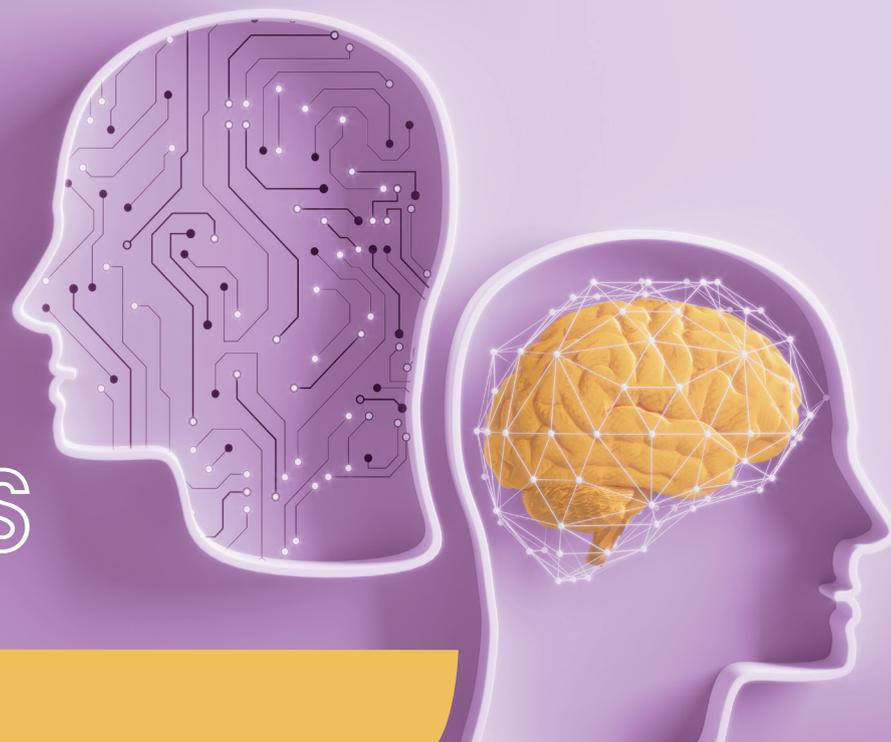


Digital Marketing STRATEGIES



BY FRANCESCO CARONES, MD

The current pandemic has put a spotlight on the use of online initiatives to reach potential customers.

C OVID-19 continues to drastically affect the marketing strategies that are used by ophthalmic practices around the globe. Restrictions, fear, and logistical limitations are some of the barriers that keep our potential customers—the patients—away from our practices.

Historically, one of the most valuable resources for marketing ophthalmic procedures such as refractive lens exchange, corneal refractive surgery, refractive cataract surgery, and ocular surface therapeutics was the on-site experience with the doctors and staff who counsel and educate patients while exemplifying the practice's culture and philosophy. During this pandemic, providing patients with an in-person glimpse into what we have to offer has been nearly impossible. On-site activities such as seminars, receptions, group education, and screening campaigns simply are not feasible at this time.

This harsh reality prompted our organization to increase our use of digital marketing tactics to reach potential clients. Marketing campaigns on websites and social media channels and other forms of online advertising were common in most markets long before COVID-19, but with more competition for the customers' screen time, these tactics alone may no longer be enough to grab patients' attention.

With some creative thinking, we began to identify several opportunities outside of traditional digital marketing that we believe provide patients with something similar to the on-site experience. The aim of these initiatives, described under the numbered headings, is to re-create the patient experience by building a rapport between our practice and our potential customers. In general, we developed and employ these tactics

with the following in mind: A voice conveys more empathy than a written message, a face is more endearing than an image, and a story is more engaging than a single scene.

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WEBINARS AND VIDEO CALLS

Webinars. The following sentence is attributed to Sir Francis Bacon: "If the mountain won't come to Muhammad, then Muhammad must go to the mountain." We have adopted this mindset at our practice. If our clients cannot come to us, we must go to them. We now routinely conduct 30- to 45-minute webinars designed with the same philosophy and approach we used in a traditional in-person seminar. Each webinar is capped at 15 to 20 attendees to ensure that we maintain a personal approach to patient education. After a series of short presentations, we turn our focus to interacting with the patients and answering their questions.

The use of webinars is not only for revenue-generating topics such as surgery and therapeutics. We also design



"Dal cristallino disfunzionale fino alla cataratta"

La cataratta, prima o poi arriva a tutti. E prima o poi il problema va risolto. Forse non tutti sanno, però, che spesso è più conveniente giocare d'anticipo, ed eliminare i piccoli fastidi e disturbi in fase precoce prima che vi sia un vero e proprio ostacolo visivo... e non pensarci mai più! Questo è il tema del nostro prossimo webinar, un nuovo capitolo del CARONES Vision Talks, intitolato "Dal cristallino disfunzionale fino alla cataratta: quando è il momento giusto per risolvere il problema?". Ce ne parla il dr. Carones nella registrazione del webinar andato live l'8 giugno 2020.

[GUARDA LA REGISTRAZIONE](#)



"Quando bisogna portare i bambini dall'oculista?"

Impariamo a vedere nello stesso modo in cui impariamo a camminare. E soprattutto per i bambini, la prevenzione è fondamentale: l'occhio con un difetto non curato è destinato a non vedere bene per tutta la vita! E dunque, quando è il momento giusto per portare i bambini dall'oculista? Ce lo spiega il dr. Vigo in questo webinar, andato live lunedì 25 maggio.

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Figure 1. On this Carones Vision website page, patients can view the practice's recorded webinars.

