



Home Sweet Website Home

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Marketing on the internet is about being found by current and future pet owners. At the dawn of internet, that meant a website built by you or a relative. Flash forward almost 25 years and being found on the internet can occur in multiple locations. However, the only property or platform that a business truly owns is its website. Social media platforms are owned by the company, e.g. Facebook. If today, a platform like Facebook or Instagram decide that your page is no longer in compliance for whatever reason, poof, it is removed. Typically, no warning is given and all the followers of your business can no longer reach you through that avenue.

Google, meanwhile, is constantly trying to grab people's attention—before they even land on your website—through Ads and Google My Business. Recently, Google stated that for some business verticals a "Get a Quote" button will be added to the Google My Business area. My thought is that if this grabs a potential new client for a veterinary practice, then, why not? But, it doesn't give the full flavor of your business because Google controls this space.

Home sweet home

In the swirling confusion of internet changes and updates, a website is the one aspect of a digital marketing program

that is owned and controlled by a business. Everything on the site can be chosen by the practice owner to reflect who they are and the services offered. The site will stay alive until it is taken down by the practice. How this online property is marketed can be controlled and managed with very few surprises. What are the key components to include in your online home?

- **Unique content.** There is no place like home, as the saying goes, and that includes your website. Making sure the content is yours and yours alone is crucial to staying in Google's good graces. Even more, it is one of the few ways on the internet to differentiate yourself from your competitors for your current and potential clients. Pictures that reflect your culture, services and animals you serve can be displayed prominently for people to see. Wording that embraces the tone and style of the hospital can help shape the message being presented.
- **ADA compliancy.** Nowadays, it is important for a website to be ADA-compliant. Many marketing companies (including Beyond Indigo) have a button that can be selected to show the website in a more easy-to-read context for people who need it. Also, websites need to be set up for screen reader software and to be controlled without the use of a mouse or trackpad.

- **Speed and mobile-friendliness.** Google knows that when we search for information on a desktop or mobile device, we want it *now*. No longer is it acceptable to wait. If a person waits much longer than a second or two, they dump the search and try something else. Google knows this and, to keep people using Google, it requires websites to be fast and mobile-friendly. Simply by rewarding websites that are speedy and penalizing ones that are slow, Google can encourage businesses to stay up-to-date or they will not be found. When people search for a topic in Google, all the results they find will be fast-loading and easy to use on a Mobile Device. Check out how your website is doing by going to <https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/feature/testmysite/>.
- **Blogs.** One of the factors Google reviews is fresh content on a website. People want to know a website is current and up to date. For veterinary practices, blogging is the answer for adding content on a consistent basis to keep a website fresh. When Google reviews the website, more new content means more chances to be placed well in various Google search options. Typically, we recommend a hospital aims for a blogging schedule that includes one blog a week, then twice a month, and then once a week, if possible. The goal is to be consistent because it keeps both Google and pet owners coming back to your site if something new is there to be seen.

Your marketing car in the garage

A website today is only one aspect of a marketing system. It can no longer be the sole aspect of a business's digital marketing program. Without a "marketing car," current clients will be hard pressed to find your business on the internet. Why? Because Google and Facebook have declared it so. A vehicle is needed to drive traffic to the practice and its front door (just like a car needs to drive to a home). There are many aspects to the marketing car that can include, but not be limited to:

- Local Search Engine Optimization
- Google My Business
- Google Ads
- Facebook & Instagram Ads
- Social Media Engagement & Management
- Online Reviews
- Organic Search (think the original search)
- Mobile Search

The entire list above drives traffic either to your business or your website, or both. Google requires all of the above are used in order to be seen where people are searching for veterinarians. Facebook runs on engagement and ads to be seen. Both Facebook and Google lean on each other for indicators about a business, in order to create places in their own search listings. No longer are there shortcuts to visibility, nor can a hospital just focus on one aspect of digital marketing. It is a system now and must be treated as such.

Want to spruce up your website's home and make sure you have a marketing car in the garage? Give us a call. Marketing done right matters greatly. Our results are the proof in the pudding with high click-through-rates and tails streaming through doors. Beyond Indigo has been conducting internet marketing for 22 years. Our CEO and COO have each been working in marketing online for 24 years. We focus on results first and discuss costs second. We are committed to staying up-to-date with the changing online environment, such as ADA compliance. Plus, we are Google Ads Partners, and we know how to build Google mobile-friendly and fast websites. Need help creating a marketing plan? Call 877.244.9322, ext. 100, or go to <https://www.beyondindigopets.com/contact/>.

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Kelly Baltzell, M.A. is President and CEO of the Beyond Indigo family of companies which she founded in 1997. Beyond Indigo is a full-service marketing company focusing on Search Engine Optimization, is a Google Adwords Partner, Social Media Marketing, Online Reviews and websites. She has been a monthly columnist for MWI Animal Health since 2011. She has also presented and been published in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the UK.

Beyond Indigo is an MWI Animal Health Distinct Advantage™ program partner. To discuss how your practice can qualify for a free Distinct Advantage program membership, contact your MWI Territory Manager.