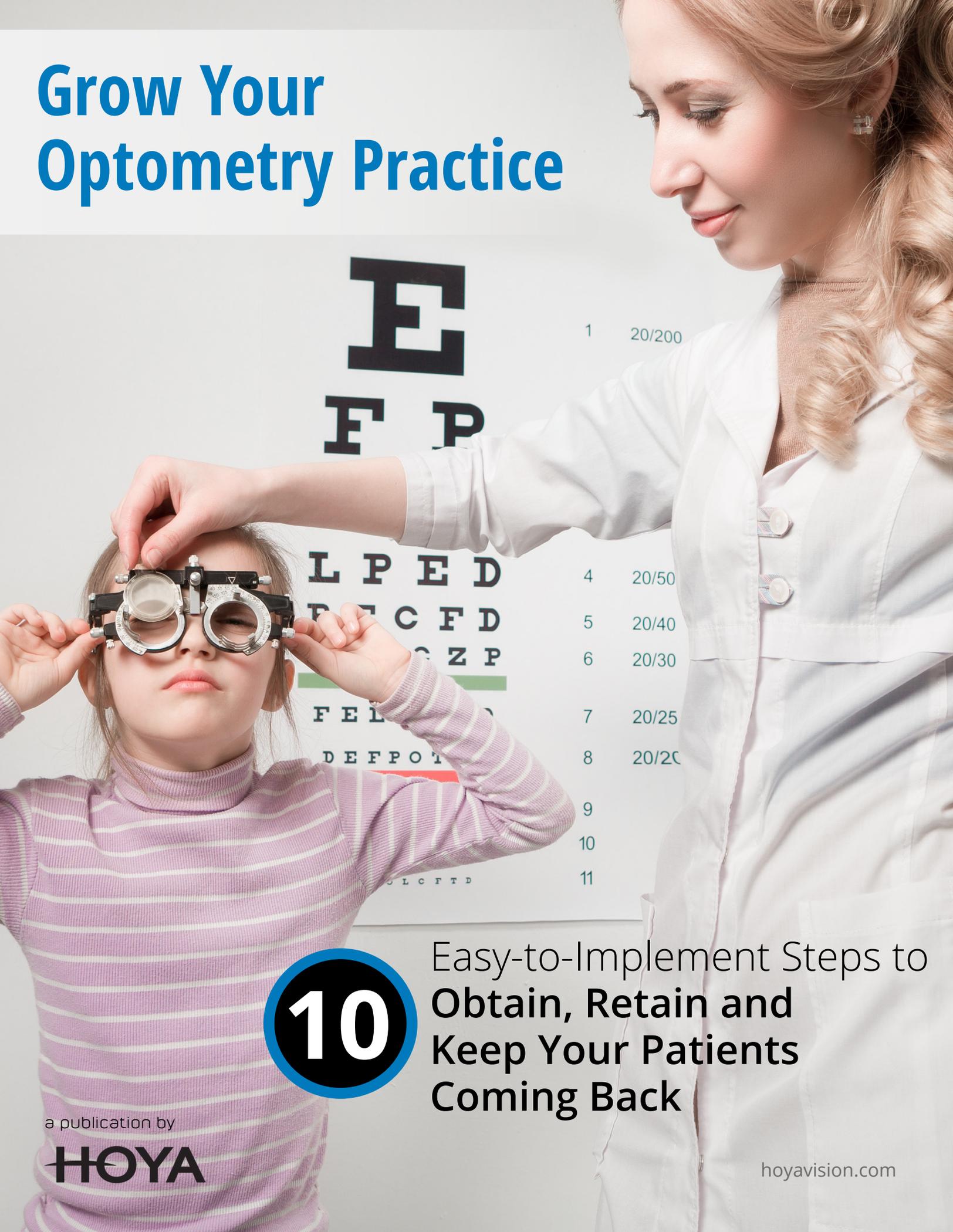


Grow Your Optometry Practice



10

Easy-to-Implement Steps to
Obtain, Retain and
Keep Your Patients
Coming Back

a publication by

HOYA

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Traditional strategies for marketing optometry practices are rapidly diminishing.

Today's patients demand a solution with an intricate footprint in the digital world, accessibility to reviews and educational resources and a strong reputation from their eye care professionals (ECPs). So, how do you grow your practice and keep your patients coming back? The answer lies in these 10 easy steps.

1

Set up your Google Business

When you type “optometrists in Flagstaff” into Google, the search results will indicate what practices exist, their phone numbers, website information, contact information, hours and even reviews. Furthermore, this information shows up on Google Maps, which helps potential patients see how close your practice is located to them.

Setting up your business through Google Business is essential to connecting your physical location with information about your business online.

Furthermore, this is where the customer journey begins for online leads that do not derive from your social media accounts.



2

Set Up Your Social Channels

Speaking of social media, did you know more than 1.55 billion users are active on Facebook each month? Social media is an incredibly powerful marketing tool. It can be used to bring awareness to your brand and practice, or patients can use word-of-mouth advertising to promote or influence your success.

You need to set up your social channels, such as Google Plus, Twitter, Pinterest, Facebook and LinkedIn. Each of these social media channels opens up the potential for garnering more leads at a fraction of the cost of traditional advertising. Basically, social media accounts do not incur a membership fee, and you can use this to your advantage by promoting your practice and connecting with patients on a personal level.

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3

Make Sure Your Practice Website Represents You



How do you connect with patients? Do you pass out thousands of flyers, or are your patients looking for something more real?

The first step in the patient-practice journey is learning to trust your practice.

If this trust is missing, the patient will feel isolated, betrayed, or skeptical, and these qualities can easily decimate your marketing strategy. So, your website needs to represent your practice.

Think about how you would feel if you visited a family physician's website. The website looked nice and focused on great patient satisfaction. Yet, you discover the building is falling apart and the staff is unfriendly when you visit. Would you be willing to visit the physician again? This same principle applies to your practice.

Your website needs to be an accurate reflection of your practice. Basically, you want patients to feel comfortable and trust your staff when they visit your practice after viewing your website.

4

Build a Referral Program

Websites are an excellent way to create a referral program for your patients. Your blog, your linked social media accounts and even other healthcare providers who visit your site will be drawn to your practice. While you might think of a referral program as Dr. A giving out your practice's information, a referral program can start by teaching potential patients how to take better care of their eyes through newsletters and blog posts.

Your referral program is the heart of lead generation and your potential patients should want to visit your practice.





5

Develop a Strong Patient Engagement Process

Engaged patients are happy patients. When you engage your patients, they feel more comfortable and are more likely to support your practice through word-of-mouth advertising and by returning to see your eye care providers in the future.

Furthermore, engaging your patients is how you provide service after the sale.

Use something like a “Frequently Asked Questions” section on your website to provide insight into basic eye health topics. You can apply these ideas to your practice’s website, which helps your patients trust and believe in your practice’s desire to help patients.

6

Embrace Expert Guidance

When learning a new strategy or technique, it only makes sense to turn to the experts for guidance. If you know someone in a similar practice who has successfully grown their patient base, pick his or her brain for what worked and what didn't. You can also research tips and strategies online from experts with proven methods for growing their practice. Webinars in particular are an incredibly useful tool for creating patient growth strategies. In the end, you'll still be able to showcase all the best qualities of your practice, but thanks to expert guidance, you'll know the best way to approach it.



7

Teach, Don't Preach

Should you expect your patients to understand how the anatomy of the eye affects vision, and do they have the time to learn about intricacies of eye health? These questions are complicated, but you have to view your patients as willing students. Patients will want to learn about how to take better care of their eyes, but you have to take an educational tone, not a demanding one.

For example, an optometrist who explains how the eye works and what a particular type of lens does to improve visual clarity shows compassion, resolve and a desire to help. However, an optometrist who doesn't acknowledge the patient's need to understand will only make the patient want to visit a competitor in the future.

Patients want to be trusted and treated equally. Although they didn't go to school for optometry, they deserve respect and compassion. You can accomplish this — and teach them at the same time — by making eye health resources readily available.



8

Promote a Positive Team Atmosphere

A negative team atmosphere is poisonous. Staff turnover rates will be high. Patients will sense the tension in the environment and your practice will suffer. However, creating an environment of teamwork and focusing on the big picture of the practice will greatly improve the environment of your practice.

Your staff should view themselves as critical members of the practice. Each person has a specific set of responsibilities and staff members need to understand that all parts of the proverbial clock cannot function when one staff member strays from the plan. This is critical to ensuring your practice's staff aligns the overall goal of your practice to provide superior service and care for your patients.



9

Develop a Marketing Strategy

How do you plan to bring in new patients? Your marketing strategy gives your practice a plan to help increase new patient acquisition rates, which may be through digital or physical means. Your marketing strategy should focus on why patients should choose your practice. Furthermore, understanding how social media and the digital world impact your business is a key step in developing and maintaining a marketing strategy. Finally, your marketing strategy needs to be adaptable and evolve to meet the changing needs of your practice.





10

Measure: You Can't Improve What You Don't Evaluate

How many referrals does your practice get each day? How many potential patients visit your site, and what parts of your site appear to deter visitors? What's the average cost of closing the sale with one patient? The answers to these questions are metrics and are vital for measuring every aspect of the patient journey. While this may seem like a hassle, it actually allows your practice to identify what areas need to be improved. If you know what is going wrong, you can improve it.



Conclusion

By following these 10 methodologies, you can help your practice grow. Your patients are out there, but you have to convince them to visit your practice and you need to be proactive in growing it.

Learn more ways to grow your practice.

Schedule a Consultation