategies. The challenge is to keep creating innovative content to retain the interest of your target readers day after day, week after week, and year after year.

Whether you build a blog or write new articles for your veterinary website, the risk of becoming repetitive or stale is always going to be high. You may consider some of the following tips and tools to generate new content endlessly and maintain your veterinary website on top of search results.

Maintain a Swipe File

A swipe file is typically used by advertising and marketing professionals to keep a collection of their tested and proven ideas and content as a ready reference for future projects. You can create your own collection of resources or swipe file that you can dip into for ideas each time you are set to create new content. Make a habit

of saving interesting resources, links and articles when you are surfing the web, and add them to your collection.

You can organize your swipe file or collection with online bookmarking tools to create efficiencies in your research. Instapaper.com, GetPocket.com, Xmarks.com, Readability.com and Chill.com are some of the popular bookmarking tools that you may use. Pinterest can be used effectively to store your collection of images in a categorized manner under separate pin boards.

You can make the most out of these tools with appropriate tagging in order to make your saved content well organized and easily discoverable in accordance with your desired workflow.

Popular Content Resources

It is important to create new content that is in sync with the current news, developments and trends, and is relatable to what your target audience in general is talking about on various online communities.

Online Discussion Forums

Inbound.org, GrowthHackers.com, and Reddit.com are three popular examples of online communities where you can find excellent topics, discussions, and articles related to inbound and content marketing. Reddit has emerged as the leader among online communities, which can inspire

you with hundreds of content ideas. Stay focused and stick to sub-reddits that are relevant to your content needs to make the most out of this resource.

Specialized Search Engines

Google Scholar (scholar.google.com) is a major search engine where you can discover thousands of academic and professional articles, which you can use or cite in your content projects. HighBeam.com is a subscription-based search engine that allows you to search the web for a specific article from an academic journal, magazine or newspaper.

Ojose.com is a science-based journal search engine that will enable you to search through multiple databases with a single search query. For unique images, you can rely on CreativeCommons.org, which holds the world's largest database of free images. Topsy.com is another interesting search engine that will let you search popular stories around a particular topic.

Content Curation

Content curation is an efficient content strategy to employ if you intend to generate a significant volume of new content regularly to keep your readers engaged. It involves finding information that is relevant to your audience from a range of online sources and sharing it in a strategic manner through your established communication channels. To begin with, you can subscribe to interesting newsletters such as

MediaRedefined.com and QZ.com, apart from some recognized newsletter specific to the veterinary field.

Comprehensive content curation tools include Scoop.it and Feedly.com, which will generate highly relevant articles on your topics of interest. Storify.com is another popular free tool, which will let you browse, search or even create stories via leading social media platforms. Flipboard.com is a recommended tool, particularly if you like to read articles relevant to your interest via mobile devices. Latest.is is an innovative content curation platform that polls leading influencers for the day's top links shared on Twitter.

Tools for New Content Ideas

The following are some of the proven and highly effective online tools to draw inspiration for new and relevant content ideas for your veterinary website, articles, blogs or columns.

Quora.com

Quora is the world's most popular Q&A website that will provide you useful insights into what are the most pressing concerns, doubts, problems and queries that your target audience may be facing. Quora will allow you to provide a thorough answer to one or more questions on the specific topics of your interest or authority.

The biggest benefit of Quora is that it will provide a good sense of what your potential audiences may be interesting in reading or learning about, with particular reference to

the veterinary field or other areas. You can understand in a better way how they discuss or describe their concerns, how these problems impact them, and their basic need and emotion to resolve the issue.

Over a period of time, you will be able to develop a highly effective list of content ideas that can directly connect with your audience. Your content development efforts can be maximized and can eventually support your long-term goal to improve the traffic to your veterinary practice.

Google Trends

Google.com/Trends is a powerful tool to let you know the new and prevailing trends in consumer interests, tastes and preferences. You can get a quick overview of the current news, events, topics, people, places and cultural issues that are grabbing the world's attention at the moment. You can search for the keywords relevant to your practice, or just choose a category of your interest to the prevailing trends in that area.

By using Google Trends, you can focus your content creation in highly topical areas. The content will tend to resonate more with your readers, engage them more actively, and get them talking. Staying current will also ensure that your content does not fall into the trap of repetition or monotony, and you can continue to provide a current dimension to your articles and blog posts.

Review Sites

One of the most interesting places to find inspirational ideas for new content that will connect with your audience is online review websites. These review sites could be related to the veterinary field or even reviews related to general products and services, such as the review section of Amazon.com. The user-generated content that you can find at such sites can uncover new insights about how your target readers think and feel as consumers.

Some of the real-life experiences and stories that you may find at these review sites can give you original content ideas for your next blog post. Problem solving should be one of your key goals whenever you are creating new content for your potential clients. These reviews can sometimes inspire you to think from the reader's viewpoint, and address their issues and concerns at a more intimate level.

Use all of these tips and tools to produce content that is engaging and inspiring enough to build a more resilient connection between you and your potential clients. Most of these online tools and resources at your disposal are available free of charge. Optimize them to bring more richness and variety to your veterinary website, blog and social media posts. Your content can provide creative answers and solutions to millions of online seekers who have the power to ensure that your content gets shared all over the web, and propel your veterinary practice to the top of Google search results.

Chapter 8

Win Google's Trust to Rank among Top Search Results

In the new Google dominated search environment, while all the legitimate SEO and content building strategies remain relevant, but there is no bigger strategy than winning Google's trust. Once you recognize this and move increasingly in the direction of Google's webmaster guidelines, you will earn a sustainable place among the top three ranks on page one of Google search results.

Google's official webmaster guidelines are primarily classified into:

- ➢ Quality Guidelines
- ➢ Technical Guidelines
- ➢ Content and Design Guidelines

In essence, all the three categories are meant to drive you towards building greater trust. The more closely your veterinary website and other online promotion efforts stick to these fundamental guidelines and principles, the more Google will trust you as a high quality, dependable online information provider.

Five Primary Trust Elements in your Website

To begin with, make sure that you veterinary website has the following five primary elements in place, which are key to establishing a relationship of trust with Google.

NAP-Consistent Contact Page

Having an accurate and dedicated contact page is not only essential to create trust with your clients, but also with Google. Google has been increasingly pushing towards reducing anonymity on the Internet because it weakens credibility and allows for lack of accountability. Your contact page must be NAP-consistent across the web to achieve higher levels of credibility.

Ensure that your website contact page is indexed and has an appropriate meta-description. Provide directions to your veterinary office, and preferably use Google Maps. Include your email address, URLs of any sister websites, and links to your official social media accounts.

Comprehensive 'About Us' Page

Create a unique and effective 'About Us' page that provides an overview of your veterinary practice and your mission and vision. It should include an accurate and update bio on you and other key team members.

Images and even videos may be included in this page to introduce you and your team as well as your office to site visitors. Ensure that the 'About Us' page is indexed and includes an appropriate meta-description.

Privacy Policy

To build a trusted website, you should preferably include a dedicate web page that describes your privacy policy. You may review the model privacy policy pages of other leading websites to gain insights about its content, and then create your own page on similar lines.

If you have any professional disclosures to make, you may include them on the policy page under a separate section, or on a separate web page.

Terms and Conditions Page

Several leading veterinary websites include a legal 'Terms and Conditions' or 'Terms of Service' page, which describes the terms for a reader to use the website. The page may also include a Disclaimer of Warranty and Limitation of Liabilities. The content for this page may be drafted with the assistance of an attorney or the task may be delegated to a professional website content development company.

Sitemap

Make sure that your website includes a comprehensive sitemap that is navigable and user-friendly. It will not just allow the visitors to the site to find out relevant pages, but also be useful for the search engine crawlers while indexing various web pages. Several automated sitemap creation tools are available online, or it may be

created by the website design company that built your website.

Key Trust-Building Measures

To build a solid foundation of trust with Google, consider the following key measures for your website.

Legitimize your Link Profile

If in the past, your website has relied on inbound links from sources of doubtful credibility, it is time to perform a meticulous clean-up act. Following Google Penguin algorithmic update, Google strongly suspects websites that have a low quality or dubious link profile. Make a committed effort to remove all such links from your website, and for future, ensure that every inbound link is earned on merit alone.

Make Judicious Use of Outbound Links

When you add new articles, blogs, videos, graphics or other forms of content to your website, give appropriate credit, citation or reference to the sources or people of authority wherever it is deserved. As far as possible, include relevant outbound links in such cases to promote interconnectivity on the web. Make sure the links are relevant, and do not link out with spammy or dubious neighborhoods.

Avoid URL Redirects

Google search engine crawlers tend to dislike websites that indulge in too much re-direction because of the inferior user experience it may deliver. URL redirects will add additional delays to your page load as they tell the browser to go to another location. When insert a redirect between the HTML document and the user, it delays everything on the page because no components can be downloaded until the HTML document appears.

Limit the Use of Robots Txt

Several SEO pundits opine that overuse of robots txt file may lead to penalization from Google. It is a good idea to limit your usage of robots txt file. A recommended SEO approach would be to use de-index status for a web page, post or category rather than go for robots txt.

Worry about the Bounce Rates

One of the most important parameters that you should be of concern to you in your Google Analytics is the bounce rate of various web pages on your veterinary website. If some of the pages are attracting an unusually high bounce rate, it indicates poor reader engagement on that page.

This could be due to technical, quality, relevance or other reasons, and you need to focus your efforts on minimizing the bounce rates. Sites with reader-friendly pages that have a low average bounce rate are likely to command greater trust from Google.

Strengthen Social Media Engagement

The near-universal power and reach of social media has turned social media signals into significant ranking factors. Google cannot afford to ignore their power any longer. As a result, every leading website of some authority has gone ahead to develop a substantive social media presence.

Merely having a nominal presence on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Pinterest and Google+ will not serve your purpose from the viewpoint of building trust with Google. You need to generate strong user engagement and maintain active and dynamic multiple social media accounts.

Build a Brand Reputation

From the word go, treat your veterinary practice as a "brand" and promote it accordingly at every step. When you have a strong brand reputation, both online and offline, it will improve your trust perception dramatically. Google loves brands because it makes it easier for them to separate chalk from cheese.

You can strengthen your online branding by becoming an authority in the veterinary field. Write syndicated and guest columns, publish online papers and eBooks, create a powerful blog, and build a popular social media presence. Build engagement with sites and blogs that approved by Google News. Inbound links from such sources will boost your trust capital with Google.

To achieve a long haul win with Google, you truly need to stand the test of time and create a website of impeccable integrity from Google's perspective, and work on focused areas to emerge as an online authority and a source of top-notch credibility and trust. This will give you the edge to stay consistently among the top search results on Google page one for a variety of relevant, localized keywords. The results will eventually begin to reflect in your monthly traffic and sales revenue at your veterinary office.

A FEW WORDS FROM THE AUTHOR

Thank you for taking the time to read "A Veterinarian's Guide to Google Domination!"

The vision of Ekwa Marketing and our primary tag line is this:

Helping doctors who know where they want to go, get there!

Do you know where you want to go?

Do you even know where you are?

You'd be surprised how many doctors I talk with who really do not have answers to these simple questions. One question I ask every doctor I speak with is "Where do your new clients come from?" Many do not know.

Just as you cannot grow a beautiful garden without the right seeds, you cannot grow, thrive and dominate Google without the right information, strategies and marketing partners!

Every day, I spend time in Marketing Review and Strategy Sessions with veterinarians across the country, guiding them through the process of identifying their current practice standings, future goals and the steps they need to take to meet those goals.

My goal is for each veterinarian who crosses my path to become laser focused on growing his or her practice online. If you would like to talk about your marketing goals, give me a call! I may be reached directly at 877 279-3316, Extension 808. I'm also available via email at naren@ekwa.com.

I look forward to speaking with you soon!

Naren Arulrajah, Founder and CEO, www.ekwa.com

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Naren Arulrajah, President & CEO Ekwa Marketing
As a serial entrepreneur, who built Bizymoms.com, Ekwa Marketing (ekwa.com)and doctorschoiceawards.orginto large companies, Naren has learned lessons in both Internet marketing and entrepreneurship. Building a company with over 160 staff based around the world, learning the secrets of successful entrepreneurship, and dealing with some of the most sought after professionals in the US and UK was not served to Naren on a silver platter. He built his companies without any financial backing or support and learned the secrets of being successful while starting from beyond rock bottom.

Naren not only runs and manages his own companies, but he is also sought after by many of his clients as a consultant to their own businesses. He is passionate about sharing his lessons of success with others and has helped many veterinarians achieve their financial and practice goals.

Today, Ekwa Marketing helps veterinary, dental and healthcare practices grow their business by generating long-term, measurable results. Through Naren's vision and insight many, individual professionals have grown their business by upwards of one million dollars per year over a 3 year period.

Naren is a proud work at home father. He lives in Mississauga, Ontario with his wife and two beautiful daughters. He enjoys building lasting companies and helping others realize business success. Naren believes either you change the world or the world changes you. He loves to travel with his family, and has personally traveled to 30 states and 15 countries across Asia, Europe and the Far East.

Naren is also available for live speaking engagements before an audience of doctors, veterinarians, surgeons or other medical specialists. **Call 877-249-9666 today to speak to Naren directly.** Ask him about your practice marketing, or book him for your next event and share Entrepreneurial Passion and Life Changing Ideas with your Organization or Group!

Vikas Vij, Senior Marketing Communication Specialist for Ekwa Marketing

Vikas supports the company's CEO and marketing team through research, creative writing, professional publication and social media engagement. Vikas has been with Ekwa Marketing for over seven years. When not working, Vikas enjoys reading and spending time with his family in New Delhi.

TESTIMONIALS AND OFFERS

9 out of 10!

"I give my new website a 9 out of 10. It looks great! Ekwa teams did a great job!"

Dr. Rand Spongeberg
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Jeff Herman, Administrator, P.A.
www.meyerlandanimalclinic.com

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