

THE DENTIST'S GUIDE TO FACEBOOK



smileMARKETING 
New Patient Dental Websites

INTRODUCTION

Social Media

is, by definition, websites or applications that enable users to create and share content for social networking. And if you've come across this eBook, you're probably wondering if putting in the work to nurture your social media channels, particularly Facebook, with engaging posts, photos, and helpful content is really worth your time.

The answer is a resounding "Yes." But not for the reasons you might think.

Participating in social media as a dental practice will not only help round out your online marketing strategy for a cohesive approach and support your website's SEO, but also build a sense of patient community, which can in turn boost referrals and improve retention. It will not, however, be your primary source of new patients.

So, why do it?

For years, we have helped healthcare professionals across the world grow their online presence. In that time, we've collected our own knowledge and exclusive data driven results on what it really means to have success (and realistic expectations) when it comes to the world's most popular social media channel—Facebook.

Join us for a step-by-step look at how to get the most from Facebook.



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HOW FACEBOOK CAN BENEFIT YOUR PRACTICE

Through years of research and experience, we've learned that Facebook is just as important as having a mobile-friendly website, a strategic SEO plan, and fresh blog posts. And like those important aspects, you've got to be "all in" when it comes to committing to social media if you're going to see results.

Facebook is an outlet that can help grow your practice in three ways:

1 Improved Patient Retention

Right now, your patients are on Facebook. They're liking photos, sharing posts, and becoming fans of local businesses just like yours. When you develop a Facebook page for your dental practice, you're building a channel that can be used to reach many current patients with the click of a button.

When you've built a network of your patients on Facebook, you get the unique opportunity to stay fresh in their minds with fun and engaging status updates, or posts, made on your page. This helps solidify your status as their go-to dentist (and subtly reminds them to schedule their next cleaning!).



2 Boosting Referrals



Because you're connecting with so many of your patients on Facebook, you're putting your practice in a position to get more referrals. Why? Because the posts that you make on your business page have the ability to reach your Facebook fans' friends, people you aren't necessarily connected with yet. But most importantly, being engaged with your patients on social media shows you care and keeps you top-of-mind, which leads to increased referrals.

3 SEO Benefits to Your Website

Sharing links from your website as posts on your Facebook page can help you gain more qualified traffic. Even though Google does not advertise that a highly shared social media post that links to a content piece correlates with higher website rankings, we've seen this prove true time and time again.

WHY YOU SHOULDN'T EXPECT NEW PATIENTS

You may have previously been told that Facebook is an excellent way to get new patients. Noticeably, this is *NOT* on our list.

Why? Because Facebook is not a search engine.

When patients decide they're in the market for a new dentist, they typically turn to Google, not Facebook. They search for a dentist near them by typing something like "Little Rock dentist" into the search bar. After Google returns results, the user will sift through websites that show up on page one. *Your website*, the hub of your online marketing activity, is what drives new patient traffic to your office.

Facebook assists your website by offering social proof. By being linked from your website, your Facebook page is available for visitors to find, read positive reviews, learn more about your personality, and imagine what it might be like to be your patient.

Sure, someone might pose the question "Looking for a new dentist. Any recommendations?" on Facebook, and one of your happy patients may respond with a link to your Facebook page. And sure, you can run ad campaigns to try to get new patients (which we will touch on later). But guess what they'll do right after clicking to your Facebook page? That's right... visit your WEBSITE.

When it comes to converting new patients, Facebook plays a supporting role.

SETTING UP A BUSINESS PAGE FOR YOUR PRACTICE

Before we get into the logistics of setting up a business page for your dental practice, now is the time to promise yourself (and your patients) that your Facebook page will be kept up and active.

There's nothing worse than visiting a social media channel that has been inactive for weeks, months, or even years!



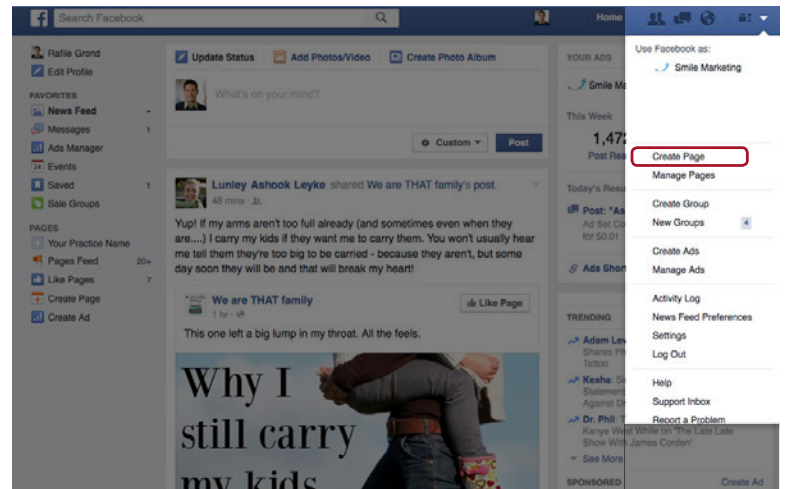
GETTING STARTED

Within Facebook, there are personal profiles and business pages. Personal profiles are what you create to keep in touch with friends and family. You get and make friend requests to follow each other. Business pages, what you want for your practice, are public pages people can “like” to follow.

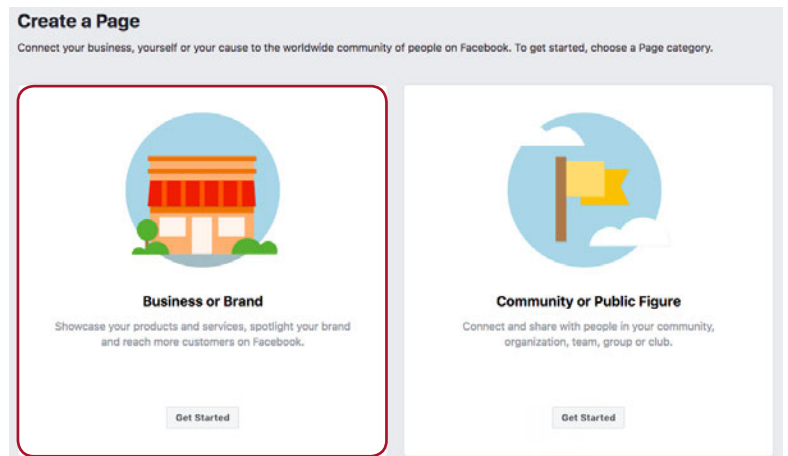
Setting up a business page for your dental practice is free, easy, and takes less than 20 minutes to accomplish. To begin, login to your personal account. You must have a personal Facebook profile in order to create a business page. If you don't have one, sign up [here](#).

Step 1 Create Page

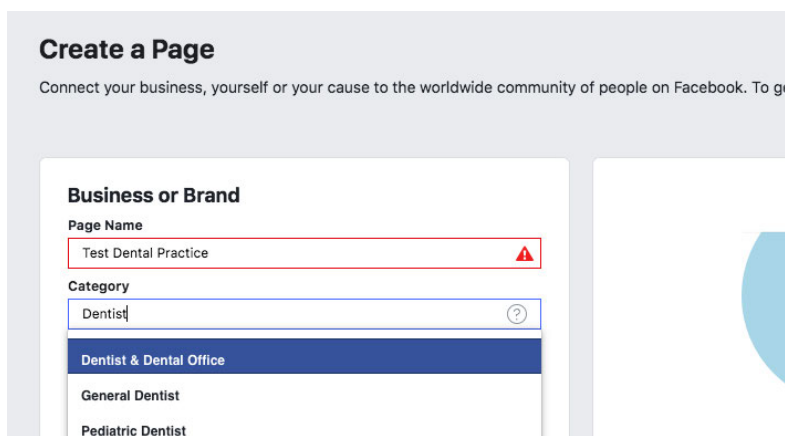
While logged into your personal Facebook account, click the dropdown arrow in the upper right corner and select "Create Page." You'll then be directed to choose the type.



Select "Get Started" under "Business or Brand."

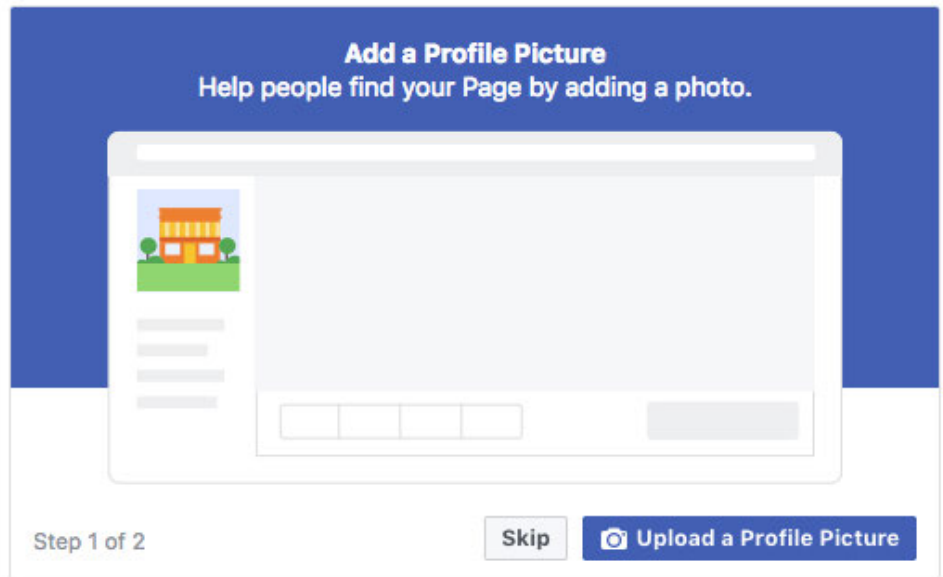


You will now be prompted to enter your business's name and category – Dentist is an option! Enter your business's information and click "Continue".

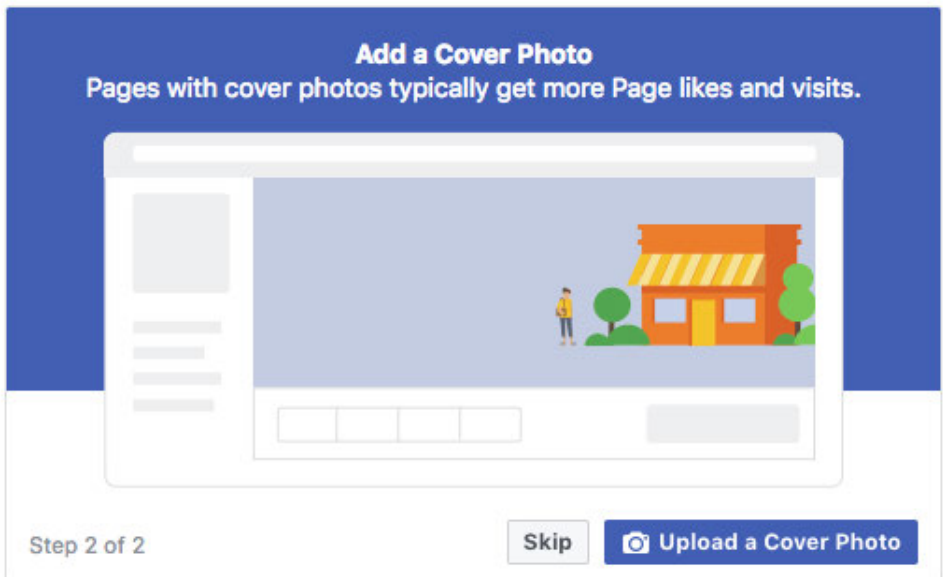


The next section will prompt you to add a profile picture and cover photo. You can do this later as well but it's nice to have it done all at once.

When it comes to selecting your profile picture, using a practice logo is often a great place to start.



Your cover photo is a great place to showcase an image of your office and staff! If the sizing of your photo doesn't look quite right, visit [Canva](#) to resize your image to 851 x 315 pixels.

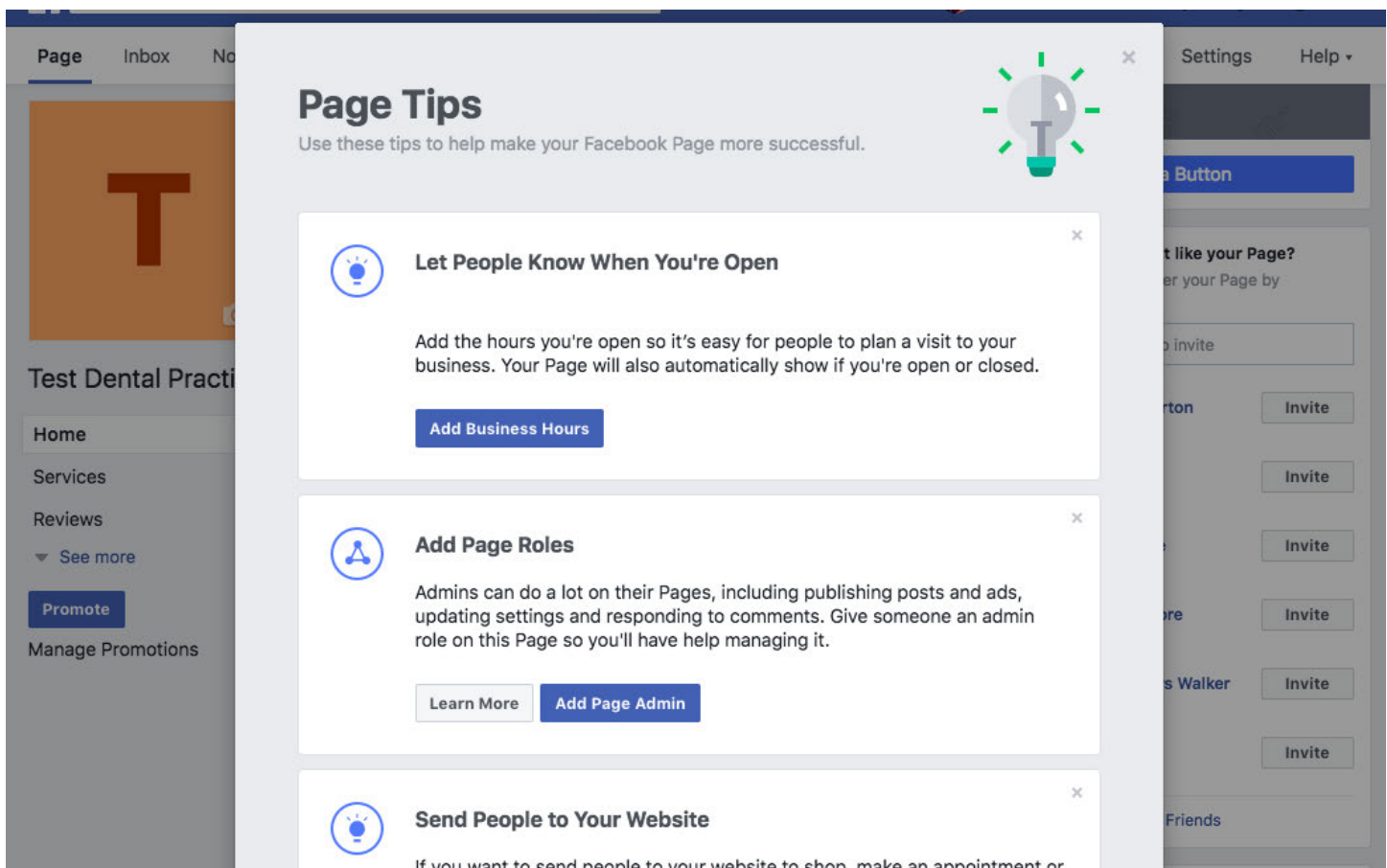


Step 2 Your Business Page

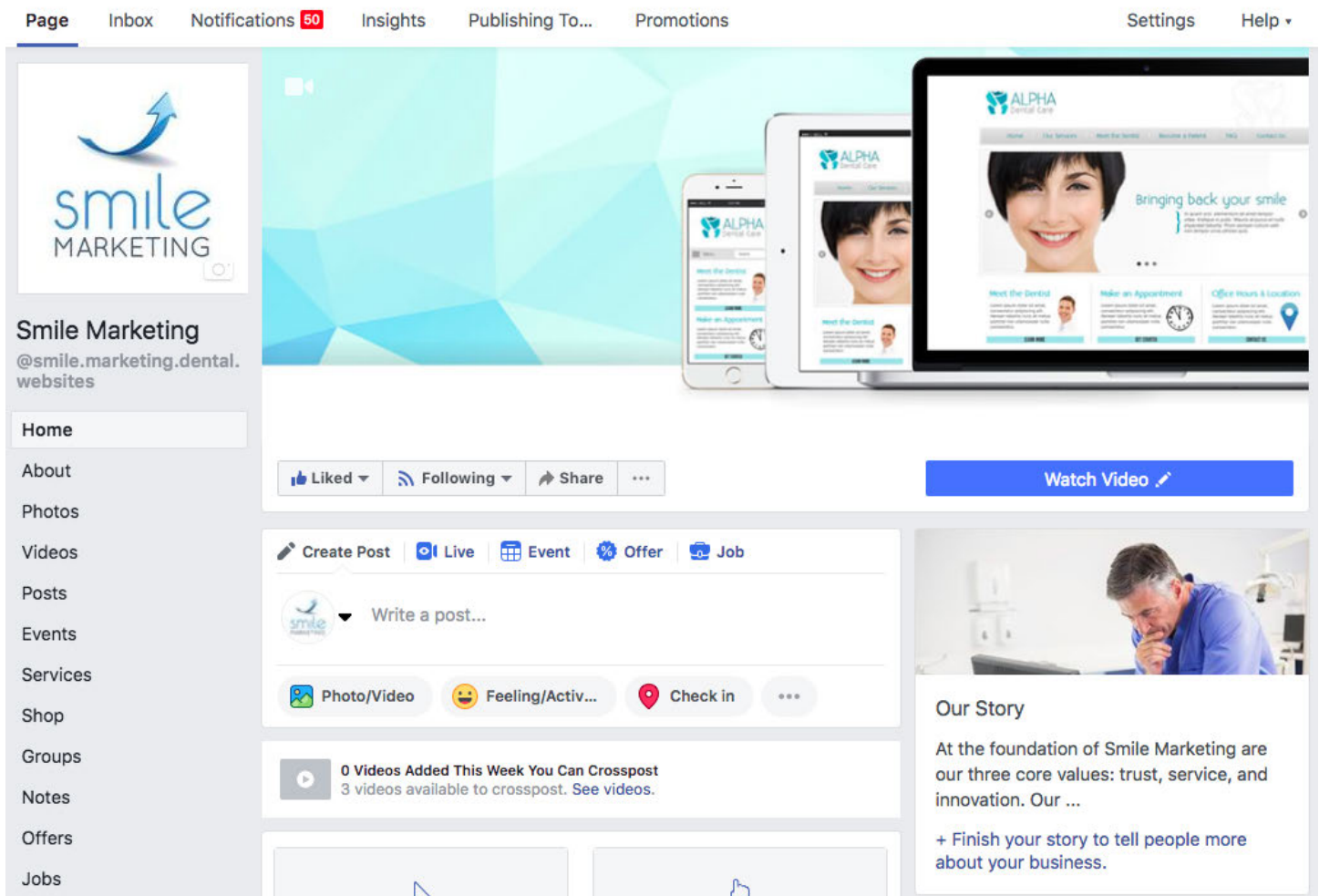
Your business page is now set up, but we aren't quite done.

Facebook will have little sections highlighted with a walk-through of how to fill out your profile. Click on "See All Page Tips" in the box on the center of your page to see the options of what needs to be updated.

You'll need a brief bio for the 'about' section, business hours, and a link to your website. Filling out as much of this information as possible will help your patients find you on Facebook.



Facebook integrates with all your Internet marketing efforts, including the design of your website. This is why it's critical that your branding is consistent. You want attractive social branding that matches your overall practice branding to add credibility, build trust, and drive social engagement.

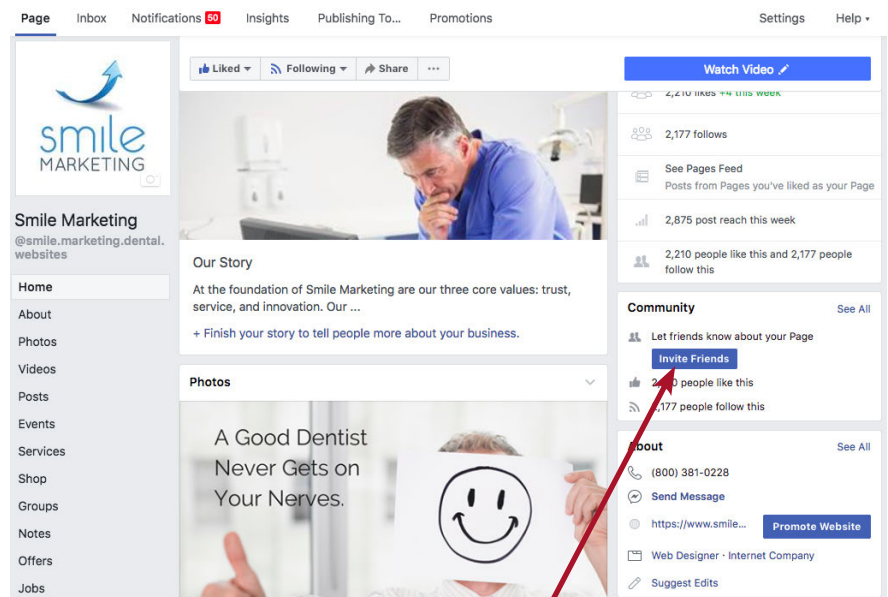


The screenshot displays a Facebook page for "Smile Marketing". The page header includes navigation tabs: Page, Inbox, Notifications (50), Insights, Publishing To..., Promotions, Settings, and Help. The profile picture is the Smile Marketing logo, and the bio lists the handle @smile.marketing.dental and the website smile.marketing.dental.websites. The cover photo features a blue geometric background with a smartphone, tablet, and laptop displaying the "ALPHA Dental Care" website. Below the cover photo are interaction buttons: Liked, Following, Share, and a Watch Video button. The post creation area includes options for Create Post, Live, Event, Offer, and Job, with a "Write a post..." text box and media selection buttons (Photo/Video, Feeling/Activ..., Check in). A video post section indicates "0 Videos Added This Week You Can Crosspost" and "3 videos available to crosspost." The right sidebar contains a "Our Story" section with the text: "At the foundation of Smile Marketing are our three core values: trust, service, and innovation. Our ..." and a prompt to "Finish your story to tell people more about your business."

Step 3 Getting Fans

Now that your page is set up, you're ready to invite people to 'like' your page. On your page's right hand side, in the "Community" box, click the "Invite Friends" button. Here, you can sort through people that you're friends with on your personal account and ask them to become a fan of your business page.

If you're friends with patients, this is a great opportunity to separate work and your personal life. Consider inviting friends, family, and current patients to like your page by clicking "invite" next to their name. When finished, simply select "Close" in the lower right hand corner.



Invite Friends

To get even more 'likes' for your page, we'll discuss how you can use Facebook advertising later on in this ebook.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD POST?

The most important part of running a Facebook business page is making great posts – they should be insightful and promote engagement on the part of your followers. Here's how you can take your posts from ordinary to great in three easy steps.



1 Ask Questions

OLD POST

Happy Monday, everyone!

IMPROVED POST ★

We're making the most out of Monday!
What are you doing to make Monday great?

2 Welcome Interaction

OLD POST

Don't forget to brush your teeth twice each day.

IMPROVED POST ★

Brushing your teeth twice each day can help prevent gum disease, cavities, and bad breath.

"Like" if you brushed your teeth this morning!

3 Include a Call to Action

OLD POST

We're running a new patient special!

IMPROVED POST ★

We're running a spring special
— **\$99 for a cleaning. Call today to book your appointment before this special is over.**

Bonus Tip: *Keep in mind that each post makes an impression on your fans. Make sure grammar and spelling is always accounted for.*



BEST PRACTICES FOR DENTAL FACEBOOK POSTS:



Aim to post once each day.

If this seems like a lofty goal, Facebook lets you schedule posts in advance. Do this in your free time once a week and you won't need to remember to post every day. Or, see if a staff member can add this into their daily routine.

Share visual content. People love images, especially on social media. In fact, [studies show](#) that content paired with a relevant image gets 94% more views than posts without an image. Fun ideas include motivational quotes and images, humorous (but appropriate) dental jokes, and patient testimonial videos.



As a bonus for downloading this ebook, you'll find five images at the end that will help you get started!

Include links to your website in posts. We mentioned earlier that your website should be the hub of all online marketing efforts, including Facebook. Make sure you're staying true to this idea by periodically sharing relevant links back to your website. If you frequently add new blogs to your website, sharing them on social media is a great way to achieve this.

WHAT NOT TO POST

Just as important as what *to* post, is what **not** to post. There are some things that you should avoid on your practice Facebook page, such as:

Graphic pictures of dental cases

While you may find photos of your extreme cases interesting, your patients will find it off-putting. When in doubt, don't post it.



Pictures of dental equipment

This can be a source of anxiety for many patients. There's no better way to discourage a patient from scheduling an appointment than by posting a picture of high-tech equipment that a non-dental professional would have little appreciation for.



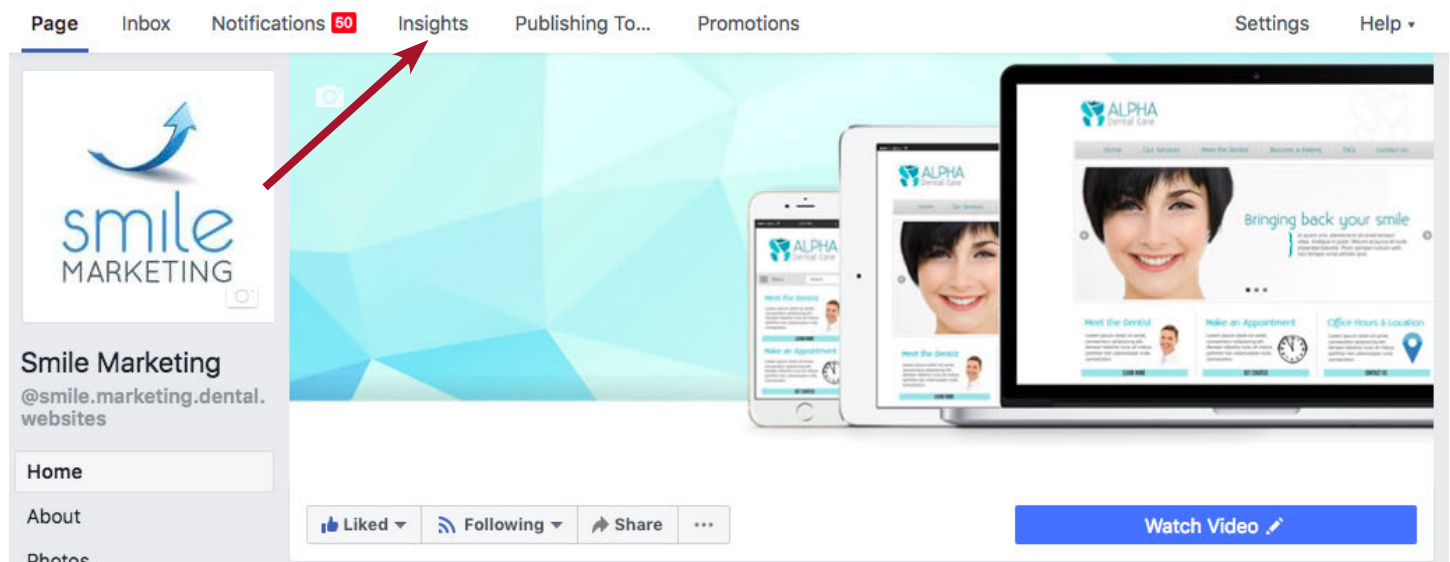
Overly personal posts

It's perfectly fine to present yourself in an approachable manner, but keep the overall tone of your social media accounts professional and don't divulge personal data that would contravene your privacy policy.

GAUGING SUCCESS WITH INSIGHTS

If you can't gauge the success of your Facebook page by how many new patients you're getting, what can you base it on?

Lucky for you, Facebook provides something called "insights," a feature that tracks business page metrics in many different forms. There's only one catch—a page must have at least **35 likes** to unlock this feature.



UNDERSTANDING INSIGHTS

Upon clicking the tab pictured above, your insights dashboard greets you with the following three main categories:

Page Likes

'Page likes' allows you to see your page grow in real time. Facebook even lets you select different date ranges to pinpoint weeks or months of significant growth. If you're running ads, you can see how many likes came from paid campaigns versus organic traffic.

















Post Reach

How many people your posts are actually reaching is perhaps the most important metric to watch. After all, we want to make sure patients are seeing your content! Similar to the 'page likes' section, the 'post reach' graph shows you how many people, paid and organic, your posts were served to during a period of time. The higher the number, the better the results.



Engagement

The 'engagement' graph measures likes, comments, and shares during a set date range. To see which posts brought in the most engagement, click "posts" in the left hand sidebar. Here, you can see a number for both engagement and reach associated with each post on your page. Delve deeper into common themes associated with higher performing posts and consider adding more to your posting repertoire.

13/01/2016 15:42	 We're excited to talk with every one tonight! Sign up here if you			333		5 2		
13/01/2016 14:50	 There's still time to register for our free dental webinar tonight			128		11 0		
12/01/2016 14:58	 Check out our newest guest post on DentistryIQ.com for 10 tip			380		12 15		

Though insights help to provide a visual form of statistics for your practice's page, don't forget to take into consideration *how you feel* about its performance. If you're happy with how things are improving, your patients are engaged, and if you're putting in the necessary work to keep up your page, chances are it's doing just fine.

BOOSTED POSTS

Sharing engaging posts regularly? **Great.**

Crafting unique visual content for your fans? **Perfect.**

Getting a lot of 'likes' and 'comments'? **That depends.**

You already know that posting regularly is a must. However, [according to Facebook](#), non-boosted Facebook posts to a business page only reach about 16% of fans organically. That means that if your page has 750 likes, just 120 people are actually seeing it.

How can you change that? By 'boosting' your posts.

Boosting a Facebook post allows you to set your own budget and reach fans, friends of fans, or look-a-like audiences for as little as \$1 per day. Of course, the higher the budget, the bigger the reach. To make sure your social media efforts are reaching your audience, consider boosting one post on your page each week for a few dollars. Great posts to boost include special promotions, new blogs, or new services offered.

Here's how:

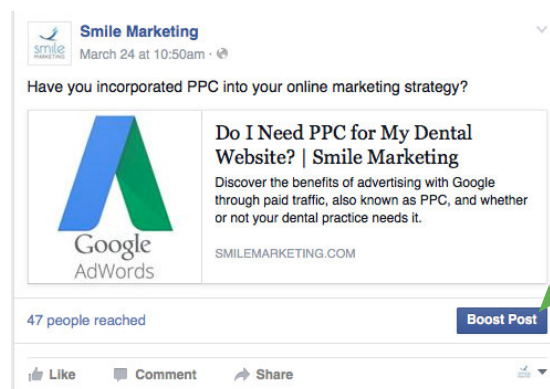
Step 1 Post Worthy Content

A post that includes a link to your website, photos, or a special offer helps to entice users to take notice and click.



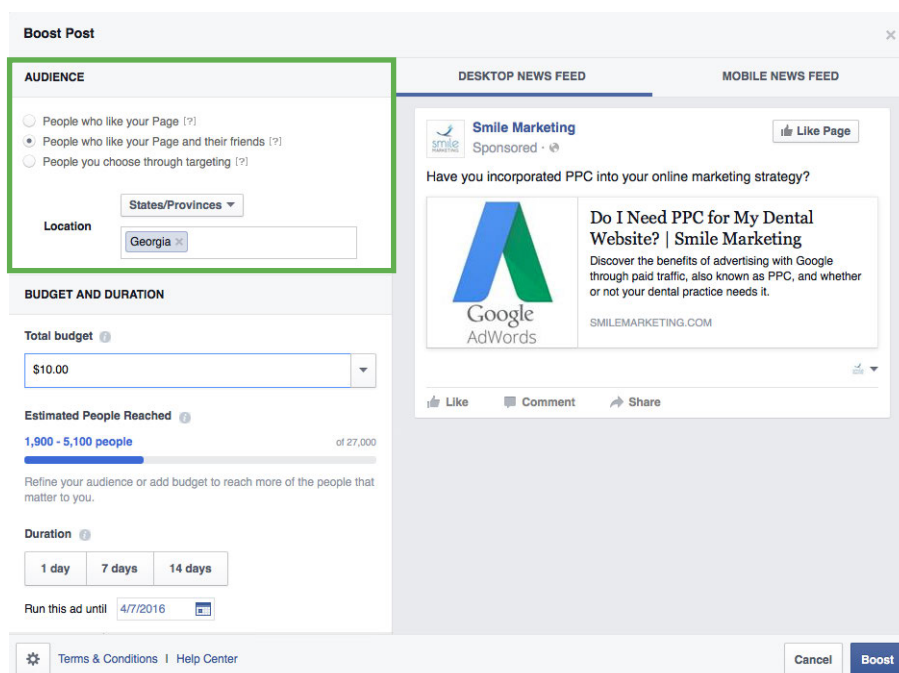
Step 2 Boost Your Post

Click the blue button in the right hand corner of your post that says "Boost Post." You'll be prompted with instructions next.



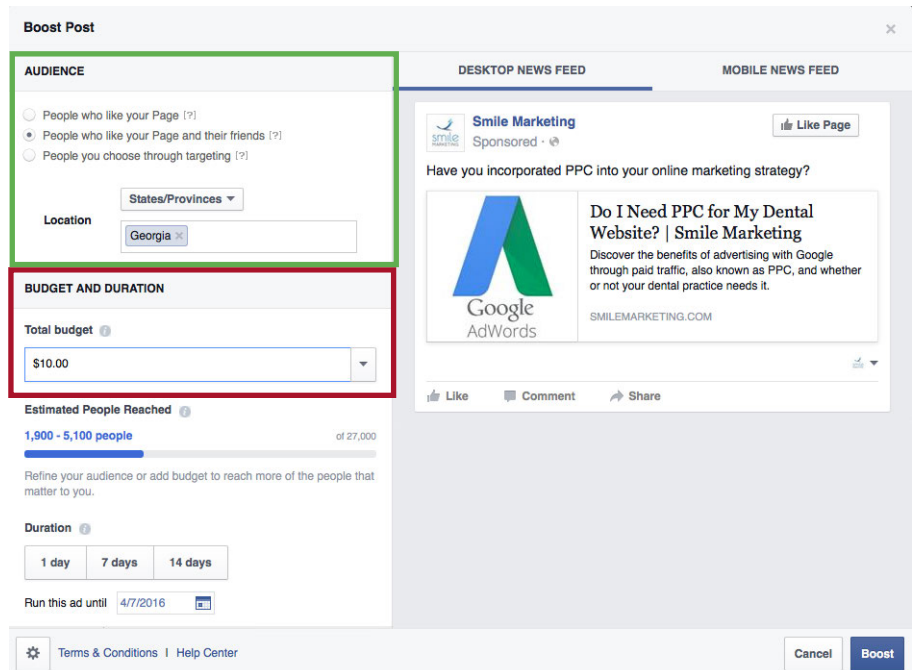
Step 3 Selecting an Audience

To make sure people see your post, Facebook lets you select a specific target audience that can be narrowed by gender, age, and location. This ensures your fans, their friends, and others in your area have the ability to see your post.



Step 4 Setting Your Budget

There's no right answer to how much you should spend on boosting your posts. In fact, Facebook lets you do this for just \$1 per post. To start, we recommend testing the waters with just a few dollars to gauge your results.



Boost Post

AUDIENCE

- ☐ People who like your Page [?]
- ☒ People who like your Page and their friends [?]
- ☐ People you choose through targeting [?]

States/Provinces ▼

Location Georgia ✕

BUDGET AND DURATION

Total budget ⓘ

\$10.00 ▼

Estimated People Reached ⓘ

1,900 - 5,100 people of 27,000

Refine your audience or add budget to reach more of the people that matter to you.

Duration ⓘ

1 day 7 days 14 days

Run this ad until 4/7/2016 📅

⚙️ [Terms & Conditions](#) | [Help Center](#)

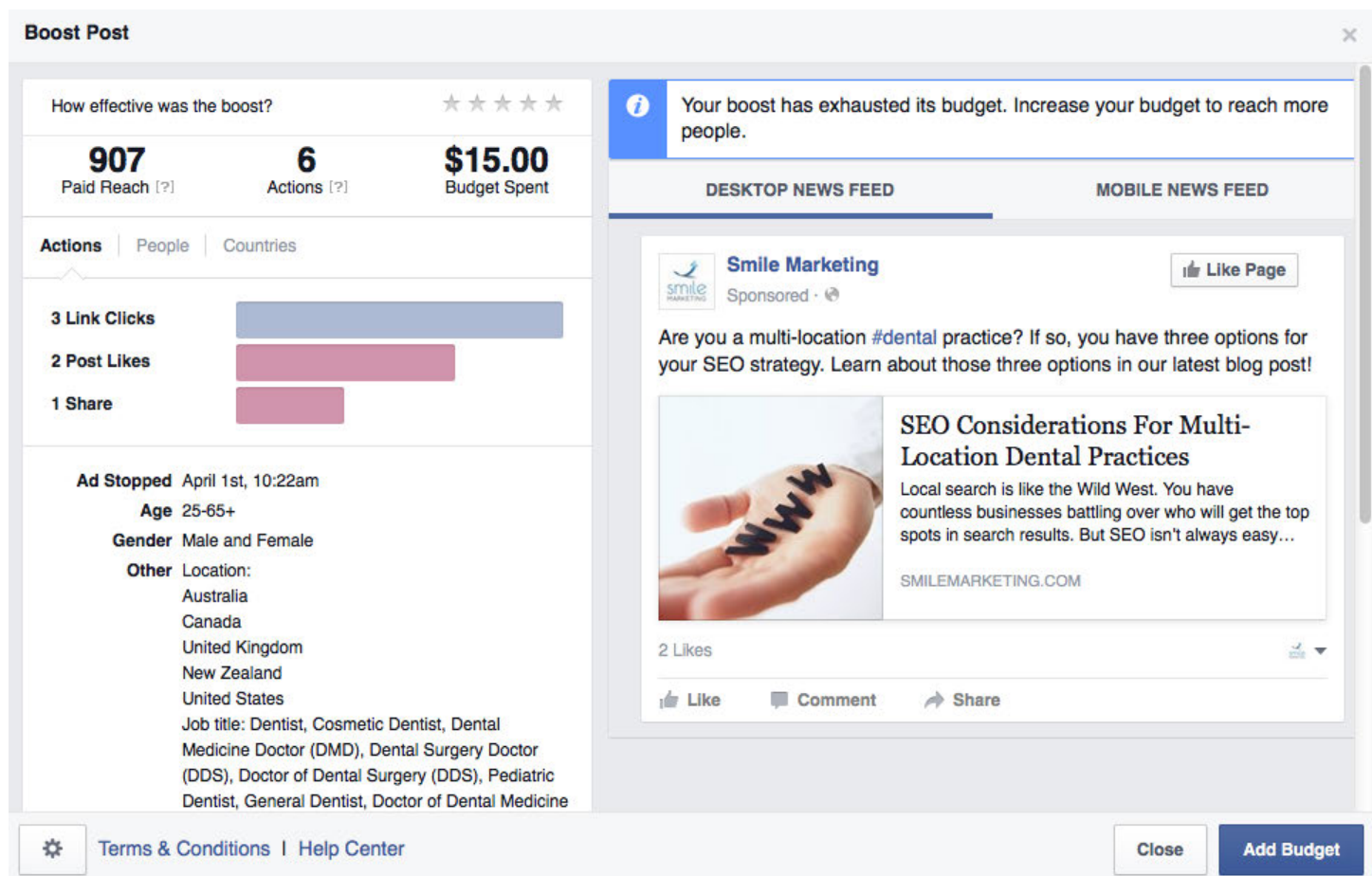
Cancel Boost

Step 5 Payment

Input your payment information and click "Boost Post".

Step 6 Measure Your Results

To find out how your post is doing at any time, click the “Boost Post” button on your post and review page insights. Here, you’ll see numbers indicating how many people were reached, who clicked, and how much was spent.



Boost Post

How effective was the boost? ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

907 Paid Reach [?]
6 Actions [?]
\$15.00 Budget Spent


Actions | People | Countries


3 Link Clicks
 2 Post Likes
 1 Share

Ad Stopped April 1st, 10:22am
Age 25-65+
Gender Male and Female
Other Location:
 Australia
 Canada
 United Kingdom
 New Zealand
 United States
 Job title: Dentist, Cosmetic Dentist, Dental
 Medicine Doctor (DMD), Dental Surgery Doctor
 (DDS), Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS), Pediatric
 Dentist, General Dentist, Doctor of Dental Medicine


Your boost has exhausted its budget. Increase your budget to reach more people.

DESKTOP NEWS FEED | **MOBILE NEWS FEED**

Smile Marketing
 Sponsored · 






Are you a multi-location #dental practice? If so, you have three options for your SEO strategy. Learn about those three options in our latest blog post!




SEO Considerations For Multi-Location Dental Practices
 Local search is like the Wild West. You have countless businesses battling over who will get the top spots in search results. But SEO isn't always easy...

SMILEMARKETING.COM

2 Likes

 Like  Comment  Share

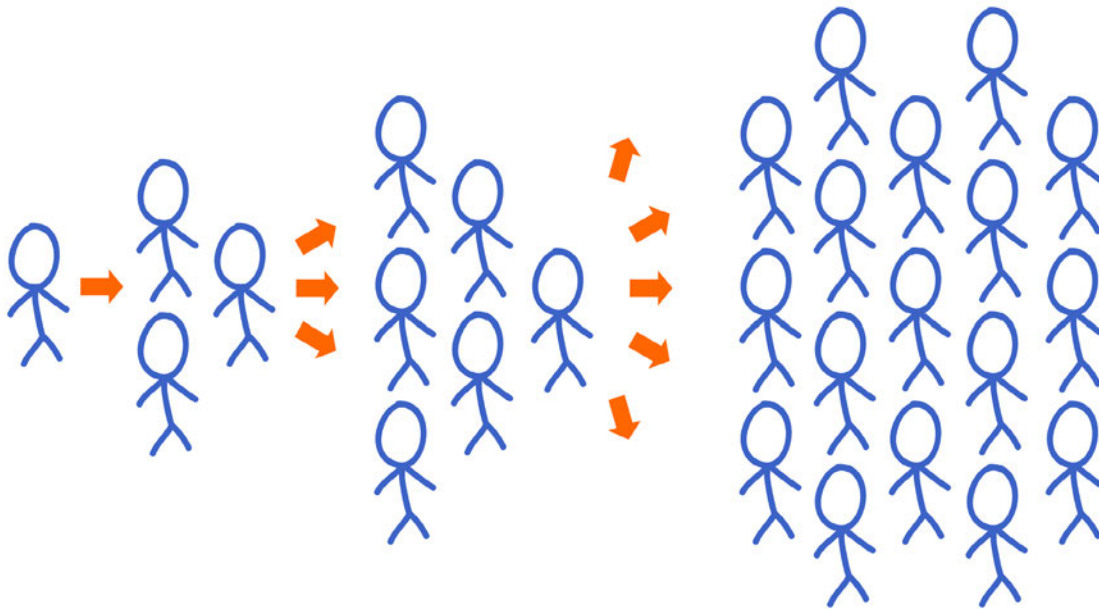
 [Terms & Conditions](#) | [Help Center](#)

Close **Add Budget**

If you like the results that you see, consider making boosted posts a weekly part of your Facebook marketing strategy.

AD CAMPAIGNS

The second advertising option provided by Facebook is ad campaigns. Setting up an ad campaign provides you with more targeting capabilities to reach individuals located in and around your jurisdiction who may need a new dentist and lead them to your website to learn more.



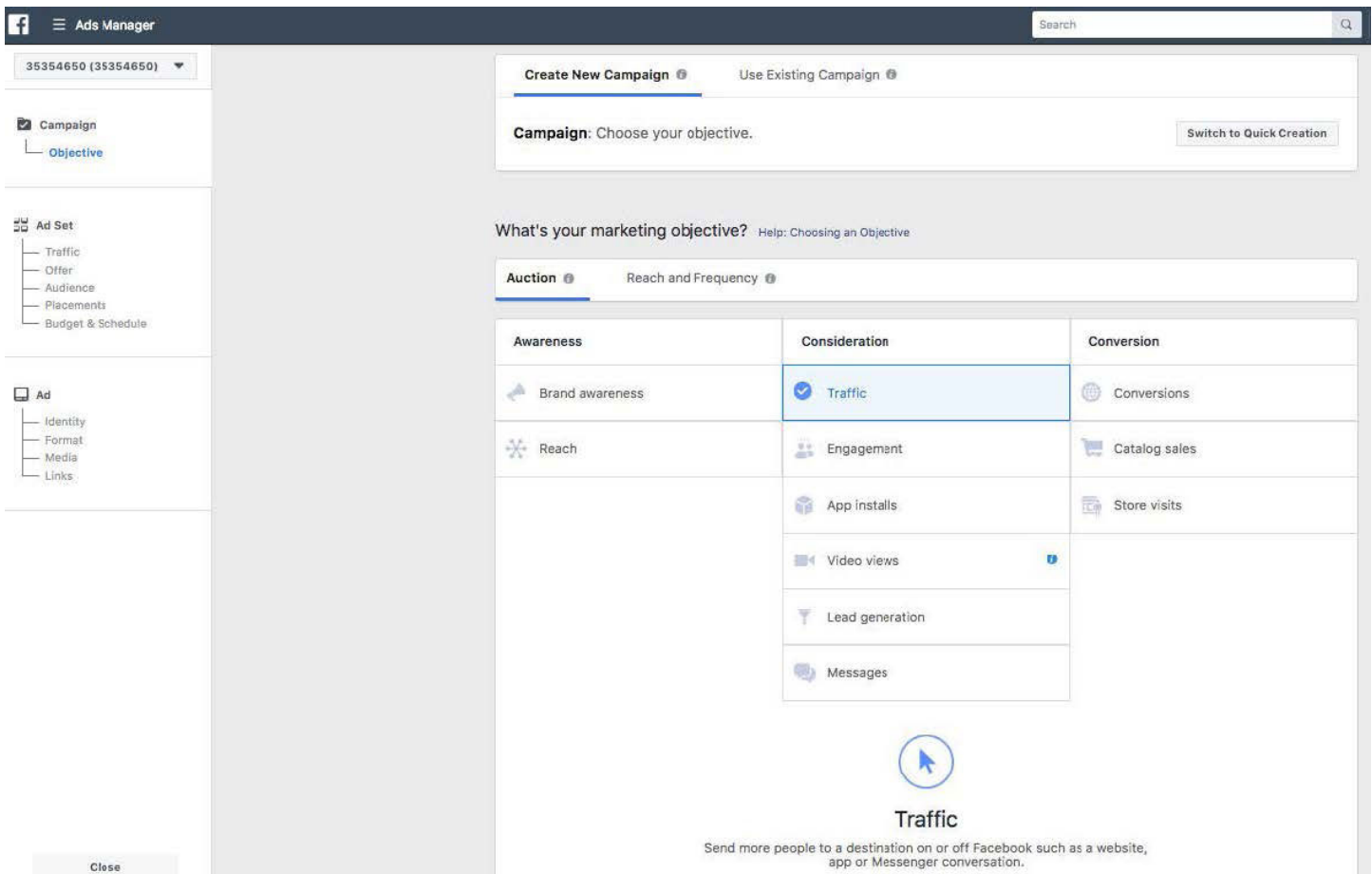
Since these ads link to your website, there is a much higher potential for new patient conversion. If you're a pediatric dentist, you've got the ability to set up a parent-friendly ad shown to only moms and dads. Orthodontist running a special on Invisalign? Target young adults by age.

Like boosted posts, you're able to set your own budget and choose how long you'd like your ad set to run.

If you've never run a Facebook ad campaign before, here's how.

Step 1 Getting Started

Visit www.Facebook.com/business and click "Create Ad". Here, you'll be prompted to select your campaign objective. If your practice page is running low on 'likes', you may want to choose "Engagement" and select "Page likes". If you're more concerned with reaching qualified leads searching for a new dentist, you should select "Traffic", which we'll use in this example. Next, name your campaign and click "Continue".



The screenshot shows the Facebook Ads Manager interface. On the left is a sidebar with navigation options: Campaign, Objective, Ad Set (Traffic, Offer, Audience, Placements, Budget & Schedule), and Ad (Identity, Format, Media, Links). The main area is titled 'Create New Campaign' and 'Campaign: Choose your objective.' Below this, it asks 'What's your marketing objective?' with a link to 'Help: Choosing an Objective'. There are two tabs: 'Auction' (selected) and 'Reach and Frequency'. A table displays various objectives categorized into Awareness, Consideration, and Conversion. The 'Traffic' objective under the 'Consideration' category is selected with a blue checkmark. Below the table, a large blue circle with a cursor icon points to the word 'Traffic', followed by a description: 'Send more people to a destination on or off Facebook such as a website, app or Messenger conversation.'

Awareness	Consideration	Conversion
Brand awareness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traffic	Conversions
Reach	Engagement	Catalog sales
	App installs	Store visits
	Video views	
	Lead generation	
	Messages	

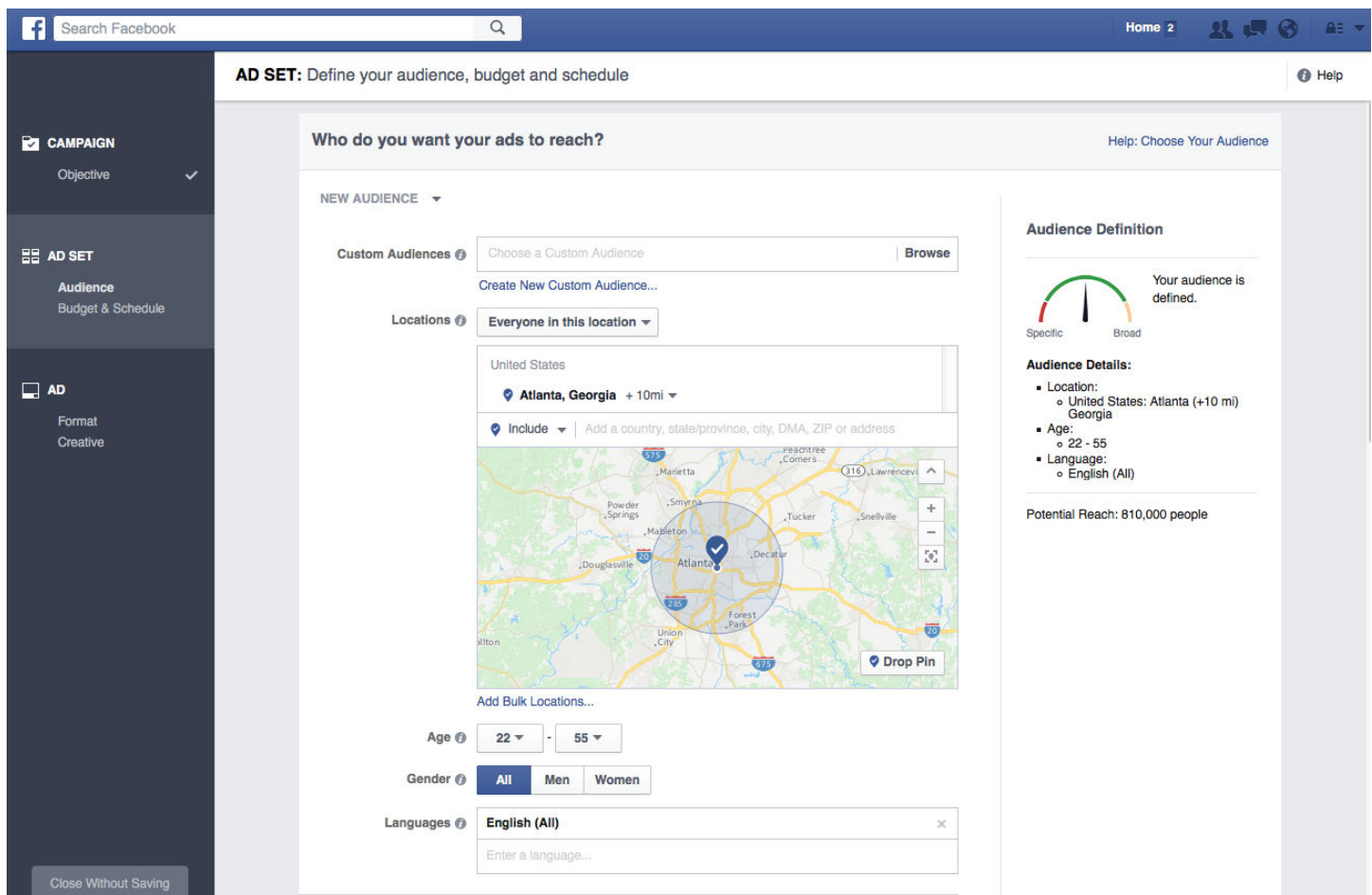
Traffic
Send more people to a destination on or off Facebook such as a website, app or Messenger conversation.

Step 2 Setting Audience and Budget

Since your goal is to bring in more new patients to your practice, deciding to focus on people located within ten miles of your office is a probable approach. If you're located in a larger city, you'll want to narrow your audience by zip code.

Next, you can select the ages of people you'd like to target. In this example, we've selected prospects between the ages of 22-55.

Before continuing, you'll also need to select the gender and language of people you want to see your ad.



AD SET: Define your audience, budget and schedule

Who do you want your ads to reach?

NEW AUDIENCE

Custom Audiences Choose a Custom Audience Browse

Create New Custom Audience...

Locations Everyone in this location

United States

Atlanta, Georgia +10mi

Include Add a country, state/province, city, DMA, ZIP or address

Map showing Atlanta, Georgia area with a 10-mile radius.

Age 22 - 55

Gender All Men Women

Languages English (All)

Audience Definition

Your audience is defined.

Audience Details

- Location: United States: Atlanta (+10 mi) Georgia
- Age: 22 - 55
- Language: English (All)

Potential Reach: 810,000 people

For more specific targeting, consider adding more demographics to reach exactly whom you'd like to see in your office. This is where you can target your ideal patient by finances, education, and more (targeting options vary by country).

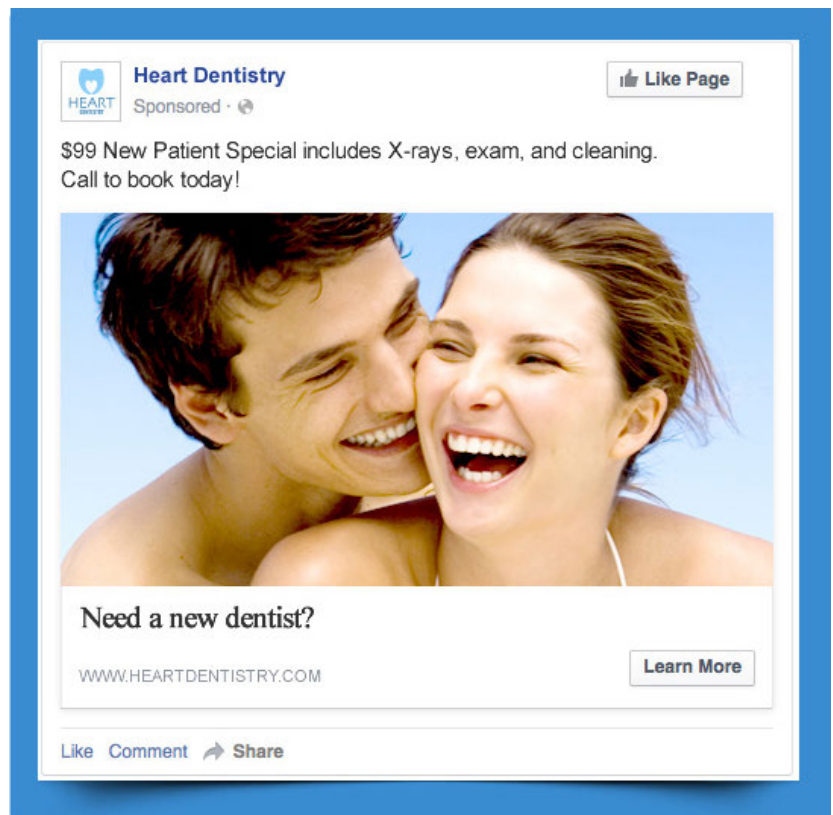
Each ad set needs a budget. If this is your first ad, we recommend starting modestly to gauge how well Facebook ads work for your practice. Spending between \$25-\$50 as a lifetime budget for your new advert will give you an initial idea of success. Facebook will automatically select your ads start and end date depending on your budget. Before continuing on to craft the text for your ad, Facebook shows you how many people your campaign will reach each day. (Note: here you'll notice that you can set your ads to run on Instagram, too, if you'd like. If not, you can eliminate Instagram targeting on the next step.)

Continue by clicking the "Choose Ad Creative" button located bottom right.

Step 3 Creative

Choose whether or not you'd like to showcase one image or multiple images. For best results, make sure each image selected for your campaign is 1200 x 628 pixels. If need be, you can resize images you own to meet this requirement using the free online photo tool [Canva](#) or select a stock photo from Facebook's library.

The content of your ad has two parts—the headline and the body text. In our new patient advert example, we've come up with the following:



Once you've crafted your own text and have selected a call to action button (the default "Learn More" is a great choice), you're ready to finalize your campaign by selecting the green "Place Order" button.

While your ad is running, Facebook will automatically bid on the cost for showing your campaign to your target audience. To see advertisement results like total reach, cost, website clicks, and amount spent, simply visit your personal Facebook accounts home page and click "Ad Shortcuts" and then "Manage Ads" to be taken to your dashboard.

FACEBOOK FOR DENTISTS

As you can see, Facebook is an important component of an effective dental marketing plan as it provides you with an opportunity to connect with your patients outside the office to build your community and, hopefully, retention.

Facebook is fairly user-friendly and something most people use on a daily basis in their personal lives. But as a business owner, the hardest part of using Facebook is coming up with insightful and engaging post ideas! If this is true for you, we're here to help. Our Social Media Content Service is available to dentists looking to engage their Facebook followers with interesting, fun, and thought-provoking content. Learn more about our Social Media Content Service [here](#).

To give you an idea of the types of social media content we provide in our weekly service, download five free graphics. They are free for you to use on your practice social channels!

**Click here for your FREE
social media graphics**

