

# The 60/30/10 Rule of Marketing for Prosthodontists

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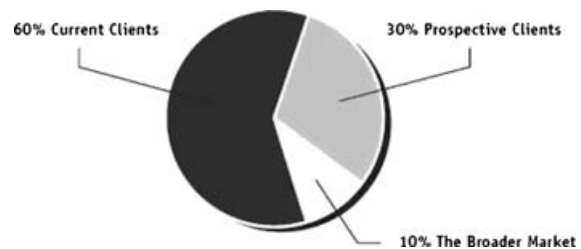
One of the questions we get frequently is, “Where should we spend our resources in marketing?” The answer is...it depends on how well you and your practice have evolved. If your practice is ready for an external marketing effort, and you are willing to embrace the risk that comes with it, then allocate your resources generously in those avenues. If your practice is not ready, and you are not really sure of what you are doing, then it is best to stick to the highly efficient 60/30/10 rule of marketing.

External marketing can often be an expensive and non-productive effort that leaves you quite deflated after a good run. Most “marketing specialists” will tell you that in order to see specific results in any campaign, you have to stick it out for at least 18 months. While that may be true in some cases, exposure and repetition are not the only elements of a marketing campaign that prove to be gauges on how successful an effort actually is.

In truth, you can waste a lot of your cherished and limited resources on external marketing if you do not follow a simple rule of thumb.

That is why, after a couple of careful questions, I tell most Prosthodontists to use the 60/30/10 rule. This rule has been used by a lot of marketing specialists in the last few years, most notably by authors Michael McLaughlin and Jay Conrad Levinson of *Guerrilla Marketing* fame. McLaughlin says, the key is to allocate your marketing resources—your time, energy, effort, and budget—appropriately. You must find the right balance in marketing to three groups:

1. **Existing Clients**
2. **Prospective Clients**
3. **Broader Market**



The 60/30/10 rule allocates resources in the following manner:

1. **Current Client Efforts:** This market includes active patients in your practice...most specifically, the ones you enjoy working with. Activities include (but are not limited to): improving yourself (behaviorally or clinically), improving your business to better attract and keep the patients, appreciation efforts to current patients and referring specialists, enhancing your website, improving the esthetics and ergonomics of your physical space, enhancing your practice newsletter, “thank you” cards and referral letters, rewarding realtors who send you patients, fun and exciting patient appreciation gatherings, taking beautiful patient portraits, random acts of kindness for wonderful patients, before and after care calls, and most importantly...inviting new referrals.

Most practices skip over developing this first category when patient flow slows down and move on to the next two categories. This is a costly mistake.

2. **Prospective Client Efforts:** This market includes people who could potentially benefit from your dentistry (directly or indirectly) but just have not worked with you yet. Some of this market includes the specific demographic that exists in the highest percentage in your practice. Activities include: search engine optimization, contacts with specialists who do not send you patients yet, attending/participating

in events that patients who fit your ideal demographics attend, networking with spas and health clubs, writing a column in the health section of a publication, meeting with neighboring businesses, participating in local charities, getting involved in organized dentistry, networking with plastic surgeons, MDs, and other health care professionals.

3. **Broader Market:** This market includes everyone else not in the other two groups. Activities include: external marketing that includes advertising in a major newspaper or high-end publication, mailers, radio interviews and ads, large-exposure PR opportunities, press releases, billboards, television ads and interviews, etc. The broader market is a horribly inefficient area to spend resources if the two others have not been extremely well developed.

McLaughlin says, "The key is to find just the right balance in marketing to these three groups. The 60/30/10 percentages are rules of thumb, and are not set in concrete. If you're just starting a practice, you'll expend more of your marketing efforts attracting prospective clients. As your practice grows, move toward the 60/30/10 percentages."

Your game plan has to be well-thought-out and then executed appropriately for your practice type, profit level, and philosophy. If you have a mature practice and it is struggling with new patients, there is usually an obvious reason for it. You have to find out what it is. If you do not, you will always be guessing, and chances are, you will be focused on spending your cherished and limited marketing resources in the last two groups.

Bad move.

If you are looking at the long haul of being effective with your marketing efforts, it is probably best to embrace your team's ability to think creatively and stick to the 60/30/10 rule. You will be glad you did.

See you on the road,

Kirk

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