

Boosting Dental Practice Efficiency with Live Chat: Modern Solution to an Age-Old Problem

Keeping up with patient communication can be a struggle for many dental practices. In fact, on average, dental practices miss a staggering [30% of inbound calls](#). By failing to connect with patients, your practice could be missing out on significant opportunities for growth, which is why it's important to find a solution that works for you. One of the easiest ways to communicate with patients more consistently is through online chat.

Understanding the Modern Consumer

In today's world of patient care, preferences have shifted considerably compared to a decade ago. One study found that around [79% of people](#) prefer to communicate over live chat options vs. over the phone or in person. Your dental practice should be prepared to meet your patients where they are, with a digital-first approach to communication.

Why Live Chat is the Solution

By offering a live chat option to patients, you're showing them you care about their convenience. Just like Google Maps allows your practice to [communicate with patients online](#), a live chat option can provide the same benefit. Even if your team isn't able to respond right away, people like having the option to reach out digitally, any time of day, 24/7.

[Dental online chat](#) options can reduce the number of missed calls in your practice, lead to more appointments booked, and result in greater patient satisfaction and loyalty.

Advantages of Outsourcing Live Chat

Of course, being responsible for a 24-hour digital messaging service is not an easy feat. Maintaining a live chat service for your practice requires a consistent effort, which is why outsourcing this feature can be a lifesaver. There are a ton of benefits to [outsourcing dental marketing services](#):

- **Reduced Labor Costs**

Choosing a [dental marketing company](#) for chat management is a cost-effective solution for your practice. Rather than hiring a digital marketing employee, or spending time you don't have responding to messages, you can rely on professionals at a fraction of the cost.

- **Redirected Phone Traffic**

Often, people are calling into your practice because they simply don't have any other options for communication. Outsourcing a live chat option to a [dental marketing company](#) allows you to filter out non-essential calls, allowing your team to focus on in-person patient care.

- **Professional Management**

Another perk of outsourcing your dental live chat is that you're putting it in the hands of trained professionals. For specialized digital marketing agencies, fielding consumer questions is their bread and butter. You'll be able to rely on responses that are professional, well-written, friendly, and helpful.

Do You Still Need to Provide Other Ways to Communicate if You Integrate Chat?

Yes! In fact, the more channels of communication open to your patients—the better. Along with live chat, patients should have several other options for reaching out including phone calls, submitting a contact form, texting, and even messaging [your practice on social media](#).

Rather than *replacing* other forms of communication, live chat *repairs* the overall flow of patient queries to your practice. The option to message your practice at any time can help reach new patients who prefer this form of communication and will reduce missed calls and lost emails.

With live chat, your staff should have more time to answer quality phone calls, make appointments, and help patients in person.

How Live Chat Improves Efficiency and Patient Management

Along with reducing the number of missed calls, and improving the quality of inbound calls, live chat leads to an increased number of scheduled appointments.

Giving patients a reliable channel of communication via live chat will provide your practice with real, tangible growth. It also optimizes your operational efficiency, because team members can spend less time on the phone, and more time helping people in person, especially when you automate with a [dental marketing agency](#).

What to Look for in a Live Chat Service

When looking for a live chat solution, make sure you choose one that has experience in the dental industry and is able to handle a variety of inbound requests.

Look for a live chat tool with the ability to schedule on behalf of your practice. By syncing your calendar with your online chat service, you can save a lot of administrative time.

Live chat should also feature helpful features like direct call transfers for escalated issues. For example, if a patient is experiencing pain after a procedure, the live chat should provide them with the option to speak to someone right away.

Presenting My Social Practice Dental WebChat

At My Social Practice, our patient communication service features a robust live chat system that you can feature directly on your practice's website. When patients visit your website, they'll see an option to chat and can ask specific or pre-programmed questions any time of day.

Our chat function even includes the option to use a chatbot for basic inquiries, making communication even faster. Other features include:

- The ability to manage multiple chats at the same time
- Options for branding and customization
- Moving a conversation from webchat to texting
- Reassigning chats to team members

Start Chatting Today

Now that you understand the importance of live chat, how it can benefit your practice, and how to automate the process, it's time to add this amazing feature to your website.

Whether you want to improve missed calls, see more patients, or improve staff efficiency, My Social Practice's dental web chat feature enables your practice to achieve all of these things and more.

As [dental marketing](#) specialists, we'll be there to help you every step of the way—from installation of the plugin to continued patient communication management. Get a demo of our [premium dental social media service](#) where we do everything for you, and start chatting today.

FAQ

1. Why Should I Add Live Chat to My Website?

Giving patients the option to live chat on your dental website can help your practice grow, improve staff efficiency, and increase patient satisfaction. The modern consumer wants instant gratification wherever possible, and live chat provides that [real-time engagement](#).

Add a live chat plugin to your website and start seeing the benefits immediately. My Social Practice offers [dental live chat management](#) on a professional level, so you don't have to do all the hard work of keeping up with every query.

2. What are the Pros and Cons of Using Live Chat?

Adding a live chat function to your dental website will definitely improve patient satisfaction, but there are always possible drawbacks to consider when adopting a new technology.

The pros of using live chat with your patients include fewer missed calls, better quality incoming calls, better time management, and more scheduled appointments. One study even found that integrating a chat tool led to a [20% increase](#) in conversion rates.

Cons of live chat include using a tool with limited features, finding time to respond, and the impersonal nature that some users feel from chatting with a screen. By [outsourcing live chat](#), your practice can make the most out of this feature.

3. Why Use Live Chat over Email or Phone Calls?

One reason practices are hesitant to adopt live chat is that they feel like they already have sufficient patient communication options. While [phone services are still valuable](#) and important to your practice, many dental offices struggle with missed calls, which means missed opportunities.

Email is a fine way to communicate with patients as well, but it's not as immediate as a live chat option, which can be frustrating. Plus, dealing with a pile of emails in a full inbox is intimidating and time-consuming.

As [potential patients search for a dental practice online](#), you can make yours stand out by offering live chat rather than only providing a phone number and contact form.