



Converting Calls During an Economic Downturn

Effective strategies to keep your dental practice growing during uncertain times

A lot of people are feeling a little jittery these days. That's normal. Just keep in mind that the same people who needed dental work before all this craziness still need it now. They just might be a little more hesitant to commit to an appointment.

Here are some tips to help put their minds at ease and remind them why you're the best place for them to come.



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Converting New Patient Callers

Let's face it: fewer people may be looking for a new dentist right now. That makes every phone call you receive even more important to your success. People are worried and that magnifies the concerns they may have already about going to the dentist. What you say and how you said it can make all the difference in calming their fears.

TIP #1

Ask for the Caller's Name

A simple way to convert more callers is to build rapport. Your receptionist is your Director of First Impressions. He or she is responsible for turning that caller from a stranger into a friend. A simple way to accomplish this is to have everyone who answers your phone give a friendly greeting.

"Thank you for calling Smiles 1-2-3. My name is Tiana. **May I have your name please?**"
"Hi, Mrs. Jones. How may I help you smile today?"

TIP #2

Keep the Focus on Solving Their Problem

People often jump right into the financial aspect of dentistry. They may say, "Do you take my insurance?" or "How much is a crown?"

Money is a legitimate concern, especially when there is an economic downturn. Here are a few ways to redirect the conversation so you can build value.

First, find out the reason they called you. "Mrs. Jones, I would be happy to answer your questions. First, could I get a little more information? **What prompted your call today?**"

Second, build urgency by finding out whether the caller has any discomfort or pain. Then reassure callers that your doctor helps people just like them all the time and looks forward to helping them too.

TIP #3

Overcoming Concerns about Insurance Benefits

We all understand that somebody who has dental benefits wants to be able to use them. If their plan is out-of-network, but you'll make it easy for them to maximize their benefits at your practice, let them know.

"We have a lot of patients with that plan. **Let's get you scheduled, and then I'll make a complimentary benefits check to see exactly how your benefits will work in our practice.** Would mornings or afternoons work better for your schedule?"

TIP #4

Answering "How Much Will It Cost?"

This is the number one question every person wants to know. Here's a simple way to answer it.

"That's a common question. Your treatment will be specific to what you need, so it's difficult to give you an exact amount. But what I can tell you is that we have a great team of people who will sit down with you and talk about what you need, your budget, and how we can help you achieve your goals. **We have a lot of ways we can help make the care you need fit into your family's budget.**"

TIP #5

Questions About Coronavirus

COVID-19 is on everyone's mind right now, so it's very possible that new or current patients will ask you about it. We recommend you check with your legal counsel for specific phrasing. Here are some general phrasing tips.

"We understand your concerns about Coronavirus. We are asking all scheduled patients who are experiencing symptoms of any respiratory virus to call us to reschedule. Specifically, this means anyone who has or recently had a fever and is coughing, sneezing or having difficulty breathing, as well as anyone who has been exposed to someone with the COVID-19 virus. We are seeing only well patients in our office.

"In addition, we always comply with all CDC and OSHA directives for disease prevention and protection. In addition to sterilizing our clinical areas, we are asking our patients to thoroughly wash their hands when they arrive for their appointment and before leaving. You will see plenty of soap and clean disposable hand towels in our bathroom and you will find sanitary hand gel and tissues in every room. These are there for your use and comfort.

"Every single instrument is completely sterilized after every use. Our safety attire, including clinical jackets, face masks, and gloves are changed before seeing each patient.

"You may not realize it, but between patients, the dental assistant wipes down the dental chair and all surrounding surfaces with disinfectant after each patient. This is part of the standard disease prevention protocol and we always do it.

"If you have a special concern, I will be happy to have one of our clinical team members call you back to answer your questions and see how we can help you."

Helpful Tips for Every New Patient Call

On a normal day, you have people who take the time to call you but then hang up the phone without booking an appointment. During uncertain times, that may happen even more frequently.

Sometimes people just need a little more reassurance that they called the right place. Patient Prism can help. We analyze your new patient calls, identify the people who don't schedule, and send you an alert detailing what you can say to **win them back – all within 30 minutes.**



CASE STUDY

Dental Group Plugs Hole in New Patient Phone Calls

Recaptures \$300,000 in 6 Months

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FRONT OFFICE GUIDE

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