



10 Strategic for Patient-Producing

All dentists want to increase awareness of their practice within the community.

Research consistently shows that postcards are the most predictively successful external marketing strategy, so chances are you've considered developing one yourself—or maybe you're already mailing out thousands.

How do you know if your postcard design is bringing in all the new patients it could?

Ask the team at DentalMarketing.net, a Utah-based consulting firm exclusively for dentists that helps practices maximize returns and responses to postcards. By leveraging more than 50 key data points, constantly interviewing thousands of doctors and industry experts, and examining results accumulated from mailing millions of postcards every month, DentalMarketing.net formulates effective, research-based postcard marketing.

You've likely seen a postcard similar to the one at right in your mailbox—but can you identify the places where it could be significantly improved? The experts at DentalMarketing.net shared their insights on how a good-looking postcard might be made even better.

Craft a compelling headline

This isn't bad, but consider using numbers, making the headline more specific, using negative words and having two parts (for example: "30 years of experience never hurt / Your 23-point free consultation ensures you get the right treatment for your best smile"). Engage readers by answering their questions.

Discuss the details

If these are good types of promotions for the practice, try to make them look more clearly like offers. Consider using offer headlines such as "FREE 23-Point Dental Consultation (includes FREE X-Rays)" and a smaller "Learn what treatment is best for your needs."

Be sure to explain the value proposition and include prominent expiration dates, amount saved, and full price of services without the offers.



Insights <<<

Postcards

Add more faces

Instead of having only this family picture, consider adding some testimonials that include each person's photo, name and city (as well as a star rating, if applicable).



Say something important

Use some of the space at the base of the family photo to make the award logo more prominent. Then add text from a strong review to the designation, and the corresponding endorsement of the practice that connects with the award.

by Shawn Rowbotham



Shawn Rowbotham is senior director of DentalMarketing.net, a leading consulting firm for dental direct mail marketing.

DentalMarketing.net's postcard marketing services include proven designs, targeted demographics, staff training and fully trackable campaigns.

Rowbotham, who has been involved in marketing and sales for over 25 years, also co-founded an automated customer feedback company that operates in more than 125 countries, and an advertising agency and promotional offers firm.

Reconsider the map

Only use a map if it's necessary! If you do include a map, include major landmarks and keep the design simple and effective. Often, this space could be better used for copy.

Add specifics

Change the headline from "Come Meet Our..." to "Meet Our Award-Winning Team"—then cite which award you're referring to and, if possible, include its badge or logo.

Get picture-perfect

Make sure everyone in the staff photo is photogenic and the pose isn't too stuffy—aim for something that's playful and relaxed, yet professional and inviting. Make sure the photo is high-resolution!

If a photo doesn't make sense, try adding another testimonial or a short invitation from the doctors that reinforces their credibility. Do they have years of additional training and specialization? Are they board-certified (and is there a logo that could be included)?



Go double-or-nothing

You could include this offer here ... but it would be more effective to either duplicate the offers from the front of the card, or use this space for other items such as information about accepted payment and insurance plans or patient testimonials.

Stay short and succinct

Shorten the bullet list to six items at most. Keep only those that are unique to the practice and are the most beneficial to the patient.

Organize elements efficiently

Make sure nothing takes up more space than needed. Moving the practice name and mailing address to the mailing block area would make the information easier to find and free up real estate here for more items such as testimonials, payment info, etc.

- Use a compelling, brief tagline, such as "Your solution for a beautiful smile!"
- Add a phrase like "Convenient early and late appointment times available" near the phone number, and make sure to include it on both sides of the card. ■