

5 Marketing Growth Hacks For HEALTHCARE PRACTICES



“ According to a Think with Google study, **84% of patients use both online and offline sources for healthcare research.**”

Growing your healthcare practice comes with its fair share of challenges. As a heavily regulated industry with HIPAA compliance and FDA restrictions around every corner, it can be difficult to employ the latest and greatest marketing strategies, without fear that you'll encounter some type of violation.

But failing to connect with an ever-growing population of tech-savvy patients could absolutely stall your growth and put your practice in danger of failing.

That's why it's important for healthcare administrators to know how to use digital marketing **appropriately** to grow their practice.

These 5 digital marketing growth hacks are designed to do just that: grow your healthcare practice quickly and easily, while still adhering to the many regulations that surround the healthcare industry.



MAKE YOUR
PRACTICE
SOCIAL





“ Social media is now the #1 driver of all website referral traffic – Shareaholic.

It wasn't too long ago that most medical professionals wrote off social media as being irrelevant to their profession.

Times have surely changed.

Doctors such as Kevin Pho, MD (@kevinmd), Mike Sevilla, MD (@drmikesevilla) and Val Jones, MD (@drval) have all amassed giant social followings, which, in your instance, could equate to more patients.

Now that social media has become a respected form of digital marketing, many theorists and strategists have offered their own take on what approach is the most effective for growing your audience.

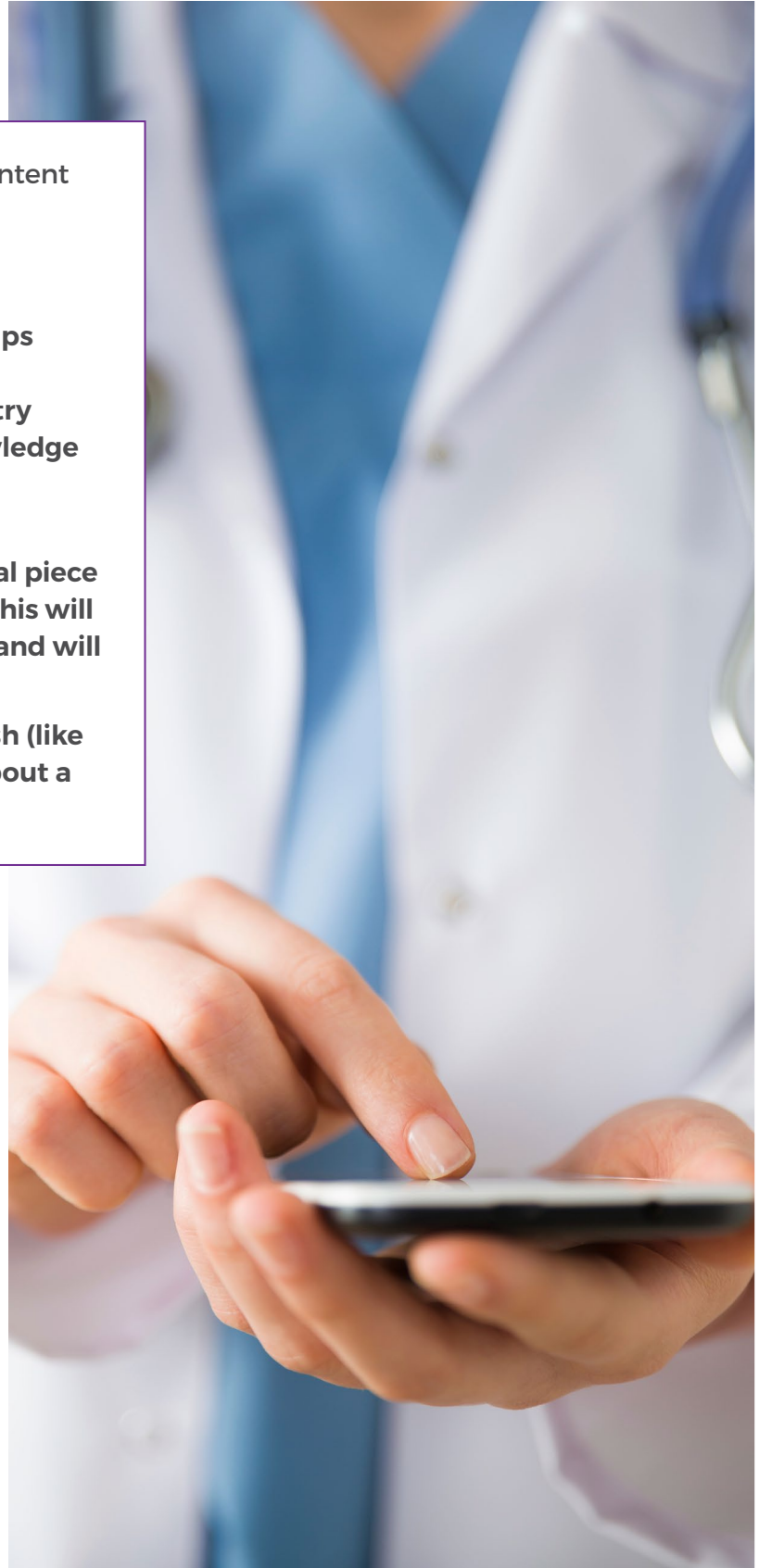
But likely the most effective approach for healthcare professionals is the 4-1-1 strategy.

With this strategy, for every six pieces of content you share on social media platforms:

- **Four should be content, from industry influencers, that your audiences would benefit from reading. This approach helps you build credibility with your patients, while placing you on the radar of industry influencers. If these influencers acknowledge your social share, you're on your way to building a following.**
- **One piece will be an original, educational piece of content you produced on your own. This will help you stand out as a thought leader, and will bring traffic back to your site.**
- **One piece should be a sales-related push (like a press release, or an announcement about a new service your practice offers).**

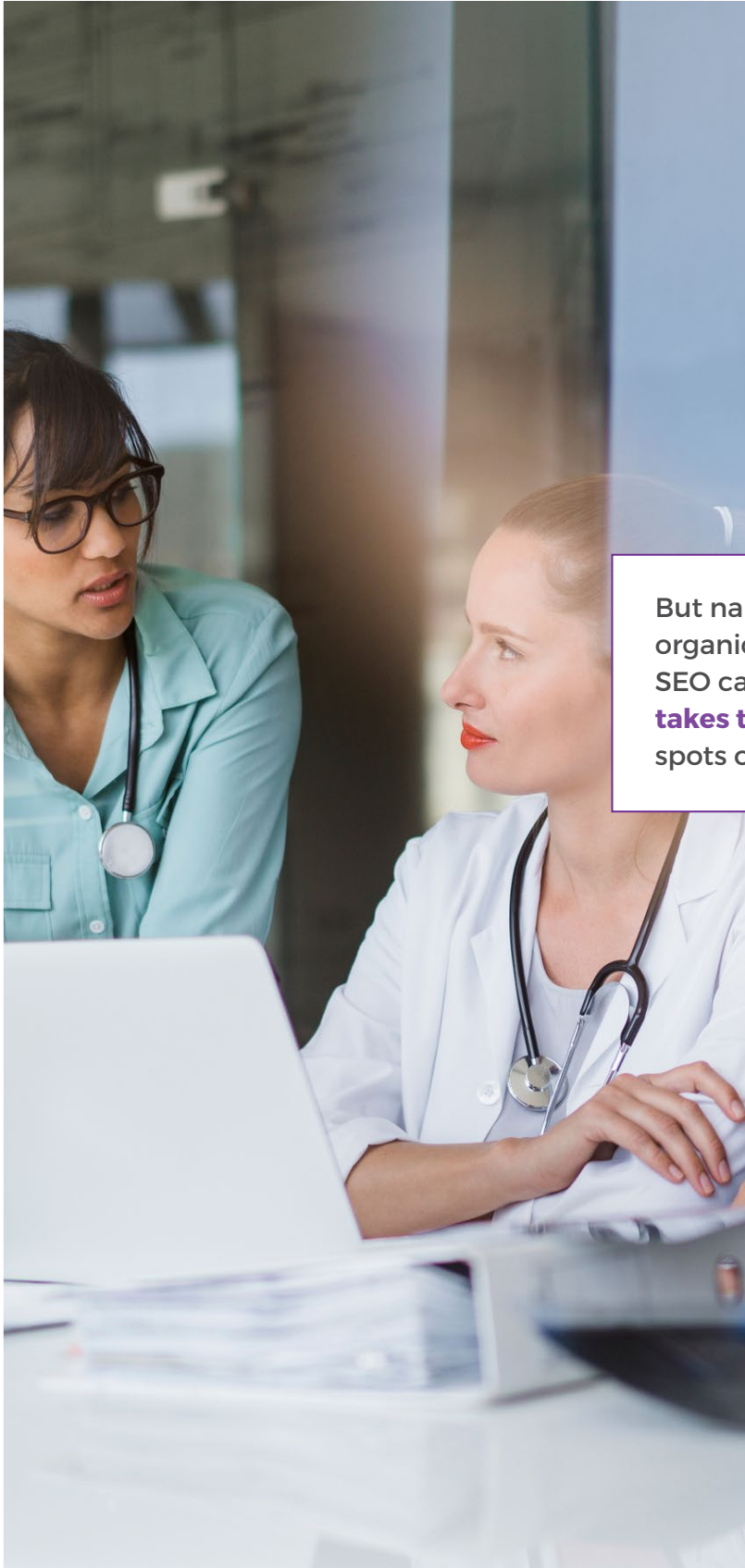
Most folks roll their eyes when they're told they have to invest energy in social media. But the 4-1-1 strategy helps relieve you of some of the workload of creating content. More times than not, all you have to do is find and promote **other** people's content.

Finding high-quality content doesn't even have to be that time consuming. Using an app like feedly, Hootsuite, or BuzzSumo can make it simple to narrow your search to certain topics, keywords or sources. Then it's just a matter of promoting that content across your social platforms. ❖



COMPLEMENT
YOUR SEO WITH
PAID SEARCH
ADVERTISING





“ Businesses make, on average, **\$3 in revenue for every \$1.60** they spend on AdWords.

If your practice owned the first three spots on a search engine results page for one of your target keywords, you'd be golden, right?

But nabbing **one** spot, let alone three, with organic SEO is a challenge. When done correctly, SEO can have long-lasting benefits, but this tactic **takes time**, and likely will only give you one or two spots on the SERPs.

But you can actually dominate, and monopolize, results pages for key terms by using paid search advertising. Here's how:

- **First, you need to perform an audit to determine your best performing keywords, as a result of your existing SEO efforts. Then rank these keywords based on traffic and conversions so that you don't waste time investing in keywords that don't offer a high ROI.**
- **Next, launch fairly aggressive paid search campaigns on your best performing words. By combining paid ads with organic SEO, you'll dominate the results pages for these terms, which should result in an increase in clicks and conversions. ❖**

GET YOUR PRACTICE ON THE RADAR OF LOCAL INFLUENCERS





Work
smart,
not
hard.

While most of the time, you'll want to be the one in control of your digital marketing strategy, there is a way for you to share the workload with others as well.

The community where your practice is located surely has local bloggers, newspapers, magazines and, perhaps, news stations, all of whom are on the constant hunt for **local news**.

Feel-good community news (such as fundraisers, charity events, etc.) are always popular topics to cover. If you want to get free and positive press about your practice, get involved in these local events.

Whether you offer your clinic as home base for a canned food drive, sponsor an event, or provide free consultations, the local media will surely cover that event and, in turn, promote your practice.

This type of media coverage brings brand recognition to your practice, but it also boosts your rankings because of the mentions and links to your practice coming from high-traffic websites such as a local newspaper. ❖

GET YOUR STAFF
EXCITED IN OB-
TAINING PATIENT
REVIEWS



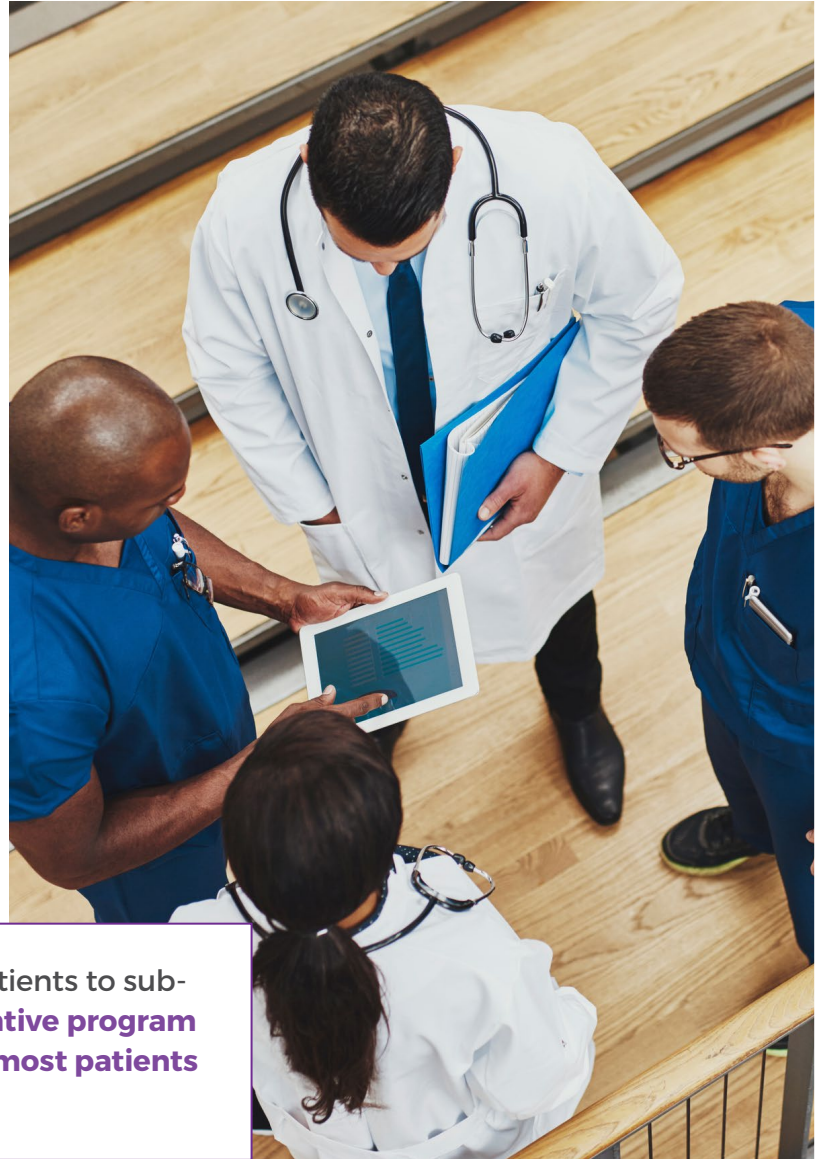
“ 88% of consumers trust online reviews as much as peer recommendations.

Online reviews play an enormous role on whether a prospective patient will come to your practice or not.

Rating sites, like Yelp or Healthgrades, give your prospects a glimpse into your practice, before they even step foot through your door. Making sure you have positive, constructive reviews and ratings are a key toward growing your practice.

While you can't prevent patients from posting negative comments, you can counter those blemishes with an overwhelming number of positive reviews.

Here's how to get more of your satisfied patients to submit reviews on your behalf: **create an incentive program that rewards staff members who get the most patients to leave online reviews.**



The incentive could be a paid day off, or a free lunch, or a donation made to a charity of that employee's choice. You might want to ask your staff what a good incentive would be, so that they're even more invested in the game.

What you'll find is that this program will create friendly competition among your staff members, as they each look for ways to encourage more patient reviews.

But a word to the wise: the only way to make this hack work for you is to make sure your staff knows the proper – and legal – ways to solicit reviews.

For example, offering to exchange services for a review is not okay. Paying the patient to make a review is also not acceptable.

More times than not, all it takes is a friendly conversation, or a take-home handout, to remind your patients that they have the opportunity to support the work you do. ❖

GET YOUR
PATIENTS
INVOLVED!





“ 92% of consumers trust the recommendations of friends and family above all other forms of advertising. – Nielsen

Perhaps the single most important factor in your marketing success is your current patients. A happy patient is far more likely to recommend you to a friend, so the key here is to get those happy patients to do your marketing for you.

Other businesses benefit from being able to use referral programs. A mechanic, for example, could offer customers a free oil change for every new customer they recommend.

You can't really do that in the healthcare field. It's not only illogical, but it's also highly unethical.

So, rather than design a referral program, you could create a referral **strategy**, where your staff is trained to know how to tactfully encourage patients to recommend you to their friends and family.

This could be something as simple as formulating an elevator pitch to be used when a patient is ready to be discharged, or it could be something more involved, such as the creation of flyers and posters that highlight the importance of patient referrals.

Whichever way you go about it, don't overlook the importance your current patients have on the growth of your business. ❖

A close-up photograph of a male doctor with a goatee, wearing blue scrubs and a stethoscope. He is looking down at a device, likely a tablet or smartphone, which is out of focus in the foreground. The background is a bright, blurred clinical setting.

FOR LONG-TERM GROWTH, TEST OUT EACH OF THESE HACKS

By definition, a growth hack is designed to grow your practice quickly, without much effort on your part.

But this flash-in-the-pan approach can quickly go flat if you don't know how to sustain success. Each of these hacks focus on a different component of digital marketing: social media, paid media, reputation management and so on. If you want to enjoy long-term and consistent growth, it's key to employ each of these hacks.

While you might consider staggering each strategy, so as not to overburden your resources, your inevitable goal should be to ensure you're addressing every facet of digital marketing and, in turn, every channel in which your target audience dedicates time.

Do that, and you'll be well on your way to a healthy and successful healthcare practice.

If you need further elaboration on anything discussed please reach out: www.CardinalWebSolutions.com