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Research

### Facebook marketing in contemporary orthodontic practice: A consumer report

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#### Abstract

##### Background

The introduction of Facebook has brought additional marketing opportunities to orthodontic practice. Social media-based marketing is different from traditional marketing strategies due to its interactive nature. The aims of this study were to determine consumers' perceptions of Facebook marketing and to determine which features of orthodontists' Facebook pages are the most effective in attracting patients.

##### Methods

This survey-based study contained 35 questions and was administered to 140 individuals. The respondents were aged 18 years or older and represented various ethnicities. This study determined which types of marketing activity are most effective in attracting

patients through the social media venue Facebook. The majority of the survey items were formatted based on a 5-point Likert-type scale.

## Results

Eighty-two percent of the respondents considered themselves to be active Facebook users. Forty percent indicated a likelihood of visiting an orthodontist's Facebook page before receiving treatment at his or her practice, with approximately 35% indicating that the Facebook page would be an important factor in their decision. The respondents indicated that there were key elements of Facebook that would attract their attention and help them to make their decision about where to receive treatment. Consumers indicated that the most important Facebook marketing components (in order of importance) are: 1) an orthodontist's credentials; 2) before-and-after photographs; 3) consumer-focused content; and 4) the orthodontist's photograph. Additional components that are effective include a link to the practice's Web site, links to oral health-related educational articles, and the presence of Facebook "likes" and "recommendations."

## Conclusion

A Facebook page may be a useful marketing tool and a valuable addition to other marketing approaches.



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## Keywords

Facebook; Marketing; Orthodontics; Social media

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