



FOR YOUR PRACTICE

The Doctor's Ideal Digital Footprint

By Megan Driscoll

Successful aesthetics practices often have one major component in common—a solid digital presence. Whether it be a website or a social media platform (preferably both), doctors are using digital in clever ways to communicate with patients, share information and promote their practice.

The possibilities are limitless. This is why it's always good to have an idea of what you want your digital presence, or footprint, to look like. You also want a plan for how you will make that happen. It's easy to get lost in the digital space. I want to offer you a little guidance.

The first question to ask yourself is, what is your goal? Some doctors want to keep it simple with a website that gives information on their practice and services. That's all well and good, but give it some depth and add some video testimonials from satisfied patients. Quotes that you post on your site are nice, but seeing the patient actually sing your praises on your site adds a level of sincerity and believability for the visitor that can lead to more business.

Many doctors want to go a step further and get a conversation going. This is where social media comes in handy. It operates in real time, it has broad reach and it can introduce your practice to an audience that traditional marketing might not identify or reach.

There are a number of different social platforms, and the one that works best can often depend on what you are looking to get out of it. Facebook is by far the world's most popular social media platform, with over two billion monthly users. Plastic surgeon and ASAPS Member Dr. Anthony Youn uses Facebook (@dryoun) to share widely viewed videos of the procedures he performs. He also

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posts regularly to his 46,000 followers about pre-surgery prep and post-surgery recovery, skin care tips and information on maintaining a healthy diet and lifestyle.

Another plastic surgeon and ASAPS Member, Dr. Matthew Schulman, has found great success on Snapchat (@nycplasticsurg). "Snapchat is no longer only the domain of teenagers sending bathroom selfies," Schulman points out on his website. He has used the platform to post before-and-after videos of procedures he has performed, and he has seen a sharp rise in surgical bookings from Snapchat followers as a result. It's a clever use of the platform's disposable content.

Twitter is great for starting conversations and sharing important information. Dermatologist Dr. Dendy Engelman (@DendyEngelman) uses Twitter to talk about skin care products and techniques that have worked for her patients. She offers recommendations and shatters myths, and shares content from her website that includes in-depth articles and press hits. She also takes time to give a birthday shout out or share a fun video.

Speaking of sharing fun content, physicians on social media don't get much more light hearted than plastic surgeon Dr. Michael Salzhauser, a.k.a. Dr. Miami. Salzhauser's Instagram (@therealdrmiami) has almost 650,000 followers, and you can see why after a quick pass through his page. He offers a variety of humorous and quirky images and videos. Mixed in with all that, though, are some serious tips beauty tips, cross-promotion with his other digital platforms and information on his practice.

All these doctors and others who are digitally engaged share some great online habits in common.

- Post regularly. There may not be time to do it every day, but don't let too much time go by without adding something. Be consistent and post on specific days each week.
- Speak about the information that is relevant to your practice and keep it fresh. Patients will look to you for advice, so let them know you are plugged in to the latest trends and developments.
- Link your digital platforms together. Some of your social media posts should link back to your website and vice versa. This allows you to share information with a variety of followers that speaks to their needs.
- Start conversations and ask questions. Get people involved. Let them know you're listening to what's on their minds.
- Use video. It's a great way to demonstrate a procedure and share patient testimonials.
- Don't confuse the promotional with the educational. Doctors have the freedom to discuss on- and off-label uses of products and give reviews. But don't let yourself become a salesperson. Always have the best interest of your patients in mind.
- Don't get involved in arguments on social media. If you have a disagreement with another physician's take on a procedure, product or service, take the high road. Protect your patients and your practice. Don't make it personal, and don't get into an online fight. Nobody wins.
- Add some color and personality to your content. Funny videos, jokes and off-topic content like vacation spots or good books are always welcome when tastefully done. It makes you human, and it is a great digital representation of a good bedside manner.

If you haven't already done so, there is no time like the present to get started establishing your digital footprint. It's okay to start small. Just remember the tips I've mentioned here. You will discover very quickly how enjoyable and rewarding it can be to take part in an online conversation about your practice. And your practice can benefit as a result.

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