

HEAT UP YOUR SUMMER WITH TIMELY MARKETING TACTICS

Wendy Lewis offers up
a checklist of creative
strategies to boost your
revenue in the slow
summer months



IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT THAT YOU HAVE any free time left in your day after seeing patients, marketing your practice and attempting to master Instagram and dabbling on TikTok, you may need to shift strategies to cope with a summer shortage of incoming traffic

Depending on where you practice, the summer season is likely full-blown by now. This time of year speaks to sun, sand, surf, and vacays, which can translate to a summer slump. Consumers may be saving up for a family trip or a romantic getaway, which doesn't always drive them into your clinic at a rapid pace.

This post-pandemic climate lends itself well to trying something new and getting creative to engage with your customers. Take advantage of seasonal festivities to ramp up your marketing tactics. Whether you choose to go with summer-themed events, introduce a new treatment to drum up business, or engage more in your local community, there are many ways to keep your aesthetics clinic top of mind for current patients and to attract new ones.

So, if you're ready to step out of your comfort zone, here is a round-up of some summertime marketing ideas that can have you swimming in a steady revenue stream all year long.

Map out the relevant holidays in your market

Get started by dissecting the calendar to identify any special days that may stimulate clever variations on special offers, virtual and/or live events, or bundling treatments and products.

In the US, at least, from Memorial Day, Father's Day, the Fourth of July, all the way to Labor Day, these well recognized holidays offer great opportunities to market specific products and services. For example, Father's Day can help attract more male clients for 'Brotax,' non-invasive body sculpting, IPL treatment and laser hair removal. Labor Day, which falls around the first few days of September, lends itself to a 'Reverse summer sun damage' theme.

Look into some of the trending special days too. Practically every week, day, and month has a growing assortment of themes to choose from to promote your practice. You can find everything from 'International Children's Day,' 'European Bicycle Day,' 'Global Day of Parents,' to 'World Reef Awareness Day,' plus silly themes like 'National Hug Your Cat Day' and 'National Nail Polish Day,' and days named for many kinds of food. These special days may be global, regional and/or local, so choose the

ones that may resonate most with your target audience.

These dates can be especially useful during the summer months to drum up new business with fun contests, timely giveaways, events, and special offers that can benefit your clients as well as your bottom line. In addition, many people have more downtime during summer, which means that they may be more inclined to pay attention to your campaigns.

Live vs virtual events

In many locations, life is finally getting more normalized so that both outdoor and indoor events are taking place. However, many themes can be tweaked to work for indoor as well as outdoor plans, as well as live vs virtual models.

Warmer weather and longer days make people want to be outside, especially after hibernating and quarantining for so long. Look into local events that you may be able to sponsor or participate in, including festivals, street fairs, panels, and other community activities where you can

showcase who you are and what you do. If you are fortunate to have some outdoor space in or around your clinic, like a rooftop or garden, now is the time to light up some lanterns and make good use of it. A barbecue or picnic theme could be ideal for hosting a client appreciation event to encourage patients to come back and spend some time with you. Show your top clients some love by sending a personal invitation and encourage them to bring a partner or other guest. Bringing your loyal clients together can help foster a sense of community around your business.

You may also try a series of intimate live events in your practice. Social distancing is still recommended in many or most locales, so it is best to keep attendance to a manageable level so your guests will feel safe and comfortable. Summer presents with an endless string of ▷

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▷ themes that can entice, surprise, and delight your guests. Some examples may include hosting a ‘Summer Speakeasy’ event to promote skincare and nutritional products and hire a few waiters dressed in 1920’s attire to serve your guests special themed summer cocktails to make it more unique.

Summer means that people tend to have more time to relax. For example, you could partner with a popular yogi or fitness pro to offer a special class for patients who have had or are considering body sculpting treatments. Start with a brief presentation about fitness and nutrition, add some slides of your own results, and offer attendees special pricing if they sign up for a treatment series at the event. If you have limited space in your clinic, you could host the event at a gym or club; however, it is preferable to bring patients into your space so they can make a stronger connection with your brand. Another popular trend to tap into this summer is the post-pandemic emphasis on self-care. Wellness is expanding rapidly into healthcare and consumers are jumping on board.

Well planned events are always a good way to engage your clients. To make sure your events are well attended, you will need to set aside a budget to promote your event effectively. Get the word out about your events on Instagram and Facebook with targeted boosts and promotions to engage with your community and attract a valuable target audience you want to get to know.

People are busy during the summer and tend to travel more, so it is important to keep them informed about events in advance. Email invitations should go out three weeks before the date, and a reminder to be sent out a few days before. You can also promote your events on all your social media channels, but only if they are open to anyone who wants to join.

Rewards and loyalty plans

A loyal customer wants to feel appreciated, like she is a member of a private club. This keeps them coming back and makes them more likely to refer their friend and write glowing reviews for your practice. The more personal the client’s experience is, the more likely they are to spend more and come back more frequently.

Consider rewarding your most loyal clients with a bonus when they have reached a specific milestone. This can be in terms of points, as airlines and hotels tend to use, or complimentary treatments or products. Ideally, you want to introduce the client to new treatments rather than just giving them more for free of what they are already paying for. For example, after a fifth syringe of filler, offer the client 30 units of a toxin. This will help build strong and long term client relationships and make them feel appreciated. Clients who feel appreciated are more inclined to send their friends and family members, and to write 5-star reviews. They can become your cheerleaders if you treat them the right way.

INTERNATIONAL SUMMER HOLIDAYS

June

- Father’s Day (US), Summer Solstice (Northern Hemisphere), Midsummer’s Day/ Eve

July

- Independence Day (US), Bastille Day (FR), Canada Day (CA)

August

- Raksa Bandhan (Hindu), Swiss National Day (Switz), National Girlfriend Day (US)

To find holidays for your market, visit <https://www.holidaycalendar.com/>

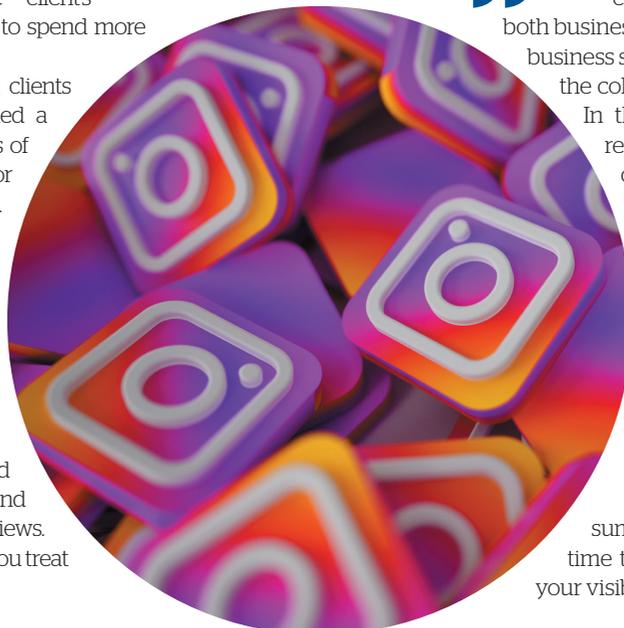
Contests and giveaways

Design a summer photo contest on your Instagram or Facebook to encourage your community to share what they are doing during the summer. Try a “Share your best summer snaps” contest to give them a reason to follow your channels through the summer and tag their friends if there is an incentive attached. This may be a gift of skincare product, or complimentary virtual consultation, or a mini treatment for the two or three followers who tags the most friends or gets the most likes or shares. Contest and giveaways tend to generate more interest if there are several possible winners rather than just one. Consumers will see it as they have more chances to win, so they are more motivated to participate.

Tap into popular giveaway themes to stay visible to your clients even if they are away for some or most of the summer season. By creating a post that encourages consumers to tag their friends for a chance to win a cool giveaway, you are designing a marketing call to action. This brings new engagement to your channels and promotes the services and products you feature in your practice. It is like giving consumers a taste of what they can experience when they come into your practice. You can generate more social media views by allowing customers to enter more than once by tagging more of their friends.

Summer only virtual ‘gift cards’ are a great way to bring in more clients. Design gift cards to fit a summer theme, so if you have a few slow weeks, the gift cards can bring clients in the door, so you can make your numbers.

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Think local

Partnering with businesses that are like-minded is always a good idea. Be on the lookout for potential opportunities to leverage local activities to promote your clinic. For example, partner with a complementary business in your area that has a similar customer base to your own and create a collaborative deal. This can be a win-win for both businesses because it can help generate sales. Each business should utilize their own database to promote the collaboration with a summer-themed package. In this way, you are essentially sharing your resources with a non-competitive business for cross-promotion.

Another idea is to team up with other professionals with whom you may share clients. For instance, an aesthetic clinic may partner with a cosmetic dentist or a popular hair salon where trendy women and men tend to go. This strategy can help to build up both businesses in your local community and foster relationships that may lead to more referrals and collaborative efforts in the future.

Give back to your community during the summer months, when you may have more time to connect with local vendors and improve your visibility in your local community. This effort can

go far to build new or stronger relationships that will pay big dividends year-round.

People like to be a part of something that benefits their community. Try hosting a give-back event in July by donating a portion of sales for a specific day or on a specific service or product to your favourite local charity. This can raise your profile within your community and spread good will. Your clients and staff will feel good that they are supporting a worthy cause and appreciate being connected with a business that cares about their community.

Entice clients with promos and special offers

If you are not keen to offer discounts, which is completely understandable, do keep in mind that competitors and other businesses that offer similar products and services are likely to slash prices when the summer slump rolls around. You can stand apart from the competition by being very strategic with your marketing plan in terms of how, what, and how much to discount.

You may consider creating just three special offers per month and rotate them each month, so they don't get stale. Calculate the cost of the procedure, including doctor or staff time and product used. You may choose to offer special pricing only on the most delegatable treatments, such as laser hair removal, IPL, mesotherapy, peels, and product sales. This will serve to avoid cheapening your brand, yet it will benefit your patients and hopefully keep them filling up your schedule during the slowest months, namely July and August.

Alternatively, some practices have one or two big live events per year where they offer patients 20% off everything. This could be scheduled for June at the beginning of summer to get the best returns. If you try it for July and August, attendance may be limited, so your return may not be as great; however, you may be able to maintain your brand positioning better.

Think of it this way; How does your product or service benefit your target audience right now?

Focus on social and mobile marketing

Even if your patients are summering away from home, you can be sure that they will still be glued to their phones



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and tablets. Don't let your social media activity slip during these critical months. In addition, people are always flipping through their Instagram feeds to see who is doing what and where, so there are captive audiences to target to keep your practice top of mind. Get their attention with creative twists and timely themes that will create excitement around what your practice offers.

For example, step out of your comfort zone and play around with Instagram Reels, their version of TikTok, or Instagram Rooms, which is a Clubhouse copicat. Try a series of Instagram Lives on key topics of interest to stay engaged with your fans and followers. Increase your mobile website-based advertising to reach them and utilize a text messaging program for specials and promotions. Keep in mind that most consumers are more likely to shop when they are relaxed and not under stress.

Summer is also a good time to focus on influencer marketing since consumers have more downtime to engage on social channels. Keep the tone and content relevant to summer skincare, makeup, lifestyle, nutrition, self-care, relaxation, etc., which is what they are most likely to be focused on.

End of summer strategies

By early to mid-August, schools will be starting up again, which will free up some of your patients who have kids to get back to their normal routines of monthly facial, quarterly injectables, and laser and light systems to reverse the sun damage they accumulated over the summer. Send out a newsletter or e-blast welcoming your patients back with special packages for the treatments they are most likely to seek out.

Keep in mind that most of us get bored easily, so they are always looking for something new. The end of summer is also an ideal time to add a new treatment or product line to your menu that you can start promoting before September rolls around to make up any revenue you may have missed out on since June.