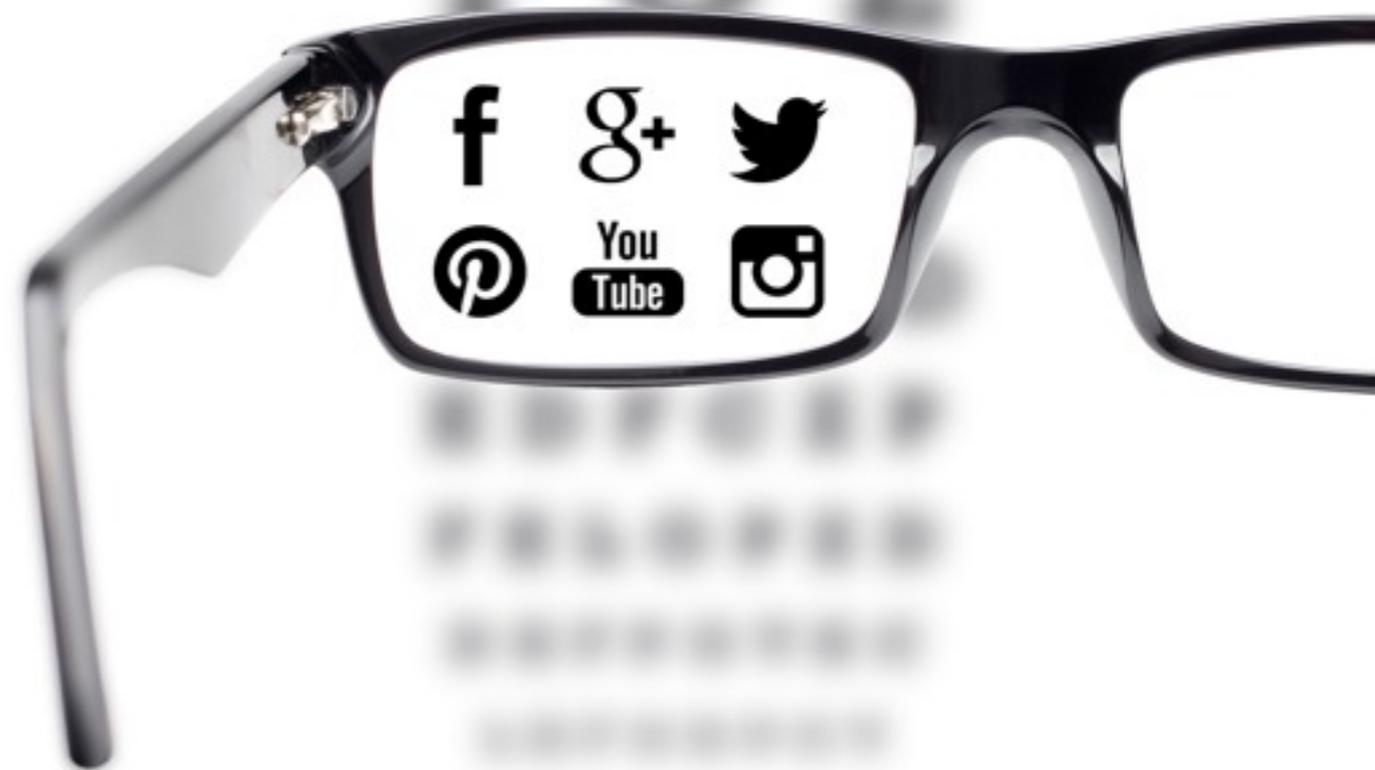


# The 5 Things Every Eye Doctor Should Know About Social Media Marketing



*Included in this eBook:*



**FREE DOWNLOADS**  
you can start using today!



**4 Easy-to-Implement  
ACTION ITEMS**

*VISION SOURCE*

**MySocialPractice**

# Introduction

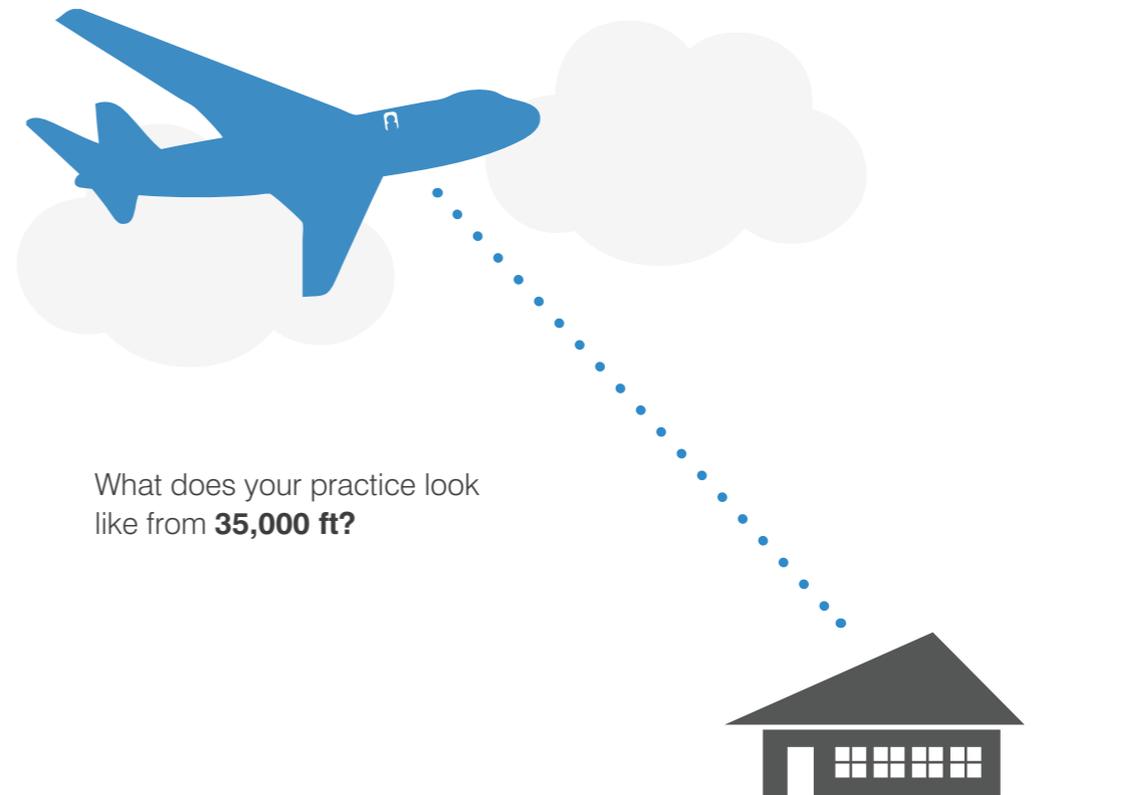
Congratulations! The fact that you've started reading this ebook says that you're progressive and visionary. You understand the value of thoughtful optometry practice marketing, storytelling, reaching out to your valued patients, being accessible, sharing, discovery, humility and service. And although you may not yet be sure how social media can help market your practice, you're likely the kind of person who trusts your instincts. We admire that. Doing new things often takes courage and a leap of faith.

Social media marketing in an optometry practice takes patience and persistence. Sometimes the rewards are not readily apparent. Yet once you've started your gut tells you it's the right thing to be doing. Your sensibilities support the notion that strengthened relationships with patients and prospective patients makes a difference, grows your practice, makes you more profitable, enhances the careers of every team member, and can even change the world in small ways.

## Start With The Why

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When you're in a plane the world looks very different from 35,000 feet. Have you ever considered the 35,000 foot view of your optometry practice?



What does your practice look like from **35,000 ft?**

When you step back and think about it, what are you really selling? What kind of business would you have if you removed optometry altogether? Sound crazy? Relationship marketing through social media helps your practice stop focusing on what you make (optometry), and focus on the things you make possible. What you're really selling is comfort, health, appearance, confidence, and trust. Social media provides the stage for telling that story. You're treating people, not eyes.

The engagement you create using social media will set you apart from the masses and allow you to create powerful one-to-one connections where you can create greater perceived value for your practice.

What type of new patients do you want to bring through your door? What type of patients do you want to retain? Keepers? Those who love and appreciate what you do?

Social media marketing in your optometry practice allows you to talk *with* these kinds of patients and prospective patients, not *at* them.

We're often asked, "Can the ROI of social media marketing in an optometry practice be measured?" In a word, absolutely. Start today by making a commitment to the future of optometry practice marketing by understanding and executing on The Five Must-Have Components outlined in this ebook.

**You can do this. Onward!**

## The Social Practice Manifesto

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A business manifesto is “a public declaration of intentions, objectives, or motives.” The five mantras in The Social Practice Manifesto are the five concepts detailed in this ebook.



# #1 Effective Social Media Starts In Your Practice

Optometry practices are unique. Very few businesses in the world enjoy an unwritten-yet-accepted expectation that customers (or in your case, patients) voluntarily walk through their door on a regular basis! It's cool. This captured, face-to-face audience is a content marketer's dream. Are you leveraging this opportunity?

One of your big advantages in gaining early traction with your social media efforts is obvious—so obvious in fact that you may not even be thinking about it. Your team!

Team members have relationships with your patients. Team members live and work in the same communities where your new, prospective patients live and work. Team members love your practice. Team members participate in your practice culture. Team members have extended family members, gym buddies, their church congregation, neighbors, and tons of friends in their online social networks who are all prospective new patients. Team members are a pivotal key to getting the early word out about your new social media efforts both face-to-face and online.



During the earliest weeks and months you probably won't have enough followers, subscribers, Likes, and connections to create much online viral effect for your marketing. Shares, blog comments, Facebook Likes, retweets, etc. can be few and far between. So, the best place to start your efforts (and continue them) is in your practice, with your team.

It's important to have some simple handout materials, posters, buttons, etc. to break the ice, spark conversations, and create interest face-to-face. It's also important to have an easy, accessible way (such as an in-practice iPad) for people to subscribe, Like, share, upload and comment.

Are you concerned that you'll have a hard time getting team members' support? Don't be. Time and time again we see



remarkable transformations take place inside practices—and inside team members—sparked by tiny social media tactics and successes. The energy that comes from heightened friendships and engagement with your patients is contagious. You'll be surprised how social media can invigorate the passion inside your office.

### FREE DOWNLOAD: Social Signs

Social Signs are a great way to increase the visibility and shareability of your practice on your Facebook page. They're easy to use and they're great icebreakers. Both patients and team members love them. [Download these two free signs](#) and start using them in your practice today!



## #2 Social Media Is Something You Do

Would you walk into a cocktail party, climb up on the bar with a megaphone, start telling everyone how awesome you are, and then try to sell stuff? Of course not—unless you're a clueless jerk. Unfortunately, when it comes to social media marketing, that's exactly what some businesses do.



Instead, you'd probably look around the party for friends to visit with and for new, interesting people you'd like to get to know. Then, after briefly introducing yourself, you'd strike up conversations. You would ask about the other person, you would listen, and you would show interest in what they do and who they are. You would find "connective points". That's how valued

relationships begin face to face—and, that's exactly how relationship marketing begins and grows using social media.

Optometry is a relationship-based business. That's one of the big reasons why social media marketing in your practice can be so effective. You've heard the adage, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." It's true.

### Being Part Of The Conversation

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Have you heard of Instagram? It was launched as a iPhone app for posting personal photos online. People share their photos to connect with friends, strangers, and businesses. It's a place where people express their lives and interests through photos. Instagram is a powerful way to connect with patients and prospective patients in the same way friends connect with friends. It's real, and people love it.

We recently did a random search on Instagram using the keyword "eyedoctor" to see the photos people were posting and tagging with the word "#eyedoctor". Thousands of photos have been posted by patients sitting in optometry practices and/or

trying on glasses! What are they sharing? Watch this short video and see:

## 200 Eye Doctor Instagram Photos in 1 Minute

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*We found 200 actual photos that were posted to Instagram with the hashtag #eyedoctor. Your patients are talking about you on social media. Are you part of the conversation?*

Are you and your team participating in these kinds of conversations? Why not take a photo of you and your patient together using your patient's smartphone or your in-practice's camera and post it on Instagram? It's a golden, no-cost opportunity to raise top-of-mind awareness for your practice on highly trusted, permission-based social networks.



**ACTION ITEM:** Patient of the Month Program

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### 3 Simple Steps To A Patient Of The Month Program

It's super easy to start a Patient Of The Month (or week) Program. Grab a pencil and piece of paper and follow these three steps:

#### Step 1

What little perk are you willing to give your Patient Of The Month? It can be as simple as a gift card to a restaurant and two movie tickets. If you're not the practice's financial decision maker, come up with three suggestions and ask the financial decision maker to make a decision.

## Step 2

What criteria are you going to use to pick the winner? Don't make this complicated! In fact, if you don't want to come up with criteria first, just pick someone you really like, then retrofit the criteria to the winner. Look at today's or tomorrow's schedule of patients coming in and pick one!

## Step 3

How are you going to spread the word? Use one or more of your social media tools. Start with a short Facebook wall post that includes a photo or 15-second video of you and your winner.

You did it! You're participating! Congrats! It's all in the baby steps.



## #3 Success Is Achieved Through Great Content

One of the biggest concerns we hear about using social media in an optometry practice is, “I’m afraid of being boring! I just don’t know what to talk about!”

**We understand. Stop worrying. Here’s your answer...**

First rule of thumb when it comes to content? Don’t try to sell optometry services every time you blog, update, or tweet! At the same time, it’s great to publish some content that supports great eye care. That’s one of the reasons you’re creating this permission-based, social media marketing strategy—to grow your thriving business. But keep in mind that the topics must be interesting and relevant, first.

Here’s a good way to think about your content mix... Pretend that there’s a TV network called The Dr. Jones’ Eye Network. The Programming Director for the network insists on running commercials 24/7. Examples of those commercials are, “25% Off Any Eye Care Service!”, or “Come On Down For A Lasik Procedure!”.

Network ratings plummet because nobody wants to watch self-absorbed programming that only runs commercials trying to sell stuff all day. The Programming Director is fired.

The new Programming Director is equally passionate about eye care but also recognizes that there are many related topics that are far more interesting, informative, useful, fun, and relevant for viewers. Many of those topics point directly back to the same optometry services as well. And of course, she knows that she must include a little bit of smart advertising in the program mix. Ratings soar.



As you start thinking about your own content, for every optometry related topic, see if you can come up with at least two non-optometry topics that your patients and prospective patients will enjoy and find useful.

As you begin brainstorming topics you'd like to post and talk about, draw inspiration from the following suggestions and examples:

### Great Content Engages

Although this principle applies to most social media tools, let's just talk about Facebook for a minute. With approximately 8 out of 10 people who walk through your practice door logging in daily, there are plenty of reasons to be active there. The #1 objective for an optometry practice's Facebook page is to increase engagement with patients and prospective patients. Why? Facebook's goal is to deliver relevant content to each unique viewer based on

what's important to that viewer. The more your patients and prospective patients engage with your posts, the more often they'll start seeing more of your content.

You must make your posts interesting so that people will Like, share and comment.

Moving patients toward greater retention, increased referrals, and higher AVP dollars spent in your practice first



requires that you nurture the platforms where your content is distributed. And, moving prospective patients toward becoming new patients requires exactly the same strategy.

### Engaging posts...

- Increase Top-Of-Mind Awareness
- Boost “Share-Ability”
- Educate
- Highlight Practice Culture
- Strengthen One-To-One Connections

- Differentiate Your Practice
- Help Your Practice Listen
- Are Sometimes, Just Fun!

- Help Others
- Keep People Up To Date



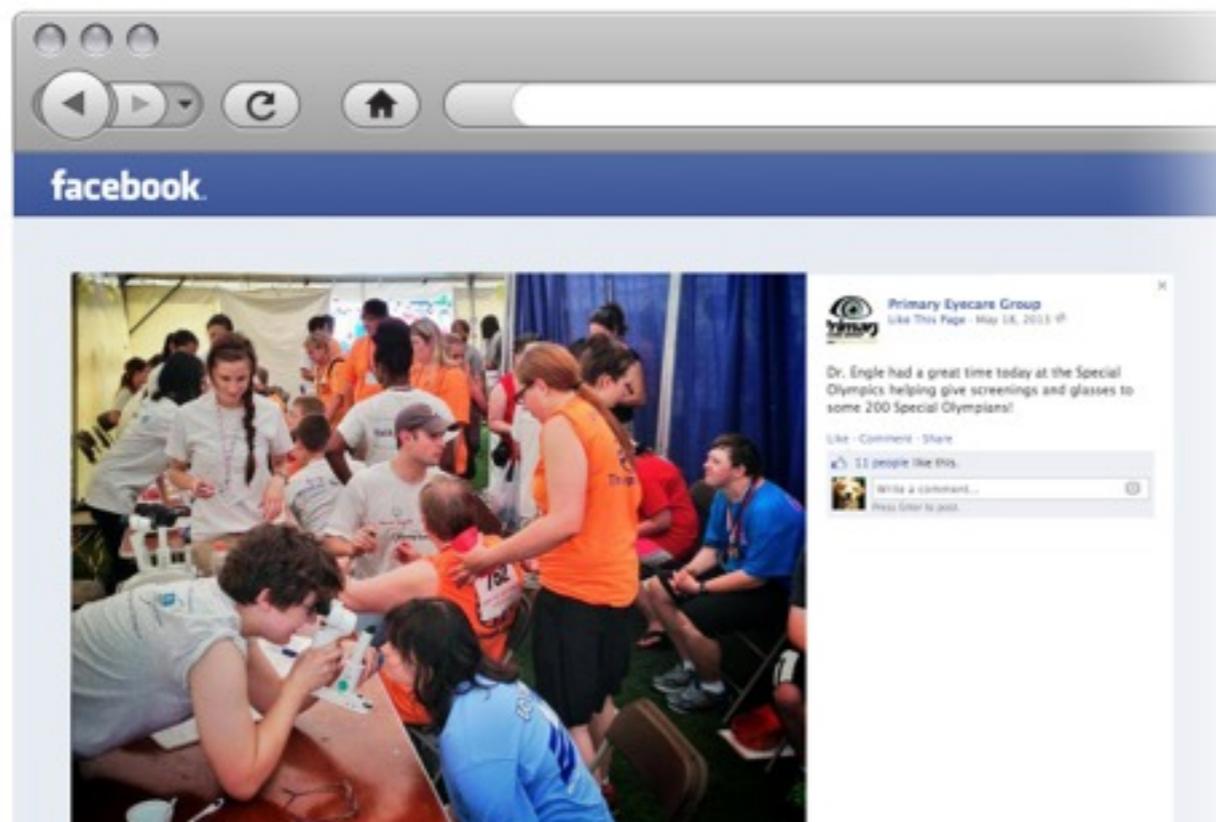
## Great Content Provides Value

Modern optometry topics are interesting to people when they are relevant. Make it personal. Provide information, tell stories, and show examples of the many ways great eye health affects people's comfort, health, and appearance.

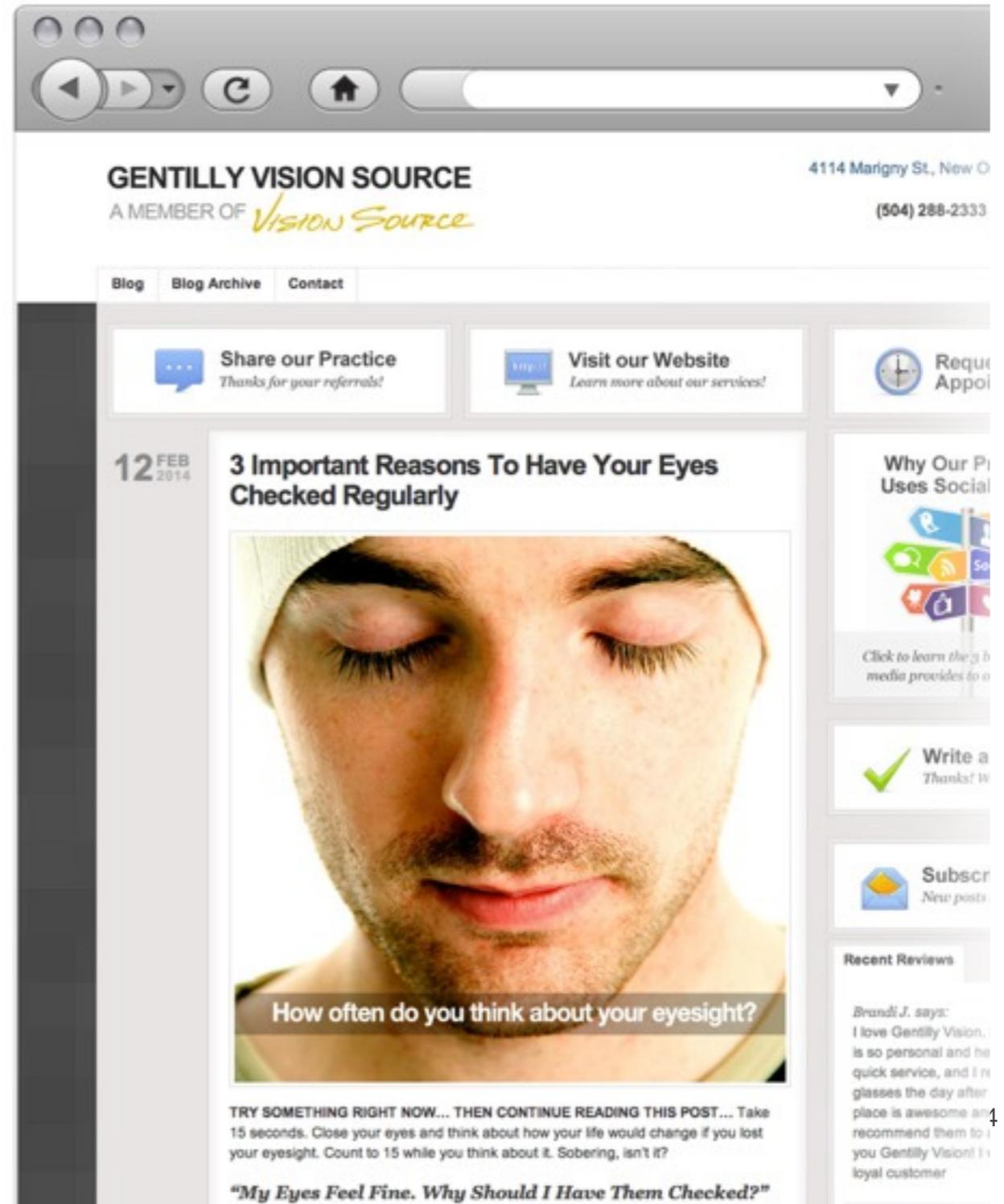
## Great Content Shares Practice Culture

Not sure if you have a culture? Sure you do. You've just never thought about it this way. And, you've never had an easy, systematic way to differentiate your practice and share your culture online.

Do you have a pirate's treasure chest in your children's exam



room where kids pick a small, inexpensive prize? Are three of your team members training together for their first marathon? Are you planning a Toys For Tots drive this year? Make a list of the

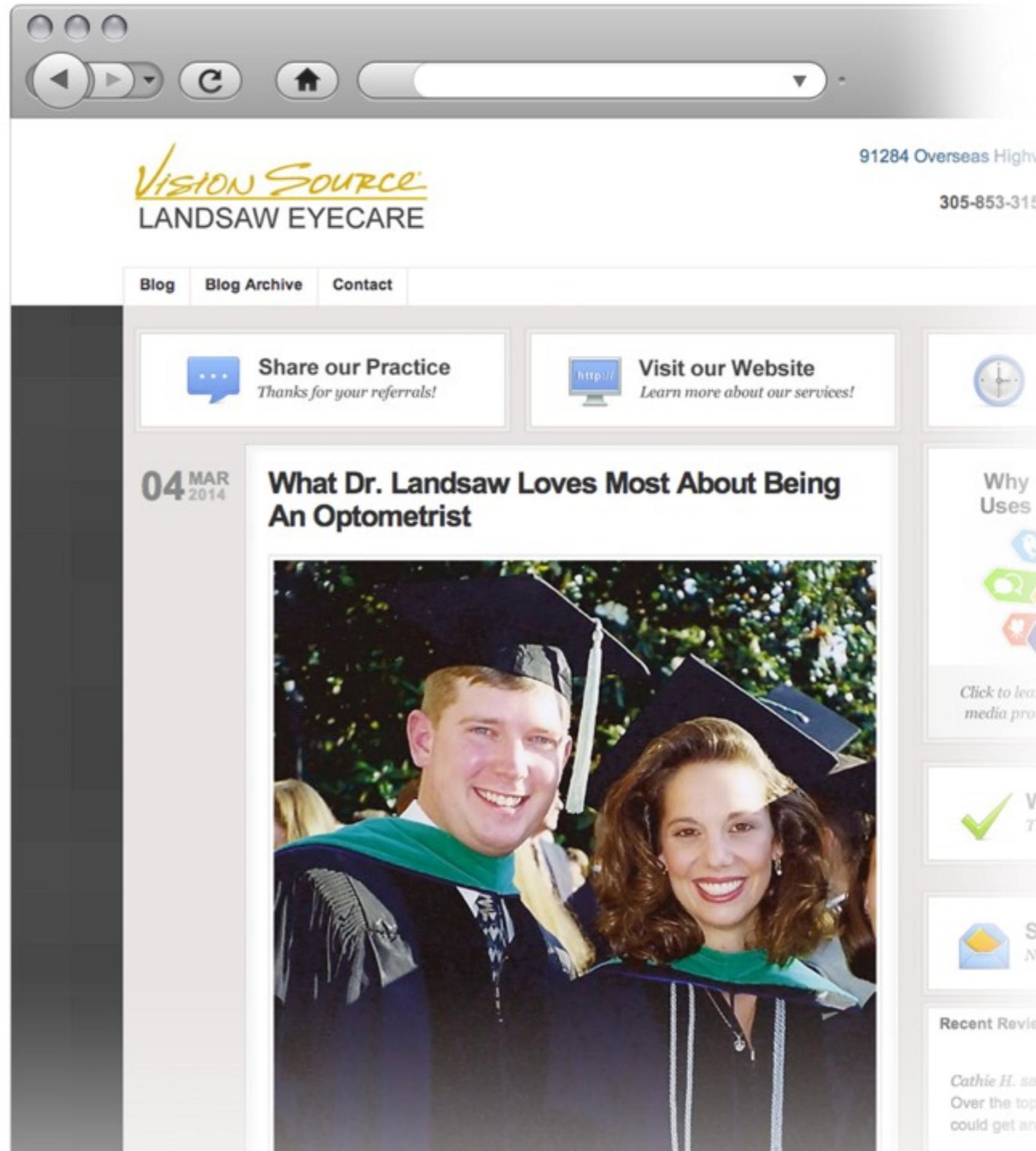


things that differentiate your practice. Look at the things you're already doing and share them. If you're not doing anything, start with one tiny thing!

Be giving. Nothing creates camaraderie in a practice faster than a simple cause. Run a 5k together. Sponsor a car wash and then take the money you earn and buy a piece of playground equipment for your local YMCA. Shoot photos and video along the way and share your experiences.

Is your practice a giving practice? Social media marketing isn't just about marketing. Your practice's social media platform provides a systematic, purposeful, easy way to not only better connect with your patients, but to also share and enlist others in giving.

Do a couple of things every year for your community. Use social media to spread the word before, during, and after each event. Could your team help build a



home for somebody in your community through Habitat For Humanity? Could you donate a Lasik procedure to someone deserving? Give away exams and glasses for the homeless? When was the last time you simply had a patient appreciation party? Be imaginative. Good works always come back in spades.

Leverage your team members' passions too! Every person who works in your practice has quirks, and quirks are great things when you lay them out there in thoughtful, interesting ways. People do business with people they know and like. And by the way, just because we've used the word "quirk" doesn't necessarily mean that everything has to be "quirky". Everyday things can work well too! Team members' simple interests, hobbies, challenges, and victories are all storytelling opportunities.

### **Great Content Boosts Clout**

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Did you recently attend a clinical CE course to improve your skill set or learn a new treatment procedure? Talk about it! Don't be technical... Talk about the benefits your patients will enjoy as a result of what you've learned.

### **Great Content Demonstrates Passion**

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Information alone rarely motivates anybody to do much of anything. That's because there's no emotion or passion tied to it. It's not human. In your social media marketing efforts, are you connecting with your patients and prospective patients on an emotional, personal level?

Don't get us wrong... When we say "personal level" we're not saying you need to tell everyone in the world that

you had a Reuben sandwich for lunch and it gave you heartburn. What we are saying is that people like doing business with people they know and like on a personal level—and being warm, transparent, humble, and imperfect are traits that human beings like in other human beings.

### **Great Content Connects**

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Social media marketing in your optometry practice is primarily internal marketing. It's based on one-to-one relationships and communications. Unlike traditional marketing, success is typically realized through connections with small numbers of patients and prospective patients, combined with great strategy, interesting content, and passion. Focus first on these meaningful connections and build from there.



**ACTION ITEM:** 10 Facebook Wall Post Ideas

*Subscribe for Free!*

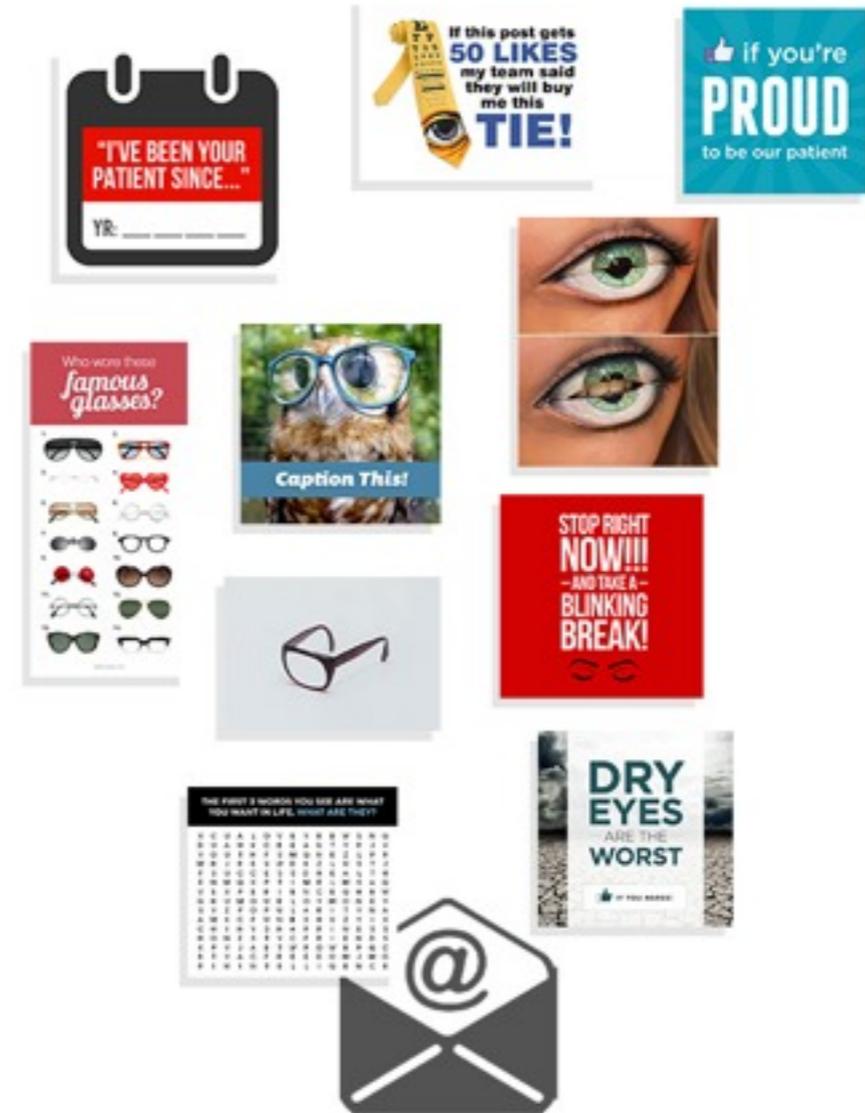
# 10 **facebook.** Post Ideas For Eye Doctors



Emailed to you daily over the next **10** days!

If you'd like a little jumpstart in your practice to help you start seeing what engaging Facebook wall posts are like, we're happy to email you 10 Free Facebook Post Ideas.

You'll receive one in your inbox each business morning for 10 days. We're confident they'll help!



**Subscribe Now!**

## #4 Online Tools Are Vital, But Secondary

Various social media apps and tools will always come and go. Your practice's complete social media marketing strategy shouldn't be dependent on any one account or network over which you have little control.

Don't misunderstand. Networks and tools like Facebook are very important. We spend a lot of time helping our clients be more effective using them. In the beginning, it's fine to simply have a Facebook page for your practice. In fact, today it's the very best place to start. But an important objective over the long run is to begin building your own platform as suggested in the graphic.

***The various tools shown as spokes are often referred to as "outposts".*** Outposts are places designed to garner attention and start conversations. They're places to make friends. They're places to show interest in others. They're places where you begin earning patient trust and making connections. And although outposts help distribute your content, they're typically not places to promote dentistry. Outposts also point back to your capture

point or "Social Site"—typically an opt-in-subscribe, blog-centric site that becomes the foundation for email marketing, promotions, event announcements, blogging, etc.



*Your Social Site is often the blog-centric, opt-in-subscribe foundation for email marketing, promotions, blogging, and integration of all your tools.*

As you create various accounts, organize them into a platform, and participate in conversations over time, you begin to build a framework... a system... a structure... a foundation... a stage... and a mindset and habits that support bigger marketing opportunities. If you wait until you need a social media platform to start creating one, you're too late.



### **ACTION ITEM:**

Create Your Practice Facebook Page OR Add A New Outpost

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If your practice doesn't have a Facebook page yet, **create one today!** If you already have a page set some goals for increasing your Likes. Here are four tips:

- 1) ***Make a goal to ask 3 patients a day if they'd be willing to Like your page.*** If they *already* Like your page, invite them to check-in for a prize. Prizes may include a \$5 gift card, a water bottle, a tube of toothpaste, lip balm, etc.
- 2) ***Hold a friendly competition between team members.*** Have each team member share your practice's page on their own personal Facebook pages. See who can get the most friends to Like your page!

- 3) ***Run a promotion.*** Choose a fun prize you would like to give away. Set up an entry form online where the first step to enter is to Like your page on Facebook. Also incentivize people to share your promotion on their own Facebook page for additional entries.
- 4) ***Have some buttons made with the statement "Ask us about what we're doing on Facebook".*** When asked, tell your patients the *benefits* of Liking your page! Be sure to role play these conversations beforehand so team members are comfortable.

If you're feeling good about your Facebook proficiency, it may be time to add another tool. Consider Pinterest, Instagram, or a blog!

## #5 Consistency Is The Secret Sauce

Measuring success seems so foreign with new marketing because we tend to only hear about the big viral successes in social media. Stories about YouTube videos that “go viral”, garner millions of views and propel a personality or business into stardom overnight. That’s not real life—nor is it a good strategy for your social media marketing. It’s like planning for retirement based on the hope that you’ll win the lottery.



The great news is that you don’t need your efforts to go viral to realize remarkable benefits. One Like on Facebook is a victory. One comment on your blog is cause for celebration. Every retweet on Twitter matters.

Here’s one reason why... Don’t forget that prior to starting down this road, you had nothing. No online connections. No online listening. No online conversations. One is a 100% increase. And remember, you’ve not only connected with one valued person, but as importantly you’ve also started earning permission to connect with his or her trusted, highly scalable network(s).

Practices that are consistent and patient absolutely enjoy social media marketing success. We see it time and time again.



## ACTION ITEM:

Take Just A Little Time This Week

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- 1) ***If you've already been using social media for awhile***, spend a few focused minutes this week going back through your blog comments, @tweets, and Facebook Likes, comments, and shares. Make sure that you've responded and shown gratitude to every person who has paid attention to you—again, no matter how small.
- 2) ***Make sure your settings are such that you're pinged when people comment, post, or message you***. The assumption is that if you're consistent and reliable here, you care about consistency and reliability in everything your practice does, including your eye care services.
- 3) ***Never purchase fans, followers, or Likes***. Never use any type of “auto responder” service or application. These tactics are of no value for a optometry practice and they compromise your strategy. Just embrace your fans and prospective fans—one person at a time.

SOCIAL MEDIA ROI	
FOR OPTOMETRIST PRACTICES	
<b>1 Greater Retention</b>	Reducing attrition by even 1% through relationship-based marketing can mean thousands in savings each year. It's much more profitable to retain a patient than to replace a patient with a new one.
<b>2 Increased Case Acceptance</b>	Commonly called “the million dollar filing cabinet”, social media makes a dent through education and “stories that spread” about new and previously recommended treatments and services.
<b>3 New Patients</b>	Social media marketing is primarily internal marketing. Word-of-mouth on steroids increases referrals and generates top-of-mind awareness. New patients aren't one-timers, they're keepers who appreciate you more and spend more.
<b>4 Added Practice Equity</b>	A deep-seated digital marketing presence, following, and strategy reaches well beyond lightweight SEO services. It's not only far more sustainable and effective, but it's always an important contributor to practice valuation.

# Conclusion

If you're not yet benefitting from social media marketing in your practice, today is the best day to get started—and it doesn't need to be difficult. In fact, you already have a loyal tribe of friends, team members and satisfied patients who are willing and able to help spread your practice story through social media.

Designate a point person in your practice. This should be someone with a willing attitude who loves your patients and can focus 10 minutes a day on social media marketing.

If you're already using social media, implement more of the ideas from this white paper. Get a little help if you need it (of course we'd love to have you as one of our My Social Practice valued clients). Practices that integrate the right mindset into their efforts and make a small commitment of time and energy experience great success.

Purposeful tactics driven by thoughtful strategies result in clear benefits that help grow thriving practices. And don't forget to have some fun with it too.

## About The Author:

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**Jack Hadley** is one of the founding partners at **My Social Practice**. My Social Practice provides affordable, highly creative ideas, content, social media strategy, and personal support to dental and optometry practices. Jack also teaches Social Media Marketing to MBA students at BYU's Marriott School of Management. Contact My Social Practice at [info@mysocialpractice.com](mailto:info@mysocialpractice.com) or call **(877) 316-7516**.