As the old saying goes, you shouldn’t put all of your eggs in one basket. Likewise, you shouldn’t stick to just one marketing strategy for your practice, either. Incorporate different elements into your strategy for the best return on your investment.

Below are 50 different ways you can market your practice, grouped by type of effort (including SEO, community outreach, patient communication, etc.). As you read, you’ll find that a lot of these items are interconnected and work very well when combined.

We’re certainly not suggesting that you go out and try all 50 at once (although more power to you if you have the time and resources to do so!). However, this list should give you some ideas of what you can incorporate into your marketing strategy. We’ve also updated this list to give you an idea of the effort and cost it will take to implement all of these suggestions, so you can prioritize your strategy that way.

We hope these suggestions put you well on your way to developing a solid and scalable marketing strategy for your medical practice.

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Section 1: Optimize Your Web Presence

Your web presence is the “home base” of your marketing efforts. Even if patients don’t initially hear about your practice online, they are likely to go online to learn more about you. For that reason, it’s important to optimize your web presence to ensure patients are able to find you and get the information they need.

1. Get a website to serve as a central hub of information about your practice.

According to Pew Research Center, 72% of U.S. adults have searched for health information online. This means that if you want to attract new patients, you’ll need to market yourself online. There are lots of different ways you can market yourself online, as you’ll see below, but all of those marketing efforts need to point to one central location, or hub: your website. Don’t have a website? You’ll definitely want to get one if you want to be able to compete with other practices in your area.

Your website is the one location that you can always drive patients to with any of your marketing efforts to give more information. Since it is online, it should also be fairly easy for you to update information about your practice as needed, either through a content management system or your web provider. Though a professional, well-built website is a more costly investment upfront, it will pay off in the long run.

**Effort:** High in the initial setup, but lower-effort after launch if you have the right solution in place.

**Cost:** Initial costs can be higher, but a future-proof website solution (like P3 Publish) can help offset future costs.

2. Make sure your website is mobile-friendly to attract patients on mobile devices.

Not only do you need to have a website, you also need to make sure it’s mobile-friendly. Is it easy to navigate your site on a smartphone or tablet? If not, it’s time to consider getting a responsive, mobile-friendly site. Google has been issuing warnings to sites that aren’t mobile-friendly, saying that these sites may not rank well in search results. We’ve built nearly 1,000 healthcare practice websites at P3 Inbound. Across all of our websites, we’ve seen an average of 40% of a
practice’s online traffic come from mobile phones and tablets. This percentage is often higher in larger metropolitan areas. You certainly don’t want to miss out on that much traffic.

Depending on when your current website was built, you may already have a solution in place for mobile. If you aren’t sure, we definitely recommend checking with your web provider. If you’re considering redesigning or upgrading your website, you should also make sure that web provider has a plan for mobile. The best option is to use a web provider that uses responsive design, as this will allow your website to adapt to a wide range of screen sizes, auto-fitting the content so that your patients always get the best experience.

**Effort:** The amount of effort needed can range based on the age of your website and current platform. We recommend choosing a provider that understands responsive design to help reduce the effort needed to keep your website mobile-friendly.

**Cost:** A mobile-friendly design can be costly if you don’t currently have a good solution in place. Though it may cost more upfront, we recommend moving to a responsive website design to better “future-proof” your website as screen sizes change.

### 3. Implement SEO best practices to improve your ranking in search engines.

Search engines are constantly evolving, and in order to get a favorable spot in search results, you need to follow the best practices of search engine optimization (SEO). Unfortunately, there are no shortcuts to get to the top of search results, but taking the time to correctly implement SEO practices can pay off in the long run.

Weed out things like low-quality or duplicate content, and avoid using spam tactics like keyword stuffing and link scheming. A good SEO strategy should focus on quality content, local listings, and other, more technical optimization. To really improve your SEO strategy, it’s a good idea to work with someone who specializes in SEO. By working with an expert, you can improve SEO and develop a plan to keep your website optimized as you add and update content.

**Effort:** The amount of effort can really range based on what you need. Some SEO best practices are a quick fix, but others (like content writing) will require more in-depth work.

**Cost:** Costs for SEO work can also vary based on what you need. In general, the more in-depth the work, the higher the cost.
4. Create custom content for your website to attract patients seeking specific procedures & services.

Quality custom content should be a part of your SEO plan. You can create custom content to inform patients about your practice, qualifications, procedures, and services. Some practices write this content themselves, but you can also pay a content to help you put content together. Quality content is an important factor in search engine ranking. It shows that you are knowledgeable and an expert in your field, which improves your chances of ranking for relevant searches. For example, a page that explains your expertise in hip replacement and answers common patient questions will improve your chances of showing up in search results when local patients search for a hip replacement surgeon.

Don’t try any of the “shortcut” tactics we mentioned in #3, though—they could actually hurt your chances of ranking. Instead, create content with your patients in mind; what information do they want and need to know? Search engines are now intuitive enough to figure out whether or not you are providing quality information, so stuffing the content with the keywords you want won’t work. However, if you have well-written content with accurate, descriptive information, search engines will recognize it and award you with better ranking.

**Effort:** If your practice plans on writing the content, you will need to dedicate at least a few hours per page to make sure the information is thorough and easy-to-read. Hiring a content writer can reduce the amount of effort needed on your part.

**Cost:** You can keep costs down by writing the content yourself. If you want to hire a content writer, an experienced content writing service is more of an investment. For example, our content writing packages start at $4,500 for four pages. However, if you are going to pay, it’s paying more money to invest in a content writing service that understands medical practices and the latest SEO standards so that you get an end product that will actually help you achieve your goals.

5. Claim your local listings to help patients find your practice.

Once a patient has decided to schedule an appointment with your practice, he or she will need to know where to find you. This is where local listings come in. If you claim and verify your local listings in search engines like Google, Bing, and Yahoo, these search engines will display that information when patients in
your area search for you. If your listing doesn’t show up, or your listing information is incorrect, your new patients may have a hard time finding you and get frustrated.

This is something that your practice can manage in-house, if desired. It does take some effort upfront to get all of your listings claimed and up to date, but maintenance is fairly simple once you get that done. You’ll really only need to check in if you need to change something, or if you get a notification about a user-submitted change. Although many listing services are free, you can also use a paid service if you don’t feel your office has the time to keep up. Automated services like Moz Local and BrightLocal allow you to make changes in one place, then push those changes out to several major online directories at once. You can also have a marketing company completely handle management of your listings. This is a service we offer for all of our client on our P3 Publish platform.

**Effort:** If you’re managing your listings in-house, it will require some ongoing effort on your part, but listing maintenance will generally not require much of your time. If you use a paid service for listing management, your required effort will be even less.

**Cost:** Most listing services like Google and Bing maps are free to use. Automated services like Moz Local and BrightLocal can start as low as $99/year, depending on how many locations you have. Paying marketing companies to manage your listings will typically require a monthly fee, but you’ll get more personal attention to your listings if you go this route.

### 6. Optimize your local listings so patients can quickly find the important details about your practice.

Once your listing is claimed and verified, don’t stop there! Fill out as much information as possible to make your listing stand out and improve your chances of showing up in search results. Currently, Google only shows 3 map listings on the first page of search results (and sometimes includes an advertisement for a fourth listing), so it’s important to optimize your listings as much as possible to get that prime placement in the map results.

Add photos of your practice, fill out hours and specialties, and add a short description about your practice. The more information you can give, the better. Google My Business is also constantly rolling out features like user-submitted Q&A functionality, so make sure you stay on top of the latest online
SECTION 1: OPTIMIZE YOUR WEB PRESENCE

listing features so that you can be prepared.

**Effort:** It will take a bit of effort to optimize your listings and keep up with responses to user-submitted features like Q&A. However, you can also outsource some of this work to a marketing company to ensure your practice stays on top of the latest features.

**Cost:** If you do this in-house, it won’t cost your practice anything. If you outsource this work to a marketing company, you can expect to pay a monthly fee.

7. Regularly update your website so patients can always get the latest information about your practice.

If your website contains old, outdated information and potential patients can’t find the information they are looking for, they may get frustrated and move on. It’s important to check for updates periodically to avoid this frustration. If your website has a content management system, it should be relatively easy to make updates to your content. If you aren’t able to make updates on your own, you may have to pay your web developer to make those updates.

In addition to keeping your website content up to date, you also need to keep your site up to speed with the latest technology. If your site is very old, it may not be up to date with all of the latest security and functionality standards. This can create more frustration or distrust among your patients, and may eventually cause you to lose search engine ranking. In fact, Google Chrome has started marking non-secured websites as “Not Secure” in the browser bar. We suggest going with a website platform that regularly rolls out updates so that your practice’s website always utilizes the latest technology available.

**Effort:** If you haven’t updated your website in a long time, it may take a good deal of effort to get it up to speed. If you regularly check for updates, you won’t need to spend as much time making updates all at once.

**Cost:** If your practice’s website has a content management system, updating your content shouldn’t cost you any additional money. If you have your web developer make changes, that will likely incur some type of fee. If you need more technical updates, like an SSL certificate or other security features, your costs
SECTION 1: OPTIMIZE YOUR WEB PRESENCE

could be higher, depending on what is required of your web developer to make those changes.

8. Start a blog to share helpful tips and information with your patients on your website.

Blogs are a great way to continue adding content to your website on a regular basis. This content should differ from your other website content (see #4). Rather than explaining your procedures and services, you can give health tips (#16), talk about innovations in healthcare, give injury prevention tips, or any other relevant topics your audience would be interested in.

Blogging is more of an advanced strategy we’d recommend trying after tackling things like mobile-friendliness, SEO, and improving other content throughout your website. In order for your blog to be successful, you’ll need to tackle these things first.

**Effort:** A blog can take a considerable amount of effort for your office to maintain. You can hire content writers to help you write your blog content, which would reduce the amount of effort required.

**Cost:** If your website doesn’t currently have a blog or an easy way to publish content, you may need to budget more upfront to have that functionality added to your website. These costs can range quite a lot depending on your website platform. Hiring content writers will also add to your costs.

9. Help your patients find your website so they know you have an online presence.

This one’s pretty simple: If you have a website or are on social media, let your patients know! They won’t know to look for you if they don’t know you’re out there! Put up “Find us on Facebook” or “Visit our website” signs in your office, and include that information in your marketing materials, too.

**Effort:** This is a fairly low-effort, easy way to remind patients about your web presence.

**Cost:** Unless you have to reprint marketing materials or redesign ads, this is a low-cost way to let patients know about your website.
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10. Use review sites like HealthGrades and RateMDs to establish your reputation online.

Review sites like HealthGrades and RateMDs are becoming increasingly popular among patients. Current or former patients can leave reviews about the quality of care they received at your practice, and new patients will often look at those reviews when researching to find a new doctor. Online reviews are even becoming more prevalent in search results, and may also factor into your search ranking.

If you don’t have time to solicit reviews from patients, you can use a service like our Reputation Marketing offering to collect reviews from patients in-office and post those reviews to key review sites.

**Effort:** If your office manages your online reviews without the help of any outside tools or companies, you’ll need to put in a considerable amount of effort to keep up. Services like our Reputation Marketing offering can greatly reduce the amount of effort on your practice.

**Cost:** Claiming and maintaining online review profiles is free. If you choose to use a Reputation Marketing company to manage your online reviews, costs can start around $600/month. However, if online reviews are an issue for your practice, it’s worth budgeting for a professional service to help you.

11. Respond to online comments & reviews to show patients that you care about what they have to say.

Review sites and social media pages allow other users to leave reviews and comment on your posts. Don’t just ignore those comments! This opens up the door for you to engage with your patients. It could be as simple as thanking a patient for a positive review, or you could engage in a conversation.

You shouldn’t ignore negative reviews, either. Respond in a professional, well-thought-out way, and provide a way for the patient to resolve the issue with you offline. Even if you have some negative responses, if other potential patients see that you have taken the time to address those concerns, it could help to quell some doubts about your practice. Our Reputation Marketing service even helps you keep track of negative reviews, so that you can respond right away.
 SECTION 1: OPTIMIZE YOUR WEB PRESENCE

Effort: Depending on the amount of responses you get, this could be a high-effort undertaking. However, it’s worth the effort if people are responding to your posts—it means you’re doing a good job with your social media. Also, responding to negative reviews shows patients that you care about their experience.

Cost: Responding to posts and reviews won’t cost you anything.

12. Get patient testimonials to reinforce your marketing messages.

Patient testimonials are a great addition for your website. Testimonials show the success stories of patients under your care, which can be reassuring to new patients. You can make it easy for patients to submit testimonials via a form on your website. We also recommend placing relevant quotes from your testimonials throughout your website and marketing materials to reinforce your marketing (just make sure you have the right permissions in place with your patients before doing so).

Effort: You’ll need to monitor your testimonials and take some time to find the right quotes to use in other marketing content, but overall, this is low-effort on your practice’s part.

Cost: If your website doesn’t have the capability to allow for testimonial submissions, you’ll probably need to pay your web developer to get that set up. However, it’s typically the most cost-effective and time-conscious way to collect and share patient testimonials on your website.
Section 2: Patient Experience & Communication

By improving your communication with current patients and working to provide the best experience possible, you can make a lasting impression. When patients are happy with your practice, they will recommend you to friends and family who need your services. Word-of-mouth is a powerful tool, and the right patient experience and communication efforts can ensure that your patients will sing your praises.

13. Try out email marketing to stay in touch with your patients on a regular basis.

Email marketing is a great way to communicate with your patients and can be very beneficial to your practice. You can use email to send out routine information like appointment reminders, but you can also use email to send out marketing materials like newsletters (#15), upcoming events, or health tips (#16). When your patients opt-in to email newsletters or health tips, it gives you another way to keep communicating with your patients even if they don’t need to visit your office regularly (just be sure to remove them from your lists if they request to be removed).

Email marketing systems like Constant Contact and MailChimp also allow you to target your audience so you only send emails to people who can use the information you are sending out, and you can automate your messages so the actual sending process doesn’t take up a lot of your time.

**Effort:** Tools like Constant Contact and MailChimp can help you save time with sending out your emails, but this method is high-effort in terms of putting your messages together. Again, you can always outsource the work to a marketing company if this is something you want to try, but don’t have the time to get it done.

**Cost:** You can expect to pay a monthly fee for an email marketing service, which can vary based on the size of your email lists and the number of emails you plan on sending out. If you hire a marketing company that also puts together newsletter content for you, you can expect higher monthly costs.

14. Don’t forget about direct mail, though – you can grab patients’ attention there, too.

In a world where we are used to using email for our day-to-day communications, direct mail can make an impact—as long as you use it thoughtfully. When a new patient comes to your practice, send out a “Welcome to the Practice” letter. Also, since you have your patients’ birthdays on file, you can send out
birthday cards. Appointment reminders for upcoming checkups can also be sent via direct mail. Small, personal touches like this will really stand out to your patients and make them feel welcome in your practice.

**Effort:** It will take some effort on your practice’s part to keep track of your mailing list and when to send out these different mailers. Often, postcards can be mass-printed so that you just have to attach an address label, which saves you some time.

**Cost:** You’ll have to budget for the cost of printing the necessary materials and pay for postage. Often, you can get a better deal if you print these items in bulk, but getting these postcards designed may cost a bit more upfront as compared to reprints.

15. **Send out newsletters (email, print, or both) to stay in contact with patients on a regular basis.**

Newsletters are a great way to keep your patients informed. Your newsletter may include news articles related to different conditions you treat, health tips (#16), articles from your blog (#8), events in the community (#45), or a combination of those items. You may have to try out different types of content to figure out what works for your practice, or conduct a survey (#22) to find out which types of content patients want to read.

If you do email marketing (#13) in a system like MailChimp or Constant Contact, you can create newsletter templates to expedite the process of getting the newsletter sent out. If you have enough demand and the resources to do it, you can also create a print version of your newsletter and mail it out to patients or keep some copies in your office for patients to pick up. Just remember, whether you’re sending newsletters to patients via email or regular mail, you’ll only want to send them to those who opt in to the service. No use in wasting your time and resources on something a patient doesn’t want.

**Effort:** This marketing strategy is definitely higher-effort, unless you are able to work with a marketing company that can help you put together your newsletter.
SECTION 2: PATIENT EXPERIENCE & COMMUNICATION

Cost: Whether you use email or direct mail to send out your newsletters, you can expect to pay for this marketing effort on a monthly basis. Email may be a more cost-effective option than direct mail, though if more patients read the printed newsletter, then it makes sense to go with the print newsletter instead. Outsourcing the work will also add to your monthly costs.

16. Give out health tips to show patients you care about their health.

By giving out health tips, you are reassuring patients that you care about their well-being, even when they don’t need to come in to your office. This can be helpful in building trust with your patients and retaining your current patients. You can send out health tips in a number of places: on social media (#35), in your newsletter (#15), or in blog posts (#8). You could even try sending out periodic emails with health tips as part of your email marketing plan (#13). You could email a health tip every week to patients who opt-in. You could also try a “Health Tip of the Day” on social media.

Effort: This is definitely a higher-effort marketing strategy, as you’ll need to take time to assemble the tips and share them on various mediums.

Cost: Depending on where you choose to share your health tips, costs could range from free (social media or an already-established blog) to a monthly cost for an email marketing service.

17. Send out appointment reminders to remind patients when to come into your office.

Patients appreciate extra attention like appointment reminders. This also helps ensure that your patients actually show up to their scheduled appointments. If your practice uses a HIPAA-compliant appointment reminder system, or an EHR (#21), it’s quite simple to automate appointment reminders. If you have a smaller practice and the staff available to do it, you could also call your patients to remind them of appointments.

Effort: Automated reminder emails can greatly reduce the amount of effort it takes to send out the appointment reminders. Phone calls will definitely take more effort on your staff’s part, but may be useful for patients that have missed appointments in the past.

Cost: Hopefully, automated reminders are built into your EHR system. If not, you will probably need to pay a monthly fee to have an automated service send the reminders out. Phone calls may not incur additional costs, but can take up additional time in your day.
18. Produce pamphlets and brochures to give patients information about your procedures and services.

Pamphlets and brochures can help to inform patients about your practice, your services, and the conditions you treat. Be sure to incorporate your branding. You can give these brochures to new patients, have them in your office for patients to pick up, add them to care packages (see #27), or give them out at health fairs (#46) and other events. This marketing method may be a good option to have handy for patients who aren’t comfortable using the internet to find healthcare information.

**Effort:** If your practice puts together the brochure content, it can take a great deal of effort to get it done. There are also companies who specialize in putting together brochures and pamphlets for medical practices, which takes a lot of effort off of your staff.

**Cost:** The initial creation of the brochures and pamphlets will probably incur a higher cost upfront for design and/or content creation, especially if you are outsourcing the work. You should also budget for reprintings, should you run out of copies.

19. Offer take-away items to reinforce your branding and keep your practice top-of-mind for patients.

Everyone loves a freebie! Send your patients home with items that have your practice’s branding. It doesn’t have to be anything big or expensive—items like pens, magnets, and notepads are all small and relatively inexpensive to produce. Be sure to include your practice’s phone number so they’ll always have it handy. It’s another little reminder about your practice, so that patients know who to call when they need healthcare.

**Effort:** This should be pretty minimal in terms of effort. You’ll need to order these items from a company that makes them. To get the best pricing, you may want to set aside a little time to research different vendors. Other than that, you just need to decide what to order and supply the information needed to get your branding placed on the items.

**Cost:** Costs can vary depending on what you order and quantities. Taking a little time to research vendors
SECTION 2: PATIENT EXPERIENCE & COMMUNICATION

can help keep your costs as low as possible. Many companies also give discounts when you order higher quantities at once.

20. Focus on patient experience and quality of care to retain current patients and attract new patients through word-of-mouth.

Your ultimate goal as a practice should be to provide the best care possible to your patients. Other marketing efforts can help you get patients in the door, but if you want them to stay and recommend you to others, you have to make sure that every aspect of care is of the highest quality possible. Remember, word-of-mouth is a powerful tool–give your patients an experience that they’ll want to tell others about. It may be helpful to use patient surveys (#22) to learn more about what patients think of the experience at your practice.

**Effort:** Hopefully, this is already a big focus for your practice, and it won’t require much additional effort on your part. If not, it’s an effort absolutely worth making.

**Cost:** Patient experience doesn’t necessarily cost your practice extra money, unless you really need to overhaul your current processes.

21. Use an EHR to provide an easy way for patients to access their records.

Electronic health records (EHRs) can help your practice stay organized and allow patients to easily access their health information. More and more, patients want information about every aspect of their care so that they can make informed decisions. Having an EHR could be a big selling point to patients who want to be actively involved in their care.

**Effort:** Most practices have some sort of EHR in place, but not all practices have a solution that provides everything they want for their patients. If your practice does need to get set up with an EHR or you’re switching, this could take a considerable amount of effort. However, the effort is worth it to use a system that works for both your practice and your patients.
SECTION 2: PATIENT EXPERIENCE & COMMUNICATION

Cost: An EHR system will, of course, incur a cost to use and maintain. However, in our digitized world, it’s essentially the cost of doing business for a medical practice.

22. Conduct patient surveys to identify areas to improve.

Are your patients satisfied with the care they are receiving? Do they like your facilities? Is the wait time too long? Find out what patients think by asking them to fill out a survey. Surveys can help you find out if you’re staying on track with patients’ expectations, or if you have areas where you need to improve. Our Reputation Marketing survey includes questions that help you gather information about patient satisfaction, and has the added benefit of helping you collect online reviews. You can also put together and hand out your own surveys at the end of the appointment, if you prefer a lower-cost option for tracking patient satisfaction.

Effort: Your effort for patient surveys can vary depending on how you choose to collect information. Paper surveys may save on costs, but you’ll have to spend time recording that data somewhere. Digital surveys can reduce your effort by aggregating the data for you.

Cost: Paper surveys will probably cost less, but it may be worth it to invest in a digital survey solution for ease of distribution and aggregating responses. If you’re using a service like Reputation Marketing, you’ll also benefit from having those survey responses published to online review sites.

23. Answer patients’ questions (FAQs) so that the information is readily available.

There are probably some questions that patients ask fairly often. This is where Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) come in handy. You can write up FAQs as part of your website content (#4), blog content (#8), or include them in your brochures or pamphlets (#18). Patients will appreciate the effort to answer their questions before they even have to ask them.

Effort: While it will take some time to write up all of your FAQs and answers, this should be a lower-effort undertaking compared to ongoing marketing efforts. You’ll generally only need to do this once, with the exception of any future updates you may have.
SECTION 2: PATIENT EXPERIENCE & COMMUNICATION

Cost: Writing up FAQs should be something your office can handle, so that won’t cost you any additional money. Depending on how and where you want to use your FAQ content, you may need to pay to have it added (for example, having your web developer add it to your website or having it printed in your brochures).

24. Get quality patient education to provide an easily-accessible, helpful reference for patients.

Patients will have questions about their conditions or the procedures they need to have, and patient education gives you a trustworthy resource to point them to. Patient education also helps to answer any questions a patient may think of after he or she has left your office. While patient education typically won’t help you rank in search engines (because the content is typically placed on multiple practices’ websites), there is a lot of value in having it for the convenience of your patients.

Effort: Patient education is low-effort on your practice’s part. Patient education is typically database-backed, so you don’t have to worry about making updates.

Cost: You can get high quality patient education, including videos, for as low as $85/month. We also include basic, written patient education with all websites on our P3 Platform.

25. Make yourself more accessible to patients so they have an easy way to contact you.

Patients really appreciate a doctor who is willing to address any questions or concerns outside of the office. Offer a phone number or email address where patients can contact you, and try to respond as soon as you can. If you’re not comfortable giving out your personal information, even having a contact form or an email address dedicated to patient questions could be helpful. Just be sure you’re using a secure, HIPAA-compliant email account or contact form.

Effort: Depending on how often patients contact you, this can be a fairly involved effort. You’ll need to check in on your messages at least daily.
SECTION 2: PATIENT EXPERIENCE & COMMUNICATION

**Cost:** It won’t cost you anything to respond to inquiries, but you may have to budget for HIPAA-compliant solutions.

26. Add new services that enhance the patient experience.

The healthcare field is constantly evolving, and you need to be able to keep up with the latest advancements. Offering newer, less-invasive procedures will appeal to patients seeking the most advanced care possible. Outside of surgery, you can do things that make care more convenient for your patients, like adding on-site physical therapy. You also can add lower-investment amenities to make patients feel more comfortable in your office, like free Wi-Fi or more comfortable seating in your waiting room. Little things like that can add up for patients.

**Effort:** Effort can vary based on what new services or amenities you’d like to implement. However, anything that improves the experience for your patients is effort well spent.

**Cost:** Costs can also vary based on which services you choose to implement.

27. Give care packages to patients to reinforce your brand and provide useful items.

Care packages could include brochures and takeaway items like pens, magnets, notepads, etc. You can give different types of care packages to different patients. New patients could get a package containing information about your practice and what they’ll need to know. You can also give care packages to patients who have just been diagnosed with a particular condition and provide information on how to manage that condition.

**Effort:** It will take some effort to put together care packages, but if you’ve already had brochures (#18) or small items like pens or notepads (#19) made, it’s easy to put those items in a care package.

**Cost:** Your costs for care packages will depend on what you include in them and what items you already have to put in the care packages.
Section 3: Advertising & Media Efforts

Once you’ve established your practice’s web presence, advertising and media efforts are a great way to take your marketing to the next level. These efforts will help you get in front of patients who may not have heard of you through online searches or word-of-mouth.

28. Establish branding for your practice so you’re easily recognizable in the community.

Branding will help patients be able to instantly recognize your practice throughout different mediums—your website, social media, blog, advertising, etc. Choose a color scheme, logo, and practice name that looks professional and makes your practice stand out from others in the area. Keep the branding consistent throughout all of your marketing efforts so that patients can easily identify information that is coming from your practice.

Unless your practice is large enough to have an in-house marketing team that handles graphic design, you’ll probably need to hire a company to help with your branding needs. You’ll also need to pass on any branding details to any team members or companies who help manage your various marketing efforts, including your website, social media, and print media.

**Effort:** Since your practice will likely have to outsource this work, the amount of effort on your staff’s part is low, though you’ll need to be available to approve and provide feedback.

**Cost:** Branding design costs will ultimately depend on what you need. Logo design tends to be the most expensive branding option. However, this is usually a one-time cost (unless your practice decides to change something), so this shouldn’t be something you have to regularly budget for.

29. Focus on what sets you apart from other practices to differentiate yourself.

This is especially important if your practice is located in a highly competitive area. When a patient is searching for a new doctor, they want as much information as possible to be able to make an informed decision. For example, if there are 5 orthopedic surgeons in your city, but your practice is the only one that offers a certain technique or treatment approach, that’s something you’ll want to point out on your website and in your other marketing efforts.
A lot of this can be accomplished through your content marketing efforts. Make sure the content on your website is not only informative, but shows how your practice is different. These details may be the deciding factor for patients when comparing your practice to others in the area.

**Effort:** You know what makes your practice great, so it shouldn’t take a lot of effort to come up with ideas on how to differentiate yourself. If your office is handling any content updates to incorporate these ideas, it will probably take at least a few hours to make those updates via a content management system. You can also outsource this work if you don’t have time for the actual implementation.

**Cost:** If your office handles the work, it won’t cost you anything. If you outsource this work, your costs can vary depending on how much work needs to be done.

30. **Run some “traditional” ads offline.**

Have an event coming up, or want to announce a new location or addition to the practice? Traditional advertising methods are a great way to do that. Billboards, print ads, and radio and TV commercials are all great options that can help your practice grab the attention of potential new patients. Just make sure you are targeting your ads for your desired audience. For example, run ads on channels or in publications that are more likely to be viewed by the patients you want to target.

**Effort:** You will need to work with an advertising agency to get the ads designed and placed, so the effort may be slightly lower in comparison to other marketing efforts. However, if your practice is planning on writing the ad copy, that will take some effort. You’ll also need to be available to provide feedback to the ad agency. TV commercials would probably require the highest effort on your part, since the doctors and other staff members would ideally be in the commercial.

**Cost:** Costs can vary based on where you place your ads and how long you run them. If you’re running the ads for a limited period of time, you may need to pay upfront for the entire run of the ad. If the ads are run for an indefinite period of time, you may pay for them monthly. Television commercials will likely be the highest-cost option, because you’ll need to pay for a film crew, editing, and placement of the ad itself.

31. **Send out press releases to notify patients about upcoming events.**

This isn’t something you need to do frequently, unless you have several events going on. Press releases are a good way to help get the word out about events in the community like a speaking engagement,
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an open house, or a health fair. You can email them to local news outlets to see if they will publish the information. There are no guarantees that your event will be run if you don’t pay for ad placement, but it’s worth a shot if advertising isn’t in your budget.

Effort: Putting together a press release can take some effort, especially if you’ve never done it before. We recommend creating a template for press releases to make it easier to fill in necessary information. There are a number of templates online that can help. If you

Cost: Sending out a press release shouldn’t cost you anything if you are sending to local news outlets. If you are sending out press releases on a regular basis or want a wider reach, you should consider hiring a PR company to help manage those efforts. A PR company is definitely a big investment, but it’s worth it if you ultimately get more patients from these efforts.

32. Run a paid search campaign to get in front of patients searching for a doctor online.

Paid search is a quick way to drive traffic to your website, and it can be very useful if you target it correctly. Paid search is great if you’ve just launched a new website and want to get some exposure. Paid search can also help you get highly-targeted traffic from patients seeking out specific procedures and services. However, you’ll want to supplement your paid search campaign with other marketing efforts–traffic from paid search will end once your end your campaign. We also recommend implementing some form of tracking for online appointment requests so that you can track your return on investment and adjust the campaign accordingly.

Effort: If your practice has a marketing department and is comfortable with running the campaign, it can reduce your costs for paid search, but will add to the amount of effort needed from your team. There’s a lot of benefit in working with a paid search expert, especially one that understands medical practices, so that you get highly-targeted traffic.

Cost: You can set your own budget for paid search, but we recommend a budget of at least $1,000 per month in ad spend to get the quality and volume of traffic you want. If you’re paying someone to set up and manage the campaign for you, you may also need to budget for a setup fee and monthly management fees.
33. Optimize your landing pages for your ads so patients find the information they need right away.

If you’re running a paid search campaign (#32), you want to make sure you’re sending your visitors to a page that contains useful information and answers their questions. This increases the chances that these patients will move forward with booking an appointment. You may have to do some research and try out different things to figure out what works best. If you’re working with a paid search specialist, that person may be able to provide some guidance in optimizing your landing pages.

**Effort:** Landing page optimization can require a lot of testing and effort. We recommend consulting with a marketing company or your paid search account manager to get the best results.

**Cost:** Depending on your agreement with your paid search provider, landing page optimization may be included. If not, you can expect to pay for optimization, which may include things like A/B testing and scroll tracking to see what patients react to and how they interact with the page.

34. Know your peak season to figure out when to invest in marketing.

If your practice is located in an area that is a popular vacation destination, you can target your marketing efforts to those patients. For example, during the winter, some patients living in colder areas may spend the season in a warmer area, and they may need a local doctor. These patients are often called snowbirds. If your practice is located in a popular winter retreat destination, you can start targeting your advertising to those patients before the season begins.

**Effort:** The effort it takes to figure out your peak season should be minimal. Your office can likely identify trends in appointment requests from patients. The real effort will be in adjusting your marketing efforts accordingly, coordinating with everyone involved in your marketing strategy.

**Cost:** Knowing your peak season can actually help reduce your costs, or help you spend your money more wisely. If you know patients are more likely to seek appointments at a certain time of the year, you can make sure to reserve more of your marketing budget for that time so that you are targeting patients when they are seeking out your services.
35. Get on social media to connect with your patients.

Social media can be a great way to connect with your patients and influencers in your field, and it is another area that can help to solidify your branding (see #28). Facebook and Twitter are great for connecting with your patients, posting health tips (see #16), sharing your blog articles (see #8), or posting announcements about events and news related to your practice. LinkedIn is useful for connecting with others in your field. You don’t have to be on every platform available--just make sure that you are able to keep up and post regularly to the networks you do decide to join. Make a plan if needed to help you stay on track.

**Effort:** In order to post regularly, you’ll need to put a considerable amount of effort into social media. Tools like Hootsuite and Buffer can help you schedule out several posts at once to save some time, but it still requires a lot of effort to get everything done.

**Cost:** Simply having social media accounts is free. If you’re using a post scheduling tool, that may require a relatively low monthly cost, depending on which tool you use. You could also hire a marketing company to help you manage your social media, which will increase your costs, but decrease your effort.

36. Get on YouTube to share videos with your patients.

YouTube videos can be great additions to your website and very useful educational tools for your patients. They can also help new patients get acquainted with doctors before they book that first appointment--it helps them attach a face and a personality to the information. YouTube videos can be used to share health tips (see #16), explain procedures and services, and share the outcomes of certain procedures (ex. a patient walking after having a knee replacement procedure at your practice).

Just make sure to avoid anything too graphic, like a video of a surgical procedure--it may be off-putting to some patients. Dr. Mike Evans has become very well-known for his illustrated YouTube videos—they still get the point across without being gory. While you may not be able to produce illustrated videos, the idea of non-graphic, compelling images is something that you could incorporate into your video strategy.
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Effort: This is a higher-effort marketing method for your practice, because doctors and office staff will need to participate in video creation.

Cost: Having a YouTube account is free. If you plan on paying someone to film your videos professionally, your costs may vary depending on how many videos you need filmed.

37. Contribute to a publication (print or online) to get your doctors in front of a wider audience.

If you enjoy writing blog articles, you might want to consider contributing to other publications. That could mean writing a health column for a local newspaper or magazine, or contributing to another blog. Aim for something that has a wider reach than your own blog. You may have to start with smaller blogs and publications first, but if it goes well, you could work your way up to larger publications.

Effort: In general, this isn’t work you’ll want to outsource. It will require a higher amount effort on your part, both in writing the content and coordinating with the publications.

Cost: This effort shouldn’t cost your practice any money.

38. Put up an “Accepting New Patients” sign to let patients know you have openings in your schedule.

This one is pretty self-explanatory. It lets people know that you are welcoming new patients when other practices in the area might be full. If patients have a more urgent need for healthcare, having sooner availability is a big plus, so it’s worth the effort to let people know. You may also be able to add it to your website by adding a banner or placing the notice in a prominent place on the homepage.

Effort: This is a very low-effort strategy for your practice.

Cost: Costs should be fairly minimal, even if you have to pay your web developer to add the information to your website.
39. Do local news interviews to share advice and expertise with local patients.

Whether you do a regular health segment or are interviewed for a news story related to your area of expertise, appearing on the local news station is another way to get your name out there. If the news station likes working with you, and there is good viewer response, you may become the station’s regular “go-to” for health-related information.

**Effort:** You’ll need to prepare for your interview and spend time filming it, but you can choose to participate as frequently or infrequently as you like. However, it will take some effort to get in touch with the new stations in your area to see who is interested. You can save time on this by hiring a PR firm if this is something you want to pursue more aggressively.

**Cost:** News interviews won’t cost you anything, but if you plan on hiring a PR professional to help you book appearances, you can expect to pay that person on an ongoing basis.

40. Target family members of potential patients who may be making appointments on their behalf.

Often, people are searching for medical advice on behalf of an older family member, like a parent or grandparent. So, if you primarily perform hip replacements on elderly patients, don’t assume that having an online presence won’t help your practice. In many cases, you’ll find that a patient’s child or grandchild found you online. Keep that in mind when coming up with your marketing plan. In particular, you can target online advertising to specific age groups to make sure you reach the right audience.

**Effort:** You’ll need to put some effort into adjusting your current strategy, which can vary depending on how and where you’re advertising.

**Cost:** Costs will, again, depend on where you are running ads. However, you can always cut back on ads targeting your primary patient age groups to target family members within your current budget.

41. Get published in medical journals to show off your expertise and research.

Medical journals allow you to show off your expertise in a particular topic to the medical community. Medical journals are much more in-depth and research-based, unlike the other publications we talked
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about in #37. You can reference or link to these studies on your bio pages on your website, or cite statistics from your studies on your website to give patients information about expected outcomes. This can help reassure patients of your expertise in a particular procedure.

**Effort:** This is high-effort, but can also be high-reward in demonstrating your expertise, reassuring patients, and educating your peers.

**Cost:** Costs for getting your article published can vary depending on the publication, but according to [American Journal Experts](#), in most cases you can expect to pay a submission fee, a membership fee, printing charges, and publication fees.

42. Do podcasts to share information on relevant topics.

Podcasts are another way to share your expertise on different topics and provide information to your patients. Podcasts will allow you to share information in an audio format, which may help patients who don't have time to read through content. If your practice cares for chronic conditions, podcasts could also be a helpful way to share information on topics affecting your patients. You could also bring patients on as guests to talk about their experiences.

**Effort:** This is very high-effort. Though you are essentially recording yourself (and any guests) talking about each topic, you'll have to take time to plan out your topics and talking points you want to cover. Then, you'll have to set aside time to actually record your podcasts, time to review and edit the recording, and finally time to upload and share the podcast. Before investing the time, it may be helpful to gauge interest among your patients.

**Cost:** You'll need to invest in some good recording equipment so that your podcast recordings come in clear and audible. On an ongoing basis, this shouldn't cost you much to keep up, although you may have to pay your web developer if you are posting the podcasts on your website.
Section 4: Local Outreach Efforts

Getting involved in your community and getting to know your local network of physicians helps get your name out there in a different way than more traditional marketing efforts. When you make a good impression on patients and colleagues, they are more likely to remember you when your services are needed. Just by making the effort to get out there and get to know people in your local area, you can bring in more referrals to your practice.

43. Ask local physicians for referrals to your practice.

Referrals are a great (and potentially free!) way to get the word out about your practice. Other marketing channels can vary with the amount of patients that come in, but a good referral partner can help you get more patients who are a good fit for your specialties. Connect with colleagues in different specialties to learn more about what they do and how you might be able to refer patients to one another. If you want to really improve your referral process and get a steady stream of referrals from colleagues, a paid referral service like Referral Pad will make it easier for key referring physicians to get appointments for their patients.

**Effort:** It will take some effort to keep up with your colleagues and make sure their patients are able to get an appointment with your practice. A solution like Referral Pad can help streamline your efforts.

**Cost:** Simply asking your colleagues for referrals is free. Services like Referral Pad can start at around $99/month.

44. Claim your Doximity profile to connect with colleagues and build your referral base.

Doximity is often referred to as the “LinkedIn for doctors,” but it provides a lot of other benefits as well. You can share information about difficult or unusual cases with other doctors through a secure, HIPAA-compliant network, get referrals from other doctors, and help with remote consultations. See our blog post about Doximity to learn more about the benefits it offers.

**Effort:** Since you can’t really have anyone maintain a Doximity profile on your behalf, this will require...
some effort on your part, though not as much as more public social media profiles might.

**Cost:** Doximity is free to use.

### 45. Get involved in your community so patients can get to know you.

Getting out in your community helps patients recognize you for your positive work. It also helps you connect with patients outside of the office or hospital environment. Whether you participate in charity fundraising events, donate your time and services, or do public speaking engagements (see #’s 46-50 below for ideas), there’s a lot your practice can do to get involved.

**Effort:** This is a higher-effort marketing strategy, as you can’t outsource this work to a marketing company.

**Cost:** Costs can range—many community involvement efforts can be done for free or a relatively low cost, while others may require more of an expense.

### 46. Go to health fairs to connect with patients who may benefit from your services.

Health fairs can help you reach out to people who may have been unaware of your practice. Health fairs are another opportunity to offer free screenings and services to people in your community. Having a booth at a health fair can also help you to build brand awareness (see #28) so that patients will remember you if they ever need help in the future.

**Effort:** Health fairs are a higher-effort strategy in terms of the time you’ll need to set aside to prepare and the time spent at the fair itself. However, you may only have a health fair in your area a few times a year at most, so it won’t be a frequent effort.

**Cost:** You can typically expect to pay at least a few hundred dollars (or more) to get a booth for your practice at a health fair. If you’re interested in going this route, we recommend trying it out and seeing what kind of turnout you get before committing to additional health fairs. If it’s not helping you bring in new patients, it’s not worth the expense and effort.
47. Offer free screenings or services to let patients “try out” your practice.

This gives new patients a chance to “sample” your care approach and services. It could be something as simple as free blood pressure screenings or a free flu shot to the first 10 patients who visit your flu clinic. This can help you attract patients who might have otherwise gone to a retail or pharmacy-based clinic.

**Effort:** This strategy will potentially require extra effort on your part if done outside of your normal clinic hours. You’ll also need to take some time to plan the logistics and terms of events like these.

**Cost:** Though you’re offering the service for free, this will cost you in services rendered. It is up to your practice to determine what is reasonable and possible from profitability standpoint.

48. Participate in public speaking events and seminars to show off your knowledge and expertise.

Speaking events and seminars are a way to help show off your expertise on a particular topic. Seminars and speaking events can help inform patients (to explain management of a chronic condition, for example), or to present new information or research studies to others in the healthcare community.

**Effort:** It will require effort on your part to put the presentation together, though the amount of effort you spend on an ongoing basis will depend on how often you plan on speaking publicly. You can also expect to put effort toward finding the right events where you can speak.

**Cost:** There may be some cost involved, if you speak at a conference or if your practice is holding the seminar.

49. Have an open house house so patients can learn more about your office and meet your staff.

This is very useful if you have a new office location or facility. Open houses allow potential patients to
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see facilities and meet your staff. It also gives patients the opportunity to discuss your care philosophy to determine whether your practice is the right fit. The American Academy of Family Physicians has some detailed tips on how to plan an open house that may be helpful if you decide to go this route.

**Effort:** An open house can require a considerable amount of effort in planning the event and getting the word out. However, open houses are typically a one-time or occasional event, so there is no ongoing effort involved after the event is over.

**Cost:** You’ll need to budget for any food, refreshments, and giveaway items you plan on offering. To get the word out about your event, you may also want to run some advertisements in local media (see #30).

50. Get involved with the local chamber of commerce to identify opportunities within your community.

Your local chamber of commerce can help you identify other opportunities to get involved with other businesses and the community. It’s a great resource to have at your disposal if you want to get your practice out there.

**Effort:** Joining the chamber of commerce is low-effort. Aside from that, it’s up to your practice on how involved you want to be.

**Cost:** You can expect to pay at least a few hundred dollars annually for a chamber of commerce membership. Check with your local chamber of commerce for membership rates.

Need tips on how to implement your marketing strategy? Check out our blog! We’ve got tips on everything from social media, SEO, and marketing strategy for medical and surgical practices.