

New Patients, Inc. Newsletter

Quick, Tested, Effective Ways to Promote Dentistry



Howie Horrocks

New patients **ARE** your future



NEW PATIENTS, INC.

The marketing firm exclusively for dentists

866-336-8237

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Attracting quality patients to client dental practices since 1989

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Corporate offices:
Oquendo Business Park
5935 Edmond Street
Suite 105
Las Vegas, NV 89118

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Happy Thanksgiving!!

This holiday causes us to dive into this subject: How do you thank patients for their referrals?

First, the predictable caveat: State dental boards each have their own regulations about this topic. Be sure you don't violate them!

There is a concept to fully grasp regarding rewarding referring patients; the Social Exchange vs. the Monetary Exchange. This topic is covered at length in a book called Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces that Shape our Decisions by Dr. Dan Ariely.

Professor Ariely gives us a timely example:

You are having a family Thanksgiving dinner prepared by your mother in law. It's a wonderful meal and you decide you'd like to show your appreciation by offering her \$300. What's her reaction? Likely she'd be insulted. But why? Because you've turned a Social Exchange into a Monetary Exchange.

The same thing can happen with your referring patients.

Normally if you enjoy a cordial relationship with your patients they are more than happy to refer their friends and family if you just ask them. But if you then give them a monetary reward (\$50 off their next visit, for example) it confuses them because you've just turned a Social Exchange into a Monetary Exchange.

So, how do you keep this transaction on the Social side?

You don't make monetary offers. Don't even advertise the fact that they can get some kind of reward for their referrals. What you should do is simply send them a small gift and a handwritten card. The gift can be just about anything like flowers, coffee mug, movie tickets and so on.

Because you've not announced to them that they will be rewarded, the gift comes as a pleasant surprise and doesn't make you look like you're "paying them off."

And that's why little gifts of appreciation work better than money or credits. You thank them for their Social Exchange and you don't try to turn it into a Monetary Exchange.

Happy eating!

An Appeal: We just got word from a dear friend of ours, Dr. Rick Coker in Tyler, Texas. A dentist in his area has suddenly passed away. Rick is trying to help the widow by getting a dentist to come in to take care of the patients. There's been no decision yet on whether the practice will be for sale. If you know of anyone who could help out, please contact Rick at riccoker@gmail.com Thank you!

Have questions? Want to learn more?

You can reach Mark & Howie at:

Howie: whh@newpatientsinc.com

Mark: markd@newpatientsinc.com

If any of you need us, just call 866.336.8237. We will be here for you.

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