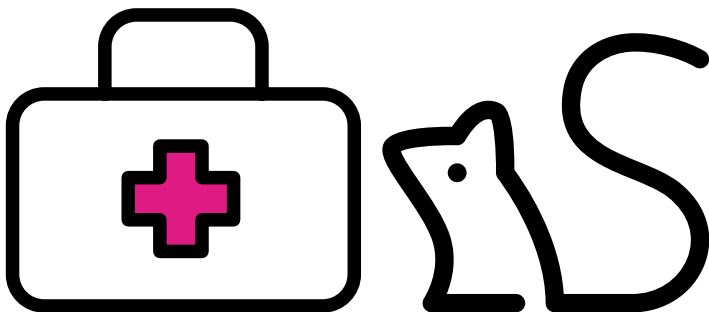


Doctors and medical practitioners

A guide to marketing
your business



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Why do doctors and medical practitioners need a website?

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These days if medical practitioners don't have an online presence it can really work against them. Did you know that 74% of Australians look for services online?

If you're a medical practitioner, developing strong online content can enhance your reputation and attract more patients.

And as the sheer volume of information available online continues to skyrocket, seeking answers to health-

related questions has become more and more common.

So, as a medical practitioner, it's a no brainer that developing online content that is informative and helpful will not only enhance your reputation as trustworthy, competent and knowledgeable, but also act to eventually bring extra patients through your clinic's doors.

In this guide we help you get started with the basics of marketing so that you can fill your waiting room from patients who find you online.

56% of small businesses have a website. Do you?¹



¹ Sensis eBusiness Report 2015

Website essentials

A professional website can play a major role in boosting your profile with your patients. Although before you start out you need to be clear about your audience.

Who is your target audience? What questions are they seeking answers to? What problems do they need solved? How can I answer their questions and solve their problems in an interesting and engaging way?

A website also gives potential patients more confidence in your business and lets them find your health-related advice even after you've gone home for the night.

When choosing a supplier to help create and maintain your website, it should be easy and cost effective.

Now more than ever, website suppliers should be able to give you loads of choice with a variety of website packages and different designs to choose from.

Website must-haves

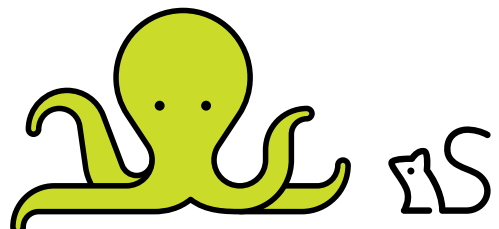
- Simple design – clear information about the type of medical services you offer is vital. It shouldn't be too distracting.
- It should build trust – how you speak to your viewers should be clear, engaging and true to your practice.
- It should work well on all screens including laptops, tablets and mobiles.

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Simplicity is vital

A simple design helps get all your important messages across quickly and effectively, and the reader is never in doubt about the purpose of your website or how to use it.

While it's tempting to want all the bells and whistles offered by a complicated design, keeping clutter to a minimum is vital so that essential information – such as your contact and areas of expertise – is clearly visible.

Ensure your descriptions of the medical services you offer are clear and include photos, videos, client testimonials and FAQs. Keep it simple to read with easy-to-navigate links. Never assume that because you understand your site, others will too.

Also make sure the headlines and body copy on each page mention your suburb and city so that people searching on the internet can easily find you.

Case Study

National Home Doctor Service

Sometimes the best form of digital marketing is achieved by allowing technology to just “do its thing”.

As such, “Australia’s largest network of home visiting doctors” has developed a basic but ingenious website that immediately and strikingly conveys its main selling point – ie. the fact that its services are available on weeknights, weekends and public holidays.

Prospective patients can either call a nationally available number to make a booking or fill in a basic form to receive a call-back.

The site’s front page also clearly states its terms of service – including consulting hours and geographical coverage, and the fact that after consultation, a medical report will be emailed, faxed or posted to reach your nominated GP the following day.



What do your patients want?

In the always-changing world of digital marketing, new ways of promoting your practice continue to pop up, and expectations from patients rise further year on year.

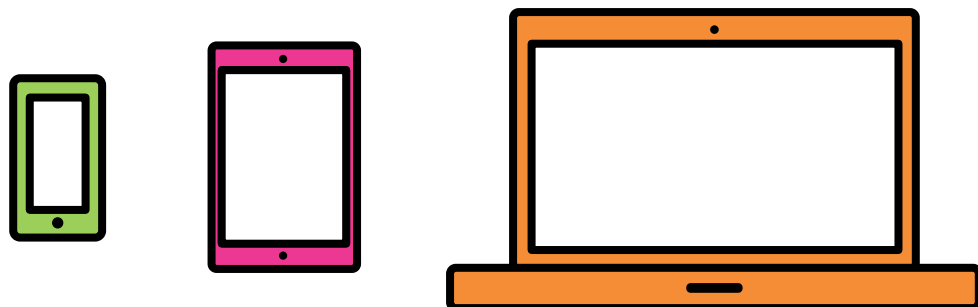
Nowadays medical practitioners in Australia and around the world are offering innovative online content and new experiences for their customers.

An example is US-based Westchester Medical Centre. Based in Valhalla, New York, Westchester cleverly breaks the functioning of its website into six main topics, under the front-page menu heading "I Would Like To". Options include "Find a Physician", "Refer a Patient", "Visit the Hospital", "Make a Difference", "Explore Careers" and "Volunteer".

This menu also reappears around the site, ensuring that prospective patients can access the essentials easily.

The centre has obviously made a concerted effort to build a strong digital marketing platform, and one of the best examples of this is its YouTube channel. The channel features almost 50 clips, ranging from patient testimonials to health advice and staff profiles.

The facility's Facebook page has well over 3,000 likes (the same as its Twitter account) and, among other things, regularly posts links to articles written by its staff.



Good design wins patients

The first mistake many medical practices make is to consider what they want to include on their website, as opposed to what their patients want to know.

The experience a potential patient has on your site will be the difference between them leaving in a hurry or calling you for an initial appointment. Once visitors land on your site, make sure they can find what they're looking for quickly and efficiently.

People are used to certain usability features of the internet. These include business logos usually

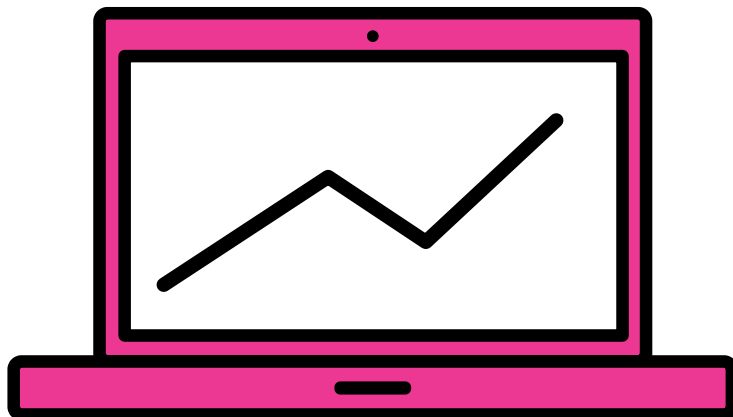
appearing in the top-left corner, an 'About Us' section – which helps them decide whether to engage with a business – and navigations being in the same place on each page.

Websites are read from left to right (in an F-shape), in much the same way as print materials, so put your logo in the top-left corner of the site.

In addition, ensure your site pages are pleasing to the eye and that all the links work. All the pages of your site need to load quickly.

Top tips

- Make sure navigation bars have clear, large links to help people quickly get to the most useful information.
- The 'About Us' section is the second or third most visited page of a website. Make sure it's easy to understand and written in concise language.



Does your website look good on mobile screens?

There's no denying the power of mobile. The mobile phone market is near saturation point, with more mobiles in Australia than Australians.

Mobile sites are often an afterthought for small businesses putting together a website.

Although considering 93% of Australians are online, it's essential that your website displays perfectly in the mobile environment.³

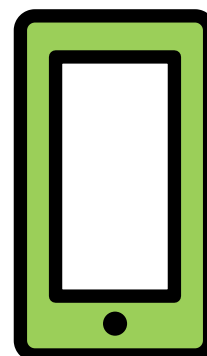
Of course, this also applies to tablets and laptops because often websites built for just a desktop experience will suffer on a smaller, portrait orientated mobile screen.

Typical mobile device users have even less patience than PC users, so just that half-a-second too long and they will move on to another website.

Therefore, you want a website that works on all devices so that your website information can be found quickly and easily by a customer.

It needs to be responsive so that the right information is displayed at the right size for mobile viewing, but most importantly, the site absolutely must load quickly.

35% of small businesses have a website that works well on mobiles. Does yours?²



² Sensis eBusiness Report 2015

³ Sensis eBusiness Report 2015

Is your website linked in to social media?

No matter what kind of practice you're running, social media is a key part of a successful website. It is the new word of mouth – blogs, review sites and social media platforms are now places for customers to turn to for open and honest business recommendations.

You should give your website a competitive edge by showing your customers you're active in their favourite social media channels.

You don't need to use every medium – pick one or two and use them well. A great example is US-based One Medical Group.

The size and scope of this multi-city primary care provider is evidenced by the fact it has managed to attract more than a whopping 100,000 Facebook likes and upwards of 30,000 Twitter followers.

It doesn't bombard its followers either, preferring to post when deemed necessary – sometimes a few posts a day, sometimes only a few posts a week.

Its main website acts as nothing more than a page to click through from to standalone sites for its six locations – San Francisco Bay Area, New York, Washington DC, Boston, Chicago and LA.

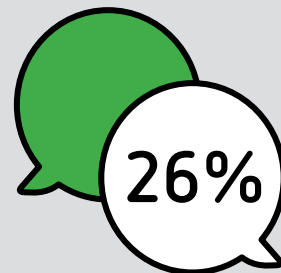
Each area's standalone site does a brilliant job of providing the previously mentioned "must haves", as well as making a strong case for new business through its "A Completely Different Approach" comprehensive pitch.

68%



of Australians use social media

BUT ONLY



26%

of doctors have a social media presence

Can your customers find your website?

Search Engine Optimisation (or SEO) is one of those technology buzzwords you may have heard about but might not fully understand.

SEO aims to boost your website ranking on the internet by influencing search engines, such as Google, so they find your site and rank it high in their search engine results pages.

The better your SEO strategy is the more traffic you're likely to get to your site and the more sales

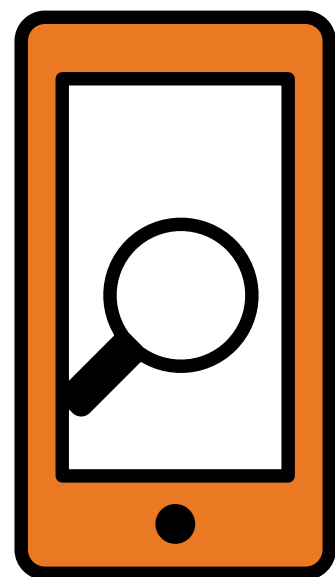
you make. This is why it's important to have a well-written and well-structured website – so that the search engines can easily find information about your business.

Another way to get more traffic to your page is through Search Engine Marketing (SEM) which involves advertising your website on search engines like Google, Yahoo and Bing.

While basic SEO and SEM can be performed by

medical practice owners, many choose to hire professionals in the field to develop a long-term strategy.

Keywords are the terms people enter to perform a search, and they are also the main marker of relevance for search engines. Here's an example. Many banks will advertise for 'mortgages' but most consumers will search for 'home loans' so make sure you have the right keywords.



Online directory listings

Another way to ensure potential customers can find your business easily is through an online directory or a printed directory.

According to recent research, the Yellow Pages® book reaches more than 11 million people across Australia and of those people, 69% who found a business contacted them with 60% going on to make a purchase.

Yellow Pages® extensive online network can boost your business' online by ensuring it can be found however your customers are searching.

Another one of Google's recent updates has actually focused on online directories so that businesses listed will be ranked higher in search listings.

Want more information?

[Sign up here](#) to get the latest news on marketing and small business trends delivered directly to your inbox with our Nutshell newsletter.

If you'd like to know more about the benefits of a website for your business or learn about the other marketing solutions we offer, talk to one of our experts or visit www.sensis.com.au

