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## Does Your Website Have Street Cred? Four Steps Guaranteed to Improve User Experience (and Boost SEO to Boot)

By David Evans, PhD, MBA

Yes, taking a deep dive into Google Analytics or other types of website metrics can be eye-opening, but the sheer volume of information and multiple data points these exercises yield can make it difficult to understand if your Internet strategy is working.

The best way to score the intel you need is to review your website with a fresh set of eyes from the patient's perspective to see if it will resonate.

This involves:

### 1. Giving Them What They Want

Does your site provide prospective patients what they are looking for? This includes not only procedural information but also a frank discussion of the benefits, risks, and costs of a procedure, as well as how it affects quality of life. Patients want to know "What's in it for me?"—and they come to your site to find out.

Are there before-and-afters? As they say, a picture is worth a thousand words.

Testimonials matter, too. Nothing is as important to the success of your practice than the endorsement of other patients.

And don't forget reviews. Always post positive ones on your site. Potential



patients connect with other happy patients, not pieces of equipment or an accredited surgical suite. Yes, these are important and necessary to run a successful practice, but your patients are more interested in learning about the experiences of others in their initial online research.

If consumers like what they see, they will spend more time on your site. Google watches metrics such as bounce rate, time on site, and number of pages viewed. Boosting these metrics gives your site an edge in Google's rankings.

### 2. Just Asking

Don't wait to find out that your receptionist is rude by reading it on Yelp. Instead, consider a patient survey to find out what your patients really think about you. The survey should include more than just a few general questions. It should touch on virtually every aspect of your practice, including items like wait times, parking, financing, contact after the consultation, information provided before surgery, etc.

### 3. Making It Pretty

Instead of loading text with keywords and links, make sure the relevant information is presented in a neat and enticing way. Looks matter, especially in the aesthetic space. Think of the glossy women's magazines that resonate with your target audience, and model

your website design in such a way. Prospective patients will stay longer if they like what they see, and are more likely to contact your practice. Plus, patients remaining on your site longer can boost search engine rankings.

### 4. Owning It

Word-of-mouth referrals dominate new-patient acquisition in every practice. If you are not capturing these leads, your Internet strategy is a bust. You must rank No 1 for your name and practice name, and all variations. Do an easy check yourself: Search for these terms on Google and the other search engines to see if you are No 1.

You don't need a ranking report, Google analytics, or a lead tracking report when you look at your website from the outside in—as a potential patient.

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