

A LIKE IS ONLY A LIKE — FACEBOOK INSIGHTS AND YOUR PRACTICE

BY KRISTIE NATION

With Facebook revamping every few months, it's hard to keep up with the changes and understand exactly what's available on the platform or how to use it. Previously, businesses used Facebook like an individual. Then came the "page," and along with it an overwhelming amount of advice on how to make your practice's Facebook page a powerhouse for traffic to your main site.

There was a mad scramble on the part of page owners to accumulate as many "likes" as possible for their page. It was like Twitter all over again. How many fans/followers can someone attract? Unfortunately, a like is only a like. Users saw virtually no benefit

from Facebook as engagement stalled, despite the fact that studies show people who "like" a business page on Facebook are 51% more likely to buy from that company.

Facebook "Insights" was developed to help users of Facebook pages determine what reach and impact they actually have by providing several sets of data:

- The first piece of data in Facebook Insights is "total likes" (fans). This is the raw number of people who at one point or another clicked "like" and acknowledged that the practice's page exists.
- The second piece of data is "friends of fans." This number represents the second circle of influence. If every one of your fans shared something from your page, this is the number of people who could potentially see it.
- The third piece of data is "people talking about this." This includes anyone who has interacted with your page whether by liking, commenting on or sharing a post, tagging a photo or video, or answering a poll or question.
- The fourth piece of data is "weekly total reach." This comprises everyone who viewed content created on or about your page, including fans and friends of fans.

Of these four sections, the third is by far the most useful since it shows people other than yourself sharing or commenting on information connected to your practice. You can even drill down and see how much of your activity is simple likes, how much is comments posted, and how much is tagging or other actions.

According to comScore — which studies Starbucks, Southwest Airlines, and Microsoft's Bing — impressions are important. But follow-through is even more essential.

Take an example from social bookmarking. Digg was the early viral sharing network. Something made it to the first page of Digg not by merely being present on the network and read by users, but by being "Dugg" repeatedly for extra visibility.

Facebook has the capability to be even more viral than Digg, with other platforms integrating their comment and share platform. These include online news sites that allow you to comment and share using Facebook as the medium right on the web page.

So *how* do you get people to comment and share on your practice's Facebook page?

Three things to remember:

1. Be human and be *nice*. Every time someone "likes" your page, remember to thank him or her, and do not use the same canned response every time. Ask them a question to prompt them to come back and respond.
2. Mix things up. If every single thing you post on your page is promotional, people will tune you out. Some pages get more interest in a funny cat picture with the perfect caption than in a dozen dental facts. And that's OK.
3. Remember to use calls to action. According to a survey by Momentus Media,
 - "Like" calls to action received 0.38% interaction
 - "Comment" calls to action received 0.14% interaction
 - Posts with no call to action received 0.11% interaction
 Likes are easier to get, but an increase in the number of comments or shares will positively impact your practice's online reach! **DE**

KRISTIE NATION is the founder and CEO of myDentalCMO, a marketing consulting firm that provides strategic marketing "treatment plans" exclusively for dental practices. The firm was founded with a mission to prevent dentists from wasting countless dollars marketing their practices ineffectively. She can be reached at kristie@mydentalcmo.com or (888) 557-6443.

