

PRACTICE IN THE SPOTLIGHT

DERMATOLOGY AND LASER CENTER OF CHARLESTON

Enhancing the Practice of Medicine with Social Media

BY: KATE CROSBY

Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, LinkedIn, and more. The social media choices available today are limitless, which can be intimidating to anyone in deciding which tactics would be most useful for their business, and the practice of medicine is no different. Yet, with many physician practices now catching on to the trend of social media, mostly due to it being a virtually free way to advertise and because of its proven track record of success, it's becoming a necessary element to remain successful in a competitive market. Whether a beginner or a social media guru, the social media success from the Dermatology and Laser Center of Charleston provides helpful insight, and most of all, proves that social media does enhance the practice of medicine.

Embrace Social Media

Dr. Todd Schlesinger, director of the Dermatology and Laser Center of Charleston, realized the benefits of social media from early on. When initially mentioning the use of social media to his practice manager, he received some resistance, but she quickly admitted it was absolutely

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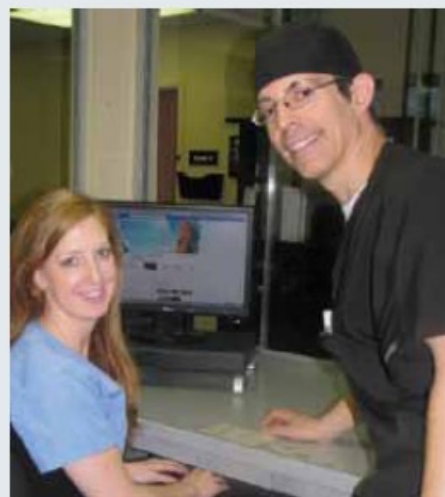
At the Dermatology and Laser Center, all patients are given a follow-up survey after their visits, and more and more patients are saying that they heard about the practice through the website and social media tactics. According to data, over 600 patients have responded to the survey and at least 50% are now following the practice on Facebook and Twitter, which allows the patient to get to know the practice on a continuous, more personal level.

Be Innovative

A large part of the success of the Dermatology and Laser Center of Charleston's social media tactics is due to innovative thinking of Jennie Fiechtl, staff member responsible for social media and marketing.

Two of their newest social media outlets include Pinterest and YouTube. On Pinterest, Jennie has created product boards labeled with skin type where the practice "pins" recommended products and skin care regimens based on your skin type. And on YouTube, they will be posting patient testimonials and "how-to" videos that reiterate follow-up care for procedures such as dermabrasion.

"Social media provides a level of warmth, and to be able to connect with the upcoming generation of patients, you have to be willing to be innovative and adaptive," said Dr. Schlesinger.



Jennie Fiechtl and Dr. Todd Schlesinger.

Nurture Your Relationships

It's one thing to be present on social media and to be innovative, but according to Jennie, the most important component is maintaining and nurturing your relationships.

"One element people most often forget is that you have to interact--- it is crucial to comment and respond to your followers," said Jennie. "By blocking out just 5-10 minutes of your day to interact with people, you are able to nurture your online relationships, which only enhances them offline."

The practice has found that social media has been worth the effort as patient feedback and communication has increased ten-fold since first utilizing online communications. However, they still maintain a healthy balance of electronic and print communications. "You have to maintain a healthy balance," said Jennie. "Everyone is not to the point yet where they only communicate by electronic means. There is still some resistance to online media and you have to embrace everyone, online and offline, to be successful."

About the Dermatology and Laser Center

The Dermatology and Laser Center of Charleston is a full-service dermatology practice offering the latest advances in medical and cosmetic dermatology, as well as relaxation therapies through the MediaSpa®. You can follow the Derm and Laser Center on the following social media outlets: Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Pinterest, YouTube, Foursquare, GooglePlaces, and Google+. 📍

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—Todd Schlesinger, MD



necessary. Now with multiple successes due to social media, the whole practice is seeing the benefits of utilizing it as a way to communicate.

"It is important for physicians to be on social media because our patients are there," said Dr. Schlesinger. "Social media