



Don't Forget the Tagline!

Joel Harris, CEO of ADA Intelligent Dental Marketing, outlines the importance of a great tagline and the impact it can have with potential patients.

I love great logos. I also appreciate great taglines. And, when you combine a great logo with a great tagline, you have created a powerful marketing combo that can communicate a lot in a very small space. And, because you can use such a combo on every piece of communication about your business you have the opportunity to imprint the message into the brain of your prospects without spending a lot of money.

Unfortunately, when it comes to dental marketing, combining an effective tagline or slogan with a logo is usually overlooked. Even though Webster's Dictionary doesn't agree with me, the words "tagline" and "slogan" are pretty much interchangeable. I tend to use the word tagline.

Now let's cut to the chase:

An effective dental tagline sells the benefits of your practice instead of the features. Don't merely describe your services in your tagline. "Family and Cosmetic Dentistry" is not a tagline.

I also cringe when I see a dental tagline that is just bragging. Consumers don't care that you are #1 in any category. Consumers don't care that you are the best or most or first. Consumers respond to messages that are about their needs and solving their problems.



Claiming to be the greatest dentist in the world isn't a statement of benefit.

It's also a mistake to be cute simply for cuteness sake. Personally, I think this flawed approach to creating a tagline has its roots in the advertising approach of many of the world's most recognized companies. Dentists see the way lots of big companies have catchy and fun taglines, and they follow in their footsteps such a tagline for their practice.

Funny thing is, marketing research shows that consumers don't necessarily purchase any more products or services because of a catchy tagline. Some companies may get some additional "recognition", but they don't necessarily generate additional customers or sales. Meanwhile, that's the entire point of your dental marketing: to get new patients. Period.

Everything about your dental marketing should increase the response you're aiming for (i.e. more new chiropractic patients, more referrals, etc.). So, how do you do that with your tagline, if you're using one?

Well, for one, don't try to create a tagline that people will remember. Instead, develop a tagline for your practice that conveys a big promise and desired benefit to your target market. Be crystal clear in what patients get from your practice that they won't get anywhere else.

If a tagline is executed well, it becomes part of the culture of the practice. When new patients call or ask about your dental services, answer with a conversational version of your tagline. And, never forget to live by the benefits stated in your tagline. In a sense it becomes your mini-sized mission statement and can be used to help your team stay focused on the values that patients find important.

There's an art to developing a great practice name and tagline. Begin by writing down a few sentences that describe the core benefits your practice provides. Break down those sentences to capture the bare essentials.

Here are some creativity tools to help you create a great tagline:

1. Use a two-fold message with a twist

Common sense. Uncommon results

2. Show your unique commitment

We try harder

3. Address a specific need

For women whose eyes are older than they are

4. Explain product superiority

Takes a licking and keeps on ticking

"...when you combine a great logo with a great tagline, you have created a powerful marketing combo..."

5. Be abstract but client-centered

After all, it is your information

6. Evoke a benefit in a fresh way

Let your fingers do the walking

7. Use an emotional call to action

Reach out and touch someone

8. Use a call to action

Put a tiger in your tank

9. Suggest the cost of not using your product

Because so much is riding on your tires

10. Combine your service with your client

You and Betty Crocker can bake someone happy

11. Describe your service and its #1 benefit in two words

Advertising pays

12. Make a compelling promise

The world on time

13. Say it staccato

Soothes. Cleanses. Refreshes.



Joel Harris is a co-founder and President of ADA Intelligent Dental Marketing located in Salt Lake City, Utah. His company provides powerful marketing tools to help dentists grow their patient base, increase the profit and improve their image. Joel is also the author of the book, Breakthrough Dental Marketing.