

6 Proven Ideas to Improve Your Website and Attract New Patients - Interview With Adam Hampson

Tip 4. Plan for Google™

It often seems that Google™ have taken over the world, so when you build a website you must certainly think about them in the planning process. Search engines, like Google will provide differing levels of organic traffic to a website, which is free, but many people believe that they need to pay for better traffic levels through Pay Per Click (PPC) campaigns, and that's not always the case is it?

It's not. Google is unfortunately the world leader in search traffic, there's no getting away from that, and I think it's not going to go away any time soon. This means that when we build websites and optimise them to try and achieve the most organic traffic possible, we really do just think of Google and what works well on Google.

The most important thing is how your site is built, and then it's the content on your site.

For example, we always start with sitting down and thinking about what those key treatments that we want to push, as I talked about earlier. Then we use several different tools that determine what are the 'key words' and 'key terms' that customers will use to search for those treatments on Google. Then we use those key words and terms or phrases to build the structure of the site and write the content for it. This should then optimise it so that it comes up in the results list of searches by potential clients.

There are a number of other things that clients really need to be aware of, in terms of how their websites are built and how that improves the chances of Google ranking their site above another. A good web design company should explain all this.

Often when a site is built (with Google in mind) and then submitted to Google, it can take between two to eight weeks to see how it ranks. There is also still no guarantees that it will be ranked, and the chances that every treatment page will appear on page one is low, especially if you're in a large city like London where the competition is fierce.

With that in mind, a Google PPC campaign will give you instant Google exposure at the top of the search engine results pages (SERPs), straight away.

People sometimes make the mistake of thinking that this costs a lot of money. If it's specific, if it's geographically targeted and if it's clever, it doesn't need to cost lots of money. But it is about using PPC wisely.

If you're already at the top of the Google SERPs organically, people think that they don't have to do a PPC campaign. Again it's about psychology. If a potential client searches for a treatment in a location where your clinic is number one organically in Google and your competitor is number two, but they also have a PPC advert at the top of the results page, then people are going to see your competitor's clinic appear twice, as opposed to yours which is just once, even though it's above them organically.

People don't always click on the top link, and even if they do, they won't necessarily book an appointment on that site without checking out a few others as well.

So it does pay to have a Google strategy which includes paid and organic rankings.

Sometimes people feel that they have to pay high fees for a long time to a search engine optimisation (SEO) company for getting high Google rankings, that's not always the case. We normally say to clients that we can start getting really good results within a couple of months of optimising a site; you shouldn't have to wait a year or anything ridiculous like that and have extended, long-term SEO contracts.

At its base level Google is a search engine, but nowadays it's a much bigger network with many more products and services that Google provides, such as Google Plus, Google Analytics, You Tube, Google Maps, Google Places for business listings etc. So is it important to integrate as many of their offerings as possible into the function and build of a website?

When Google first released Google Plus, I said to a couple of my colleagues that they will start prioritising rankings for sites with a Google Plus account.

This is because the only way Google will encourage people to use Google Plus is if they prioritise search rankings for customers with Google Plus accounts.

That way it forces people's hands (away from Facebook too) and therefore encourages more people to use it; now I believe that's exactly what Google are doing.

I think having a Google Plus page and having targeted information on it increases the amount of links and content that you have with Google and that's obviously a good thing.

Google are also integrating them much tighter together.

Ultimately what Google are doing is trying to get as much information about you as possible, as much information about your clinic as possible, so that they can then continue to develop much more clever ways of displaying content that the user wants to see.

So the more information that clinics have on their Google Plus page, their Google Maps, their Google Places listings, including their services, then the better chance they have of being found and ranked more highly by Google.

Clinics can also ask their clients to leave reviews for them on Google too and that would all be linked as well. This is a must surely?

This is a really hot topic at the moment and one that we're going to be doing a couple of articles on soon. Basically, the reason why it's a hot topic is because clinics with Google reviews stand out visually better on page one of Google, which leads to more visitors.

When you get reviews, and you see the little yellow stars appear next to your listing, you will get higher rankings. It's better to have several reviews and be in position three of the rankings than to be in position one but with no reviews. People are instantly drawn to it visually if they see reviews, and they're more likely to click it, irrespective of the organic SERPs ranking.

So now we know this and we want the Google reviews, how do you go about getting them?

First of all people have tried giving clients an i-Pad™ whilst they're in the reception or waiting area of the clinic so that they can complete a review. The problem with this is that Google sometimes confuses this and thinks it's the clinic making up their own reviews. This is because they don't recognise the different clients, they just see it as one i-Pad, from one internet connection (one IP address), and they think all of them are being made up by the clinic themselves. We have had a couple of clinics that have genuinely had client reviews this way, but Google haven't published them.

So we're recommending to clinics that they don't give the clients the clinic's iPad or their Wi-Fi code, but instead ask them to leave a review on their own mobile phone or via their own devices when at home. Often, because they'll be signed in anyway on their own devices, they're more likely to leave a review.

Also we have produced nice little Google review cards for clinics to give to clients. The clinic can give them instructions on how to leave a Google review on a business card; that's always a nice little reminder.

What we also find is that if a client isn't going to leave a review there and then or on the same day, which is when the majority will do so, then it's very unlikely that they're going to do it in two days' time. They've often got too much on their plate to do it and they don't have enough time, but sometimes helpful reminders like the business card or a post-treatment email can nudge them towards leaving one in the days following their appointment.

So the answer is yes, we're really looking into how to encourage the most Google reviews possible from a clinic's clients.

Another often overlooked and underused offering from Google is Google Analytics which can tell you about the traffic that's coming to your website, where it's from and what people are looking at on your website. Can you explain why people shouldn't ignore this tool.

Most people know what Google Analytics is, and most people have it set-up, and they read the report, but very few people read the report, understand it and do something about it.

Google Analytics isn't the most interesting read, let's be honest, however it does have unrivalled insight into your website.

What we do is click on some of the primary features available so we can take key information from it that we need in order to understand more about a client's website.

Traffic flow is a really useful one to use, you can see how many people have landed on a page, but not only how many people have landed on a specific treatment page, but where they've come from and where they've gone, and where they've fallen off, when they've left.

So, for example, if one of your key treatments is dermal fillers, and we can see that most people are landing on that page, we might be able to see that when they leave they go to the prices page, or we might find that some people are booking the consultation, but then we may see that more people than we'd like are falling away and they're leaving the website.

We need to then start changing that page and then checking again to see if fewer people are leaving the website at that same page and compare the results.

There's obviously other, more basic things that you can look at in Google Analytics, such as the number of people that are looking at your website on a desktop computer or laptop or on mobile devices such as a smartphone or tablet.

This is especially important if you don't currently have a responsive site as you can find out yourself what percentage of your visitors are using mobile devices. If your site isn't responsive and its getting statistics of 40% to 50% of visitors using mobiles, then that really is all the proof you need to make you aware that you need to change things; you need to rethink the design of your site to make it mobile-friendly.

We always like to take a three month average from the Google Analytics statistics, instead of just one month, because it then takes into account seasonal peaks and troughs. So look at a three month average, look at the number of people that are visiting, what devices they're using to view the site and then look at the bounce rate for that device. It is the number of people that have left straight away from landing on your site. If your site isn't responsive and you have a high bounce rate, then you know why!

So there's rather a lot of things you can learn from Google Analytics and it is very useful. But I think it's about being clear on what information you really need and how to get just that from Google Analytics.

So the best way to ensure that you get the right information is to be very clear about what you need to get from it, don't overcomplicate it or just ignore it thinking it's too complex. It sounds very basic but it's often overlooked.



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With 10 years in the industry H&P Design has become the UK's No.1 Agency for Medical Cosmetic Websites "We've seen many changes in that time including an increase in demand for treatment and tougher competition to attract the same new patients".

H&P Design support clinics in the UK and overseas to grow with successfully attracting new patients using their creativity, knowledge of the industry and expertise in Web design, Google, Marketing and Design.

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