



HOW TO GENERATE MORE REFERRALS FOR YOUR HEALTH CARE PRACTICE

Fill empty chair space. Save time and money on marketing.

connectthedoc

FORWARD

Congratulations- you have just taken the first step towards increasing your practice's patient volume.

When you opened this workbook, you opened a window on the single most effective strategy for practice growth- increasing patient referrals. Seems remarkably simple doesn't it? Yet, creating a sustainable patient referral pipeline is often ignored, never getting the attention it deserves. It is often buried in the strategy behind marketing efforts like SEO, Google Ad-words, and social media marketing, all of which can be extremely expensive and time consuming.

We have a better way. We are going to help you lasso the mighty power of the digital age so you can methodically and consistently, attract new patients. It is possible to increase patient referrals while decreasing your marketing costs. We realize that this is a goal that remains elusive to many, but patient referrals are the golden key to a successful, sustainable and scalable practice.

We can help you answer the following questions:

- How do I build patient volume through trusted referrals?
- How do I reach new patients?
- How do I use smart marketing to build my practice without breaking the bank?

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YOUR PATIENTS ARE ONLINE

New patients are the cornerstone of your practice today and tomorrow. That means you need referrals.

Why do some practices excel in that area while others fail miserably? The answer is knowing who your prospective patients are, and when, where and how they get their information on medical providers. We happen to know those details and we are going to share them with you.

“Your current and prospective patients are ~~sometimes~~ online.”

Did you know the most commonly-researched topics are specific diseases or conditions; treatments or procedures; and doctors or other healthcare providers?

In your patient's mind, their personal health and the internet are interconnected.

72%

of internet users say they looked online for health information within the past year.

30 MILLION

According to a recent Pew internet study, thirty million prospective patients search online for a healthcare provider each month

Don't buy into the myth that only "young people" use the internet to research providers and services. Your patients are online regardless of their age; Deloitte's consumer surveys show that using technology for health information spans the generations:

Generation	Percent who use the internet for health information
Millennials (born 1982–1995)	69%
Gen X (born 1965–1981)	64%
Baby Boomers (born 1946–1964) & Seniors (born 1900–1945)	More than 50%

One, Two, Build Practice Volume

It's easy to become frustrated with multiple marketing options and a cacophony of voices trying to give you different types of marketing advice. ***We believe that you need two – only two- strategies to build a strong practice.*** Both use the highly efficient, highly economic power of the worldwide web to your best advantage and positive result;

- 1) Build a referral pipeline
- 2) Proactively craft, manage and protect your online reputation

This whitepaper has been written to help you take the steps necessary to create and implement a bulletproof strategy to increase referrals and grow your reputation online. It's a combination of educational materials as well as a "workbook" with quizzes and self-

assessment tools. Together, they will help you figure out where you are in terms of patient referral strategies and what you can do to reach your goals. After you read this, I'd like to personally invite you to contact me for a complimentary consultation. Together we will develop a clear picture of your current referral-building methodologies, and then discuss how to use the mighty power of digital communications to build your practice.

A woman with a ponytail is sitting on a blue mat, holding a yellow resistance band. A woman in a white shirt is standing behind her, assisting with the exercise. The woman is pulling the band towards her chest. A blue foam roller is positioned under her right leg. The background is a plain wall.

LET'S GET STARTED!



ARE PATIENTS CONSUMERS?

Yes, You Bet, and Absolutely.

People don't think of themselves as patients unless they are in pain and sitting in your office. They are not searching for you as a "patient"; they are searching for you as a consumer. You are a service that they are going to consume and therefore they are going to analyze their options and benefits just as they would a car or a refrigerator. (Don't take it personally- it's the way of the world today.)

It used to be that generations of the same family saw the same provider. If you provided great care to one generation, the next would come. Those truly were the good ol' days and they are gone forever. Today patients conduct online research and actively make informed decisions about their care. In fact, patients expect to discuss their care and treatment with their doctors and be part of the care decisions. Have you ever had a patient come to you with a printout from WebMD or a screenshot on their iPhone and

tell you exactly what they think they have? You wouldn't be the first...

You know, the patient thinks

It can seem to be quite a dichotomy. While you are thinking about treatments and outcomes, the consumer is thinking about price and accessibility. However odd it may seem, both of those ends do meet in the middle. The trick is speaking like the consumer thinks. When you communicate your services in a way that matches how the consumer thinks- Bingo- you have just connected with a new patient.

Q: When was the last time you saw an advertisement online, in print, on the radio or on a billboard that really piqued your interest? What was it for? Why did it interest you? Was it because it:

- a) met a need,***
- b) fulfilled a want, or***
- c) made you happy or satisfied?***

In order to understand the decision making process of today's healthcare consumers, let's compare it to buying a car:

Buying a car	Finding a dentist
<i>I need a car.</i>	<i>I need a dentist.</i>
<i>I need to do some research. What models are getting the best reviews? Where did my friends buy their cars?</i>	<i>I need to do some research- who gets the best online reviews and ratings from patients? Which dentists do my friends see?</i>
<i>I'm going to shop online and see what kind of car I want.</i>	<i>I'm going to search Google and find out which dentists get good reviews, and are recommended by my friends, are close to my work.</i>
<i>I have found the dealer I want to go to. Are they open on Sunday?</i>	<i>I have found the dentist I want to see. Can I book / request my appointments online and can I talk with staff via e-mail and texts?</i>
<i>I'm going to negotiate the price and then I hope I can get the right payment plan.</i>	<i>I have a high insurance deductible. I want the staff to help me set up a payment plan to manage the self-pay portion of my bill.</i>
<i>What are the taxes and hidden costs? I don't believe the sticker tells all.</i>	<i>I want to know - upfront - the detailed costs of my visit. I have to pay it myself so I need to know the costs of the office visit, x-rays, and all the treatments.</i>


You are probably thinking, "When the consumer has a toothache, they will find a dentist." That's correct.

But the question is, will they find YOU as the dentist?

That's where we come in. You need to be easily found online and in the consumer's sphere of influence before they need you. In other

words, you need to be top of mind with their friends, family and other influencers because if you are, you get the referral.

This may seem an impossible number of variables to meet. It isn't. In order to build patient volume, and increase your referral base, you need to have some insight into how consumers make purchasing decisions. Then you can ensure that every message you distribute and every patient experience meets those needs.



WONDERING HOW TO INCREASE YOUR EXPOSURE ONLINE

In a way that is both sustainable and effective?

WHY SEO & GOOGLE ADWORDS ARE UNSUSTAINABLE

Right now the three most popular ways to increase exposure and be found online are:

1

Pay-per-click advertising

2

Search engine optimization
(SEO)


3

Social media marketing

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Let me ask you something. When was the last time you received a cold call or unsolicited e-mail from a stranger wanting to discuss your current marketing strategy? My guess is it was sometime during the last 10 days. Most likely they were trying to sell you some sort of online marketing package that had all or most of the three elements listed above.

These marketing tactics seem to be at the top of everyone's list, but not mine. Before I go into detail as to the reasons why, I want to make it very clear that these forms of marketing do work, but only for a small percentage of businesses.



Before you choose marketing strategies- know these 3 things:

1. You need to know the lifetime value of each patient to your practice, (this can range from \$1000 - \$20,000 depending on the type of services you provide)

2. The percentage of new patients that become lifelong patients

3. The cost to “acquire” a new patient – which will vary from campaign to campaign.

Once you know these three things, you can then begin to test strategic marketing tactics. You can use them to build different marketing campaigns and test the success of each. As you employ different strategies, you will be able to compare the acquisition cost of one campaign vs. another. Based on the results, you can add dollars to the successful campaigns and eliminate the unsuccessful ones. This becomes a successful overall marketing effort tailored specifically to your practice, location and potential patient preferences and habits.

In theory, and over a long period of time, as long as the acquisition cost of a new patient is less than then the lifetime value of that patient, you are coming out ahead.

In practice, most providers should be able to recover the acquisition cost of a new patient within that patients’ first 3 visits

and in no more than 6 months. This can be accomplished with internet marketing.

How do you find the best marketing strategy for your practice?

The cold callers and email marketers will tell you that the best marketing strategy for your practice is to use Google ad-words, search engine optimization and social media marketing. They will explain to you how you “bid for clicks” or pay for rankings and that if you follow their advice you will eventually attract new patients worth thousands of dollars to your practice. Are they right? Maybe, but with millions of companies competing online for consumer attention, no one really wins in a big way (except Google). As more and more practices use digital marketing as part of their patient referral (lead generation) program, the online competition increases, making it more difficult for each individual practice to get the exposure they seek. Adding to the competition is the fact that more than 95% of prospective patients stay on the first page of Google search results. Few continue on to page 2 or 3, limiting your options for exposure even further. Because only about five businesses can organically rank at the top of Google, most practices that have tried internet marketing have also invested in Google AdWords pay-per-click advertising or search engine optimization (SEO) to increase their chances of appearing in the top five.

That brings us back to the question of whether or not there is value in these paid tactics to improve your online position. Let me explain how they work.

Search engine optimization is actually quite simple.

Google (and other search engines) has an algorithm that determines which websites are the most relevant to the words the person has put into the search box. In order to appear on the first page when you match the search terms, your site needs to meet the criteria that Google has set for “relevancy”. This is what is called Search Engine Optimization, or SEO. Hiring someone to conduct SEO for your practice costs thousands of dollars each month. There are no guarantees that the SEO will in fact improve your online position, as Google’s criteria changes on a weekly basis, depending on how Google updates or changes its algorithm.



Ten years ago, the average click for “New York dentist” or “LA chiropractor” was less than 50¢

Pay-per-click advertising works on a bidding system.

You set a maximum budget per click and a maximum budget per day. Whoever has the highest bid per click shows up first, second highest bid shows up second and so on. There are a total of 10 spaces on Google for pay-per-click advertisers. When someone clicks on your ad, regardless of what happens, you get billed. When your advertisement is displayed and no one clicks on it, Google deems it as being irrelevant and shows your competitors advertisement instead.

These two tactics: search engine optimization and pay-per-click advertising were effective marketing methods ten years ago, but they work for only a handful of practices today.

Ten years ago: the acquisition cost of a new patient was approximately \$10.

With an estimated lifetime value of more than \$1000 per patient, and a first visit value of more than \$100, that \$10 investment was worth every penny.

Today: it can cost more than \$200 to acquire each new patient. That tips the value proposition on its head.



Now, each click can cost upwards of \$10 to \$15 dollars. Normally it takes about 15-20 clicks to get a new patient.

THE THREE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS TO GROW YOUR PRACTICE

To make matters worse, the number of healthcare providers entering nearly every market in the country is increasing faster than the rate at which providers are retiring.

Ultimately, this means that the competition is going to continue to rise, resulting in higher costs for both search engine optimization and pay-per-click advertising.

Therefore, we believe that the three most effective ways to grow your practice are as follows:

- 1. Focus on internal marketing and referrals*
- 2. Build a strong reputation online*
- 3. Increase conversions on all web properties you own*

Read on. For the remainder of this whitepaper, we'll share with you the tips and tricks that we have used to help nearly 1000 providers across North America increase the value of their practice, collectively, by more than \$50,000,000. Let's get started.



DOES YOUR BUSINESS HAVE A MARKETING PLAN?

Are you confident in its effectiveness?

HOW TO CREATE A BULLETPROOF MARKETING PROGRAM

Creating a bulletproof marketing program for your practice can be as simple as A-B-C. No one wants to tell you that because most consultants and marketing experts are in the business of selling lengthy marketing packages.

Exercise: Do you remember what the majority of consultant and experts have told you that you need for a successful marketing campaign? Write a list of all the suggestions you have received, the ones you have implemented, and how well it has worked.

How many years have you tried to figure out the best way to market your practice and grow your patient base?

☐

Every Year

☐

The last 10 years

☐

Only recently

☐

It keeps me up at night

You need marketing to grow. It's the only way to grow. You have to continually find ways to reach out to new patients, bring them in the door, and then convert them to long-term patients. The problem is that marketing can soak up large percentages of your budget and quickly become a black hole- not reaching the people you intended and not having any measurable results for the money you have spent. There is a better way, a simpler way, and it focuses on referrals and improving your online reputation.

The truth is that by implementing 3 simple steps you can improve your referrals and fill your new patient pipeline. It is as simple as A B C:

A: Always provide care that your patients will want to talk about.

In other words, great patient centered care generates referrals.

- *If patients go to you, they assume clinical excellence.*

- *b) It's the small gestures that will differentiate you and endear patients to you; follow up phone calls, get well cards for those who have had long procedures, even e-birthday cards.*
- *c) After their appointment, send them a text/email thanking them for coming in. Include all your contact information so that they can be in touch AND so that they can forward your information to a friend, (and potential new patient).*

B: Be ready to ask for referrals.

You need to ask your patients to refer their friends. Everyone in your office needs to have this question built into their conversation.

The hygienist: “It’s always great seeing you. If you know anyone that also has {insert pain / problem}, don’t hesitate to tell them about our practice.

The receptionist: “Thanks for coming in today. Here’s one of our cards with more information on our referral program so you can give it to a friend and both of you can benefit.”

If you think that your staff will feel awkward or uncomfortable asking for referrals, send us an email and we’ll help you out. By now, I’m sure you know that we run a digital referral platform that helps healthcare providers get more referrals and good reviews from their patients. One of the many tactics that we employ to break the ice involves automatically sending out highly effective e-mails asking for referrals. We have included a template for these e-mails in this workbook.

C: Consistently provide tools that make referrals easy and say thank you once a patient walks out of your door!

Once a patient walks out your door they go back to their busy daily lives. Referrals have to be effortless for them, so give them the tools they need. Here are 5 suggestions we have for you...

1) Send them an email after their appointment saying thank you. We have included the template at the end of this workbook.

2) In every e-mail you send to a patient, on your website, blogs, Facebook page, newsletters, and any other electronic communication, include a message asking them to refer a friend.

3) Create an incentive for patients to refer friends to you. Explain this on your website or on your referral landing page and include a link to this page across your marketing material.

4) Hand out postcards, brochures, flyers, cards, magnets, floss picks, anything that can be branded with your contact information, to your patients when they leave your practice. If they can hand it to a friend, you should consider having it in your office. Some things you will want staff to hand out. Other things like printed materials can be in the waiting room.

5) Tell every patient that has scheduled their next appointment to refer a friend. Ask “Have you been told about our referral program?” Develop a campaign around that straightforward question and you will reap the benefits. If you have any questions, or want some tips, send us an email or contact us - we’re here to help.

Creating and implementing the right referral program is pretty simple. We've found that there are 2 primary challenges:

1

Practitioners, office managers, and front end staff find it too awkward to ask patients for referrals, therefore it never becomes a habit.

2

Your patients, who have just had a positive experience, (You know this because they have booked their next appointment with you as they are leaving), don't know which one of their friends requires care or needs a new _____. Therefore, they need the right tools and information so when a friend asks "What dentist do you use?" Your patients can answer, "Dr. XX. I'll send you an e-mail with his contact info and link where you can request an appointment so that we both get \$15 off our next visit."

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If you're interested in solving these challenges, watch this video with a demo of how Connect the Doc works. <http://bit.ly/ctddemo>

You can also check out this blog post on the most common mistakes that healthcare providers make with regards to increasing referrals <https://bit.ly/6referralmistakes>



LET'S TRY A TEAMWORK EXERCISE

TEAM BRAINSTORMING EXERCISE

Team Brainsorming

Close the practice for lunch one afternoon and gather everyone around the table to brainstorm ideas on building referrals. Here is a quick idea on how to make this fun:

Things you will need:

- a) White board
- b) M&Ms
- c) Facilitator

Facilitator asks these questions and write the answers on the board. Hand out M&M's for participation as you see fit:

1. Give me one word that describes a great (insert specialty - dentist etc.).
2. Tell me the main way that you communicate with friends.
3. Tell me one word you frequently hear patients using to describe our practice.
4. Now let's put together some sentences that we would write or say to people to refer them to our practice using the words we have identified.

Next, help your staff understand ways in which they can refer their friends.

"Before we leave, let's brainstorm some ways in which you can help us build referrals"

1. Send a link to our website to your friends.


2. Talk about us on Facebook
3. Mention us on Twitter
4. Can you think of other ways that we can get more referrals?
5. Maybe Lunch and learn?
6. Patient & Friends appreciation night

Thank them for their participation and give everyone a bag of M&Ms as they go back to work.

Exercise Addendum:

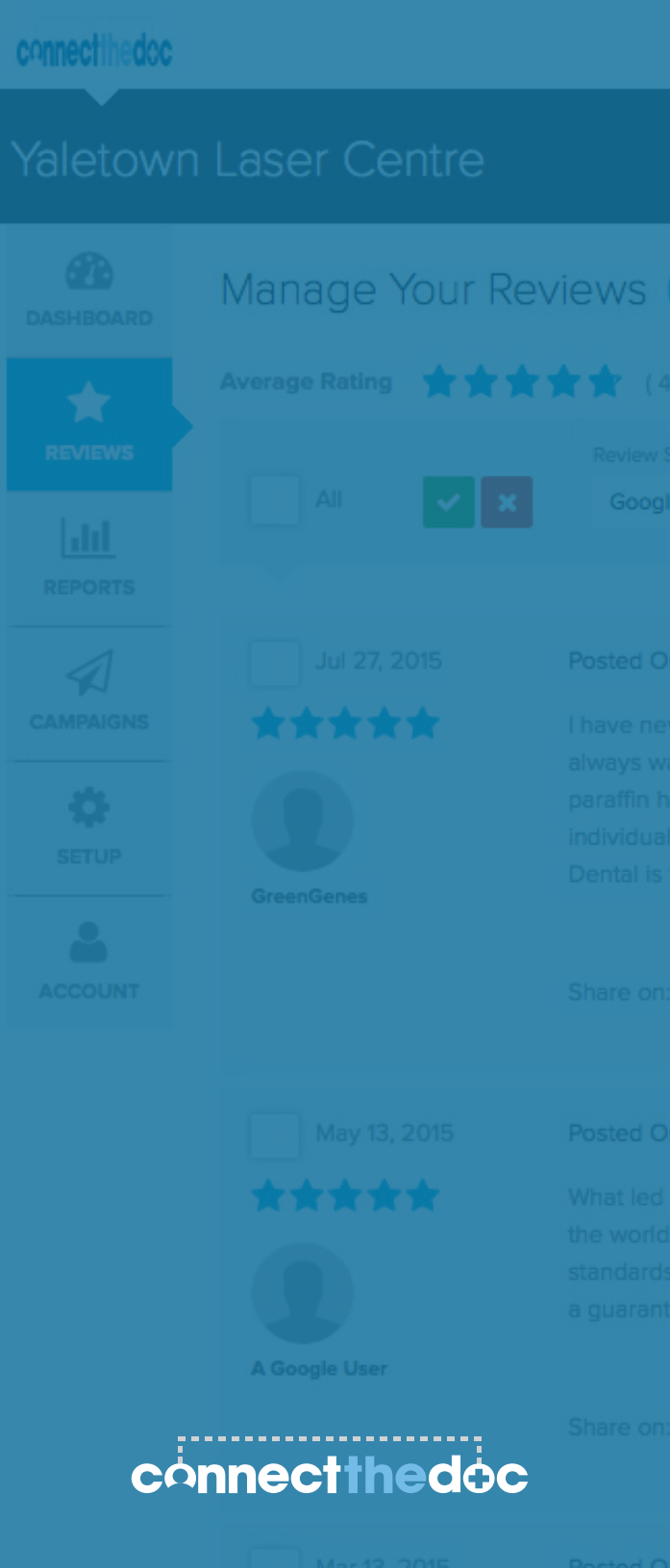
Staff members who have access to the data should make the following lists:

7. All the patients at your practice that have referred their friends. Do you track this?
8. The patients at your practice that you would consider to be your "best patients", the Top 50. How many of them have referred their friends? Have you sent them a thank you recently, for being a "best patient"?
9. For patients who have not made a referral, write them an email. Assign one staff member to be responsible for sending those emails?



DO YOU CONTROL YOUR ONLINE REPUTATION

Or does your online reputation control you?



MANAGING YOUR REPUTATION ONLINE

Let’s talk about reputation. We all know what it is, and we can quickly state what we believe to be the reputation of any given person or company.

Earlier in this whitepaper, we went through the consumer decision process and how it applied to a consumer purchasing a car. You know the reputation of a person or a business just by looking at the name. Look at the following types of cars and then quickly fill in the blanks to the right of each name. Don’t over-analyze the exercise. Write down what first comes to mind.

Type of car	Reputation	Type of person that buys
<i>Mercedes</i>		
<i>Honda</i>		
<i>Range Rover</i>		

And there you see, in a nutshell, what that intangible thing called “reputation” can do to build or destroy your brand.

How is a reputation built? The answer is piece by piece.

How is a reputation ruined? In the touch of a button.

Nowhere is reputation more important than in the delivery of health care. People perceive risk in health care, even when the provider has a stellar reputation. That is why it is essential that your reputation be as stellar as possible, and that you communicate it as frequently, and in as many places, as possible.

Consumers conduct research and read reviews before purchasing any product or service, and that includes treatment at your practice. In other words, your potential patients are making judgments as to your reputation by reading reviews posted by complete strangers, and without any context as to why it might be a less than glowing review.

Here are some quick facts to consider:

9/10

consumers trust an online review as much as a personal recommendation.

72%

of patients say that bad reviews prevent them from actually going to see a particular doctor or healthcare provider.

44%

of patients say that they would go out of network to see a healthcare provider that has more favorable reviews.



2 Billion searches/month on Google.
Are you on page one? With 5 stars?



1 Billion users on Facebook, Twitter, Google+.
Are your best reviews on Social Media?

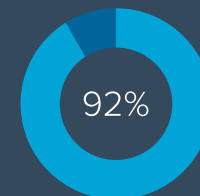


Do you stand out from the competition? How
do you appear on Top Review Sites,
Industry Sites, 100+ online directories?

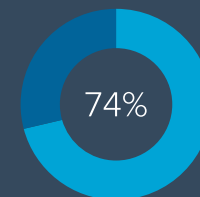


Is your website converting Prospects
into Customers?

DID YOU KNOW?



Users read online
reviews before
selecting a business
(eTelling Group)



Users say they will
not select a business
with poor reputation
(Harris Interactive)



1 "star" difference in
reviews results in 5-9%
change in revenue
(Harvard Business Review)

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Think about the impact of this for just a moment:

1. People now trust an online review from a stranger, out of context, as much as they do their friends.

2. Three-quarters of people will let reviews from strangers prevent them from seeing a particular provider.

Before we move on, there is one more piece of bad news... online reviews are not monitored, can be posted anonymously, are difficult to remove once posted, and have no requirements for validation. Yes, it is the Wild West. However, we can help you rope it in.

Better online reputation = increased patient volume

Here are the keys to building a positive online reputation;

1. You need to encourage your existing patients to write positive reviews.

2. Make sure that their reviews are syndicated online automatically.

3. Proactively manage any negative reviews of dissatisfied patients.

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Here are the steps to making that happen:

Step #1: List your practice and all of your clinicians on all major review sites. Hesitating to do this doesn't protect you. People are already posting comments and reviews about your practice. You need to know what they are saying and respond where appropriate. You can't afford to be blind to reviews. The most popular review sites for

healthcare providers include: Google +, Yelp, RateMDs, Healthgrades, Vitals, Facebook, and Dr. Oogle.

Step #2: Proactively ask your patients to write reviews. Monitor review sites daily and track the percentage of good to bad comments. What are people saying about you?



Step #3: Most of the review sites let you respond to poor/bad reviews. This is a great opportunity for service recovery. Reach out to each dissatisfied patient, find out what happened, repair the relationship, if necessary adjust practices internally. It is also a great reinforcement to thank happy patients for posting a positive review. It's a great way to show your appreciation.

Step #4: Repost positive reviews on your social media feeds. Let everyone know you have lots of happy patients! When your other patients see these posts on social media, they may submit a review as well so that their review is shared online.

A word about listings

Not all listings are created equal. Sites such as Yelp, or Facebook are directories and social media sites where anyone can post a review. If you are approached to list your profile on a site, and you must purchase advertising in order to be listed, say no and walk away.



LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE

What is your first impression to prospective patients?

AUDITING YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE

Take a look at the sites in the table below. Do you have a profile?
Have you claimed it? What is your rating? How many reviews do you have?
Have you updated it in the last 6 months?

Site	Claimed	Not Claimed	Last Update	# of Reviews	Avg. Rating
<i>Yellow Pages</i>					
<i>Yelp</i>					
<i>Google+</i>					
<i>Facebook</i>					
<i>City Search</i>					
<i>healthcarereviews.com</i>					
<i>ucomparehealthcare.com</i>					
<i>Healthgrades</i>					
<i>RateMeds</i>					
<i>Vitals</i>					
<i>Dr. Oogle</i>					
<i>Others:</i>					

If you are a dentist, send me an email at Nadeem@connectthedoc.com and I'll share some other important sites where dentists are frequently reviewed.

If you find negative ratings on these sites, it is important that you open each rating, read the comment, and respond to it (tips below on how to best respond). Keep in mind that there are people who use these sites to complain without legitimate foundation. You will have to use your own judgement as to which ones they may be.

When you find a negative review:

1. First respond publicly to the patient so that everyone can see that you take patient care and quality very seriously.
2. Then respond to the patient privately to address their concerns, set up a phone call and whatever other service recovery actions you deem appropriate.

3. Communicate the negative patient review and phone comments in-house and change policies, procedures, customer service as necessary to address the issue, reducing the chances that the problem will reoccur.

With careful monitoring, tenacity and some help from our platform, you can manage your online reputation! At the end of the whitepaper, I'll share some of the features that we have on Connect the Doc to help you boost your online reputation.

A man and a woman are sitting outdoors, looking at a laptop screen. The man is pointing at the screen with his right hand. The woman is looking at the screen with a focused expression. The background is a blurred green field. The entire image has a blue overlay.

ARE YOU GETTING ENOUGH REVIEWS ONLINE?

Here are some tips on how to get more reviews.

GETTING MORE POSITIVE REVIEWS ONLINE

Now that you know where you appear and what your ratings are, you need to proactively generate more positive reviews online. This is where you take control!

#1: The first rule of thumb is that you must proactively ask for reviews. Don't assume that your patients will give you a positive review. You need to make it happen by asking.

a) MOST IMPORTANTLY: Make sure you have policies and procedures in place that help to guarantee consistent customer service and high quality patient care. A good patient experience is a must in order to generate positive reviews.

b) It's normal in many outpatient practices for patients to book their next appointment when they are checking out. When a patient does this, you know they have had a positive experience – otherwise, why would they continue to see you? When this happens, use this as an opportunity to ask for referrals and reviews:

a. *“Did you have a good appointment today? Thank you for coming in on time. You might be interested to know that we are making a \$10 donation to the Breast Cancer society for all referrals, so it would be great if you referred a friend! Here's how you can do it online. (Hand them a card with the website and instructions) We would also appreciate it if, as one of our best patients, you would take a moment to post a review for us on Yelp or Google.”*

c) Make sure to include messaging encouraging patients to refer you to friends and family, and to write you reviews, in all newsletters, brochures, your website, patient flyers, appointment cards, and other materials. It can even be part of the signature in every e-mail you send.



#2: Send follow-up e-mails asking for referrals and reviews:

a) After every patient's appointment send an e-mail to say thank you, reinforce referrals and ask for reviews. If you do not already have a referral landing page from Connect the Doc, where patients can refer their friends via social media or write a review on various sites, try to include links to a few of the top reputable review sites in the e-mail.

b) Ask your patients to share their positive experience with you on their social media networks like Facebook, Twitter and Google+.

Send your top 50 patients an e-mail asking them to write you a review. You will already have this list from the brainstorming exercise addendum.

Here is an example email template:

Hi *{patient first name}*,

Hope you are keeping well. I wanted to share a quick update with you and ask for your assistance.

Our practice is making a conscious effort to improve our online reputation so that we can help treat more patients that {add pain/injury/problem}.

As part of this initiative, I'm personally reaching out to you as one of our most loyal patients to ask you for an online review or testimonial. If you are comfortable doing so, would you please consider writing a review on our practice on either Google or Yelp?

Here are a few links you can write a review for us on:

{Yelp Link}

{Google + Link}

Thanks you in advance for helping us to spread the word about our great patient care. We look forward to keeping in touch and seeing you at your next 6 month check up!

{Insert Signature}

#3: Reinforce patient satisfaction in the office:

- a) Buy nice looking clear plastic display frames for your office. Some can be mounted on the wall and some have stands for table top use. Print out patient testimonials and post them in these frames. Change them at least every month if not more frequently.
- b) Create a photo wall of patients, photo Christmas cards, children's artwork and drawings. Create a feeling that you have a family of patients.
- c) Let children take their favorite book with them. This is not an expensive patient satisfaction tactic. Books can be purchased for less

than \$1 a piece at thrift shops and library sales. (Sometimes you can buy them for 25 cents.) Place a sign over the children's reading table telling parents and/or their children to take one of their favorite books home and then leave the rest for other children to enjoy.

d) Monthly drawing: Send an e-mail to your patients informing them that you have established a monthly prize drawing. All they have to do is review your practice and/or clinicians, and send you a link to their review. Their name will be entered into a drawing and one (or 2) patients will receive a prize. (One staff member puts all the e-mails into one digital folder.)

Effortless Reviews and Referral Generation

If you're worried about the implementation of either the review or referral tactics we've suggested above, we'd like to invite you to learn more about Connect the Doc and our referral generation and reputation management platforms. Our goal is to make asking for referrals and reviews as effortless as possible. Here are a few ways our reputation management add-on can help you automate the process of asking for a review:

- a) When your patients arrive for their appointment, have them check in using an office I-pad or computer. This will require them to enter their name, email, and phone number (now you have captured that information). After their appointments, patients will automatically receive an email or text message asking them for their feedback and to refer a friend.
- b) If a patient writes a negative review, only you will see it. The review will not be posted online.

c) When a patient submits a positive review (4 or 5 stars), two things happen:

1. The review is automatically sent to Citysearch, Yellow Pages, and dozens of other popular directories for syndication. This will help your search rankings.
2. The patients are automatically sent another email asking them to share their review on Yelp, Google +, Facebook, and or RateMDs.

To maximize the effect of all positive reviews, we offer a tool that gathers together all reviews from all sites for your review. You can select the best ones and post them on your website, landing pages, referral pages, blogs, e-newsletters and other digital content you may have. By adding various widgets, buttons, and feeds to these positive reviews, you can send readers to the actual review site to read it for themselves.

A blue-tinted photograph of a medical team in a hospital. In the foreground, a female nurse and a male doctor are looking at a tablet. Another male doctor stands behind them, also looking at the screen. In the background, an elderly male patient is sitting in a chair. The image has a semi-transparent blue overlay.

DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE MESSAGING IN YOUR MARKETING?

Here's a quiz to see how you're doing.

ADDING MESSAGING TO YOUR MARKETING

Think about incorporating messaging asking for reviews and referrals in every place possible in your practice. Every practice is different, so there is no right or wrong answer to this exercise. It's a good thing to think about. Look around. What spaces do you have that patients see? Can you use it to post a message? Where do you think that you can successfully incorporate messaging asking for reviews and referrals?

1. On-hold call messaging

☐ Yes ☐ No

4. E-Newsletter

☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Social media sites

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Office bulletin boards/signs/frames

☐ Yes ☐ No

5. E-mails

☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Staff training & reinforcement

☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Brochures, printed materials

☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Practice website

☐ Yes ☐ No

9. Appointment cards

☐ Yes ☐ No

The background of the slide is a waiting room with a light blue wall. On the wall, there is a round clock with a white face and black hands. To the right of the clock is a white door. In the foreground, there are three blue chairs with metal frames. The text is overlaid on this background.

NOW IT'S TIME TO ASSESS YOUR OWN PRACTICE

Let's see how you do.

SELF ASSESSMENT

Now that you have read our workbook on increasing patient referrals, it's important that you conduct a self-assessment to see where you are now in the marketing/referral spectrum, and where you would like to be. Consider it a mini-SWOT analysis; an opportunity to honestly review your Strengths-Weaknesses- Opportunities and Threats as it applies to increasing patient referrals. Don't worry, you can be honest. No one is going to see this except you.

First, in which category do you consider yourself when it comes to thinking about marketing and referral generating programs?

- A) I don't believe I need marketing or referrals to build patient volume.
- B) I wonder why I can't increase referrals and I understand it is directly connected to marketing.
- C) I get it and I am trying to implement a marketing program in order to build referrals,

I just need to improve.

If your answer is A, that's ok.

However, if you have read to this point that may indicate that you are curious about marketing and referral generation. Good. You don't have to jump into the deep end of the marketing pool. You can begin with one simple step. Remember, you don't have to spend thousands of dollars on web design or marketing materials that you don't understand. We would rather you didn't. We can help you take that first step and begin an effective, economical campaign.

If you answered B, that's good.

Understanding that marketing is the foundation of building patient referrals is important to implementing effective tactics. However, they have to be the right tactics for your practice, and they have to be designed to directly connect with your patients. Purchasing an ad in the Yellow Pages does not equate to targeted marketing with measurable ROI. Online tactics with attached analytics do equate to targeted marketing, and all you have to worry about it ensuring you have patient e-mails.

If you answered C, great!

You are well on your way. Your marketing and referral generation program may need fine tuning and an “upgrade” so that it takes advantage of all digital tools that increase impact and reduce cost. You may also need to reduce the amount of staff time required to maintain marketing and referral efforts. We have just what you need at Connect the Doc.

*Just to make sure, let's ask this another way.
How often do you think about marketing? Check one.*

- ☐ Never because it doesn't matter
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Every month when I look at the financials
- ☐ It keeps me up at night
- ☐ Never because we have a strong plan in place

*How would you rate your satisfaction/frustration
quotient regarding marketing? Check one.*

- ☐ It's an enigma to me
- ☐ We are improving
- ☐ I would give us 5 stars

Next, let's look at your practice today:

New Patients

How many new patients a month does your practice schedule? _____

What percentage of new patients that come through the door are referred? _____

What is the approximate lifetime value of a new patient? _____

Do you have a budget line dedicated to marketing and patient acquisition/referrals? _____

Tracking

Do you have a system in place to track the source of new patients?

☐

Yes

☐

No

Do you know how consistently it is implemented?

☐

Yes

☐

No

If you have tracking, are the results collated every month and shared with all staff?

☐

Yes

☐

No

Are the results used to implement new, or improve existing, practices?

☐

Yes

☐

No

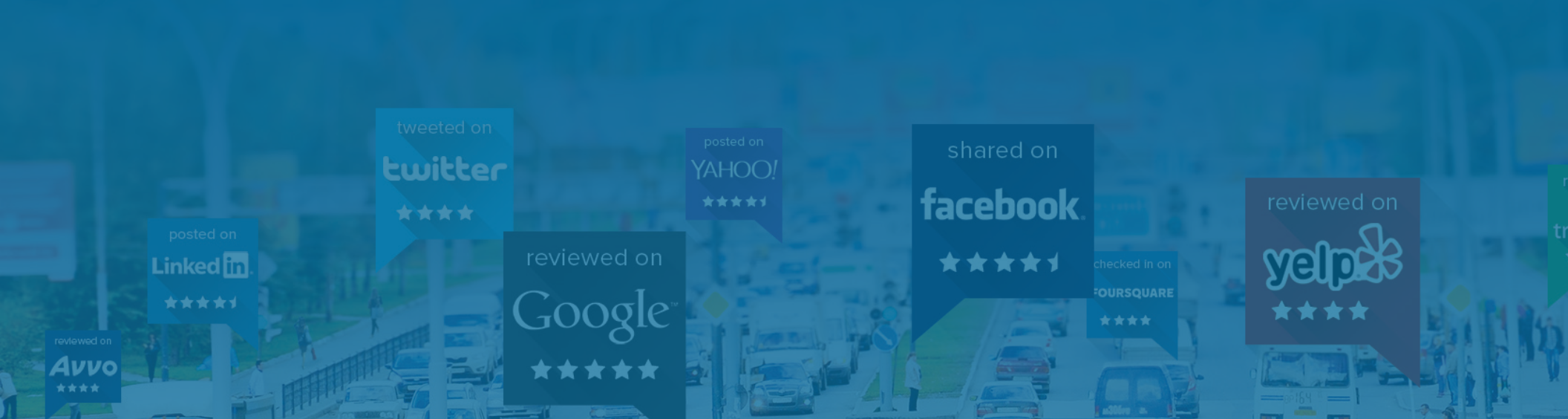
Front End Staff and Referrals

What would you like your front end staff to do better?
Check all that apply.

- ☐ Phone etiquette
- ☐ Meet & Greet
- ☐ Initiative
- ☐ Follow-through with patients
- ☐ Compliance with office policies regarding new patients
- ☐ Encouraging current patients to refer friends and family

From the above list, what are they already doing quite well?
Check all that apply.

- ☐ Phone etiquette
- ☐ Meet & Greet
- ☐ Initiative
- ☐ Follow-through with patients
- ☐ Compliance with office policies regarding new patients
- ☐ Encouraging current patients to refer friends and family



When was the last time you discussed with your front end staff, the need to ask current patients for referrals and positive reviews?

☐ In the last month

☐ Last 6 months

☐ Last year

☐ Never

Is it working?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you meet with staff regularly to discuss referrals and what can be improved?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Marketing

How much money are you currently spending on marketing each year? \$ _____

Do you include the cost of staff time in that amount?

☐

Yes

☐

No

How many hours a week do you or your staff spend on marketing?

☐

Me

☐

Staff

Are you happy with the ROI of your marketing efforts?

☐

Yes

☐

No

If you are unhappy, are you considering stopping your marketing efforts?

☐

Yes

☐

No

Or, do you think your marketing effort needs to be redirected?

☐

Yes

☐

No

For more information on how to calculate return on investment “ROI” (and lots of other resources), please visit our blog at <http://joinctd.com/blog/>

Which types of marketing are currently working the best for your practice? Check all that apply:

<input type="checkbox"/> Print advertising	<input type="checkbox"/> Practice website	<input type="checkbox"/> E-mail follow up with patients
<input type="checkbox"/> Billboard advertising	<input type="checkbox"/> Blogs using SEO and keywords	<input type="checkbox"/> Social media campaign
<input type="checkbox"/> Radio advertising	<input type="checkbox"/> E- newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/> Referral/lead generation
<input type="checkbox"/> Online display ads	<input type="checkbox"/> On hold recording	

Which types of marketing are not working well for your practice? Check all that apply:

<input type="checkbox"/> Print advertising	<input type="checkbox"/> Practice website	<input type="checkbox"/> E-mail follow up with patients
<input type="checkbox"/> Billboard advertising	<input type="checkbox"/> Blogs using SEO and keywords	<input type="checkbox"/> Social media campaign
<input type="checkbox"/> Radio advertising	<input type="checkbox"/> E- newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/> Referral/lead generation
<input type="checkbox"/> Online display ads	<input type="checkbox"/> On hold recording	

Are you still taking part in those marketing efforts that are not doing well?

☐

Yes

☐

No

If yes, please list them here. For each one, explain why you are still using that specific marketing tactic if it is not generating new patients:

Marketing Tactic	Reason to continue implementing
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

41

Print and radio soak up a lot of marketing dollars so it is worth analyzing your costs:

Do you use newspaper and/or radio now?

Print:

☐

Yes

☐

No

Radio:

☐

Yes

☐

No

How much does it cost you each month? **Print:** \$ _____ **Radio:** \$ _____

Do you know how many referrals you receive for each monthly campaign in print or radio? **Print:** # _____ **Radio:** # _____

What is the value of the average patient received from print referrals to date? _____

What do you consider to be the total cost of recruiting that patient? \$ _____

What is the approximate lifetime value of a new patient? _____

If you have a marketing plan, how frequently does it put you in the public's eye?

☐ Monthly

☐ Weekly

☐ Daily

If less than daily, what is limiting your campaign efforts?

☐ Cost

☐ Available staff

☐ Belief that it works

☐ Lack of referrals

☐ Pressure from partners to reduce marketing expenses

Competition

Assessing competition is not an exercise in “keeping up with the Joneses”. Rather, it is looking at who your competition is, the size of their business, and the marketing you see them doing. There is no need to outspend competition. With the right marketing tools, you can outthink and out-strategize them.

List your top 3 competitors:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Can you list where you see them marketing?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Are you marketing in the same places?

1. ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. ☐ Yes ☐ No

List 3 marketing tactics you are employing that you do not believe your competitors are employing?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Wrap-Up

As you can see there is no score and no definitive answers here, except for the ones you provided. It is exactly what we promised at the beginning: a mini-SWOT analysis to honestly review your Strengths- Weaknesses- Opportunities and Threats as it applies to increasing patient referrals.

Use these answers to consider what tactics you should be implementing to increase referrals, and where you can make improvements to increase efficiency and economy. We can help. Read on.

connectthedoc

You Share. We Give.

We're supporting the local food bank. For every referral made or review written, we will donate 5 cans of food to the local food bank. Our goal is to get to 1000 by the end of the month.

Get Started

Select the practitioner you'd like to refer or review:



Dr. Matt Jenkins

Dentist

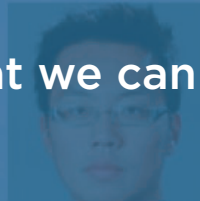
Refer Review

Select how to share your referral link:



LASTLY, WE'LL TELL YOU A BIT ABOUT OUR REFERRAL AND REVIEW PLATFORM

And what we can do to help!



Michael Cai

Physiotherapist

Refer



Samantha Johnson

Physiotherapist

Refer

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CONNECT THE DOC



Nadeem Kassam
CEO & Founder
Connect the Doc

connectthedoc.com
joinconnectthedoc.com

Nadeem Kassam is the CEO and founder of Connect the Doc, a digital platform that helps healthcare providers get more referrals and reviews from their patients. Nadeem has more than 15 years of experience as a marketing manager and practice consultant. With his unique blend of operational and internal marketing 'know-how', Nadeem has the gift of finding the root problems and coming up with different solutions to solve them. Since launching Connect the Doc in 2012, Nadeem and his team have helped practice owners increase the value of their practices by more than \$50,000,000. When he is not in the office you can find Nadeem playing tennis and hockey, reading business books, and mentoring young entrepreneurs.

SAVE MONEY & TIME ON MARKETING

Fill empty chair space and grow your practice by generating more patient referrals and boosting your reputation online.



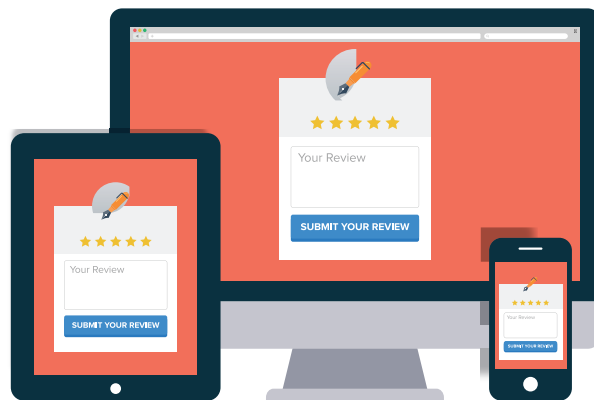
Get more patient referrals

1. “Ask” your patients to refer friends and family without feeling awkward
2. Effortlessly promote your referral program via email, social media, and print
3. Allow your patients to refer via Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to maximize exposure.
4. Convert prospective patients via 24/7 online appointment bookings and appointment requests.

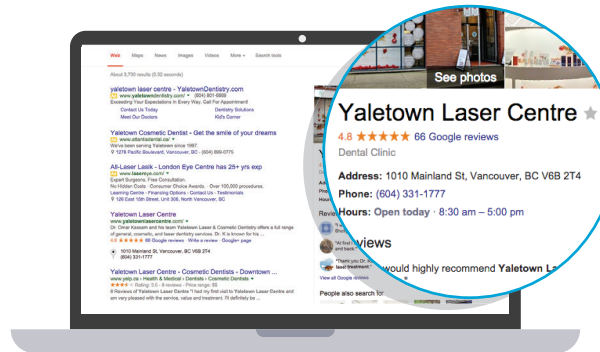
Visit JoinCTD.com or call 778-882-6663 to schedule a consultation or to get a free reputation audit. Watch a 10 minute software demo at www.bit.ly/ctddemo

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR REPUTATION

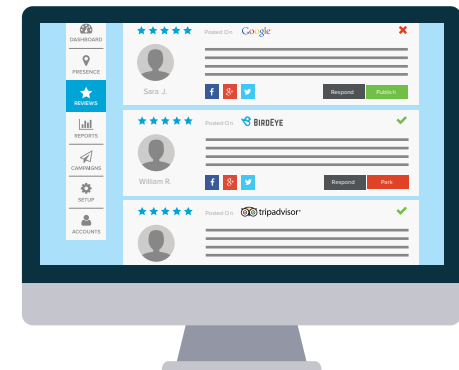
Your reputation is your #1 asset. Online customer reviews can make - or break - your business.



Get 100's of new reviews with automated review requests, check-ins, SMS and mobile kiosks.



Get found easier online by ranking higher on page 1 of search results with 5-star reviews.



Your 4 & 5 star reviews are auto-posted to 50+ sites including your website, Facebook, & Google+

THANKS FOR READING!

We hope we can help you reach your goals!



CONCLUSION

By reading this workbook you have taken the first step to improving your online reputation, increasing referrals and building patient volume. Our goal has been to show you that effective internal marketing to build your practice is easier than some would have you believe, and less expensive and time consuming than you think.

Connect the Doc simplifies the process of asking for referrals and reviews. Our platform is designed to help you with the internal marketing so that you can get on with the business of running your practice and caring for your patients. Spend a few moments and peruse what we offer to see if it solve some of your challenges or will help you reach your business and growth goals quicker. We know it will.

Please feel free to share the download link of this PDF with your colleagues and encourage them to consider effective internal marketing tactics to improve patient volume. In the nature of referrals and reviews, we'd love to get your feedback on this whitepaper. Please feel free to send me an email at nadeem@connectthedoc.com with your thoughts and any questions. Lastly, we have a referral program that I want to share with you. When you refer someone to us, you will receive a \$100 in credit, which can be used towards a month-to-month subscription of our services.

The road between opening a practice and building a robust one can seem long. We are here to shorten it for you and ease the ride. We look forward to working together!



Contact Nadeem Kassam at Connect the Doc for a
complementary consultation & free reputation audit.

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