



Three Steps to Market Your Practice Effectively on the Web

by Katriel Reichman, CEO, TherapyEverywhere.com

Expert commentary by
Jason Barnes and Kathleen Cassbaro

To Web or Not to Web?

A breeze ruffled the back yard trees, children shrieked happily, and a murmur of laughter and conversation floated along with the sound of guitars and singing. Alex and Laura, having finished a meal and caught up with all their neighbors, were taking some quiet time before plunging back into the block party.

“This is fun, isn’t it?” She asked him, leaning back and smiling.

“Very fun. A lot of the kids went to your school, didn’t they? It must be satisfying to see them growing up.”

Laura nodded. “It’s a little bit amazing to see how old they’re getting. They might always be four years old to me. And I guess it’s a surprise to think how long I’ve been in business. You too, probably.”

“I’ve been getting a strong reminder of that lately,” Alex answered. “Do you know that after all these years, the practice still doesn’t have a website?”

Laura was startled. “I guess you were waiting to see whether this whole internet thing would catch on,” she laughed. “And I guess I just never thought about the fact that you don’t have a website. Maybe you should get one.”

“Maybe I should. Right now, I’ve got a *Psychology Today* listing and I’m on LinkedIn, and that’s about it.”

“I bet it’s not,” Laura sat up and pulled her phone from her pocket. “Have you Googled yourself? I heard that a study from Duke University found that most doctors are on those health care review sites showing a star rating this is usually based on just one review.”

“Maybe GPs,” Alex objected.

“Look for yourself,” Laura suggested. “Actually, you have five stars on Healthgrades, but it’s from one review, and a lot of your peers have two or three stars from

a single review. Having your own website would let you—”

“Control the conversation,” said Alex, peering at the listings under his name.

“You might not get to control the conversation, but you’d at least be in the conversation. You could have a picture of yourself so prospective patients could see what a nice guy you are. They say that you only get ten or twenty seconds to catch people’s attention online before they either decide to stay or click away. A picture would help.”

“But what else would I put on a website?” Alex wondered. “My pictures and my degrees, I guess, but how does that really help someone who’s looking for a psychiatrist? I’m not going to do some hard sell ad.”

“Alex, you’re talking like you don’t use the web, and I know you do. You go there for information, right?”

If you’re looking for a local doctor you want to make sure they can help you with whatever you’re going through. Maybe you want to get a sense of their personality and see whether you’d be comfortable with them.”

“I’d want a map and directions to their office.” Another couple joined them.

“Hey, Natalie,” said Alex. “Hi, Jack. You’re right. You’d probably want to know the hours the office was open.”

Jack picked up where Natalie had left off. “I’d want to know whether the doctor would take my insurance.”

Laura and Natalie both nodded. They had more ideas of things they liked to see in a doctor’s website, and Alex wished he could take some notes without spoiling the party atmosphere.”

Jack chimed in, too, and the list of things they’d find useful grew longer.

“I don’t really know much about marketing,” said Alex, “but it sounds like there are a lot of ways to make a website useful for patients.”

The friends headed back to the cooler to refill their glasses, but Alex’s mind was humming with ideas.

What would a website do for Dr. Friedman’s practice and his patients?

Whatever You Measure, You Can Improve

“I can’t believe you already have a website up!” Laura was impressed. “It took you ages to get around to implementing that ClinicMind software.”

“I’m on a roll,” Alex explained. “And actually, the people from Vericle have been super helpful with my website, too. It’s nothing fancy, but people are already visiting and calling.”

“How do you know?”

“We have Google Analytics,” Alex said proudly. “Now ask me what that means.”

“Okay, what does that mean?”

“It’s a free program from Google that counts people who come to your website.” Alex opened his laptop and Laura scooted closer so she could see. “It’s actually



pretty cool. We don't have very many people yet, of course, but we do have visitors."

"Okay, so what do these words mean? Sessions—that's not like a session with you, is it?"

"No, I don't think this program is quite that integrated with our practice," Alex smiled. "Sessions are how many visits we've had—242, actually, since we launched the website."

"That's pretty good!"

"I don't really know if it's good or not, but I was kind of expecting zero, so I'm happy with it. Anyway, there have been 222 users, which is individual people, so some of the visitors came back and visited more than once."

"Got it. 504 Pageviews—does that mean people looked at more than one page?"

"Exactly. In fact, an average of 2.08 pages per session."

Alex and Laura stared at the screen in fascination. "So what's Bounce Rate? What are Intelligence Events? What are you going to do with this information?"

"Frankly, I have no idea. Right now, Luisa and I look at it every morning and get all excited about the people who have read the site in Spanish or the fact that someone from Canada came to see us. It's just a toy at the moment."

"I'm sure it can give you a lot more useful information than that," Laura said dubiously.

"I know it can. If you Google it, you can see that it's a serious tool with lots of value for business. I just haven't had time to figure out how to use it."

Laura jumped up. "We definitely don't have time now! We're about to

be late for your mother's dinner party. We can look at it more later, though."

"I'm glad I married a woman who enjoys a good analysis."

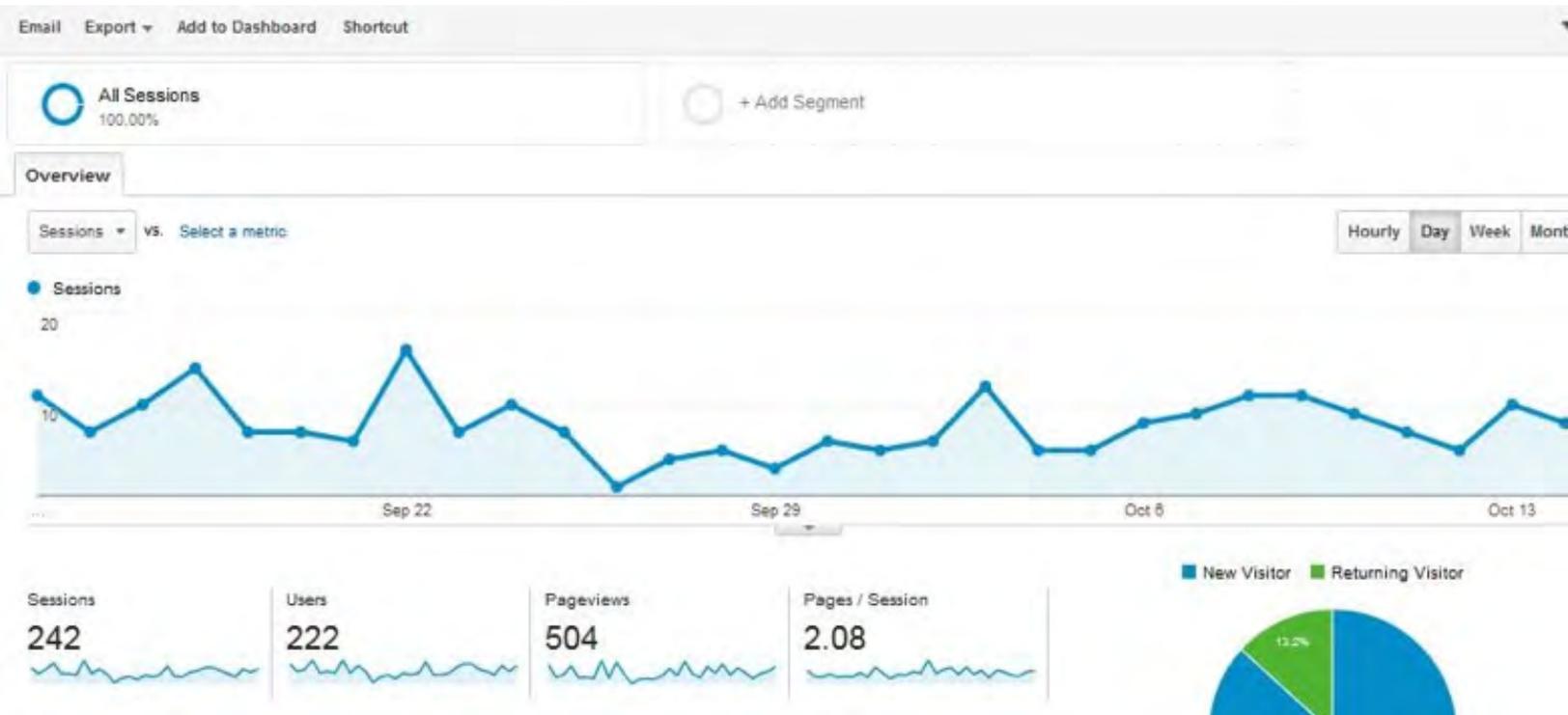
How can Google Analytics help Dr. Friedman make best use of his new website?

Search Queries

"I enjoyed your mom's dinner party of course," Laura said as she and Alex entered their home, "but I have to admit I've been eager to get home and play with Google Analytics some more."

Alex opened his laptop. "Okay, this screen will appeal to your inner geek. This shows the times that Google offered my website to people—that's Impressions on the left."

"Okay," Laura said, peering at the screen, "and this column called



‘Clicks’ must be when they clicked. Oh. Those numbers are small.”

Alex had to agree. The largest number of clicks his site had received for any of the search terms Google had showed it for was 5. Most of the rows showed zero.

“But the CTR, that’s the click through rate. It was actually pretty high for both of the things people clicked on. I got 100% for this term and 10% for that one.”

Laura frowned. “So when people looked for the name of the practice and Google showed it to them, they all clicked through. That’s great.”

“Right. And when they looked for my name, 10% of them clicked through. So that’s pretty good. I guess that those people, if they had looked before I had a website, would have clicked through on Healthgrades or something instead. This way I can present the practice the way I want to, so that’s an improvement.”

Laura wasn’t convinced. “What’s this part that shows position? Is that what number you were on the page when people were searching?”

“That’s right. It isn’t quite that simple, because it’s the average position when Google chose to show the site to somebody. Depending on things like where they are and what else they look for, Google might not even show

Impressions	Clicks	Average Position	CTR
274 <small>% of Total: 9.13% (3,000)</small>	15 <small>% of Total: 30.00% (50)</small>	9.1 <small>Site Avg: 120 (-93.08%)</small>	5.47% <small>Site Avg: 1.67% (228.47%)</small>
50 (18.25%)	0 (0.00%)	4.4	0.00%
50 (18.25%)	5 (33.33%)	2.9	10.00%
22 (8.03%)	0 (0.00%)	8.8	0.00%
22 (8.03%)	0 (0.00%)	41	0.00%
5 (1.82%)	0 (0.00%)	10	0.00%
5 (1.82%)	0 (0.00%)	8.4	0.00%
5 (1.82%)	0 (0.00%)	2.4	0.00%
5 (1.82%)	0 (0.00%)	2.2	0.00%
5 (1.82%)	0 (0.00%)	2.8	0.00%
5 (1.82%)	5 (33.33%)	7.8	100.00%

my website. But when they do, that’s the average position my website is in.”

“But you’re not number one for your own name!” Laura sounded outraged.

“I know!” Alex matched her tone. “I’m not the only Dr Alex Friedman with a website. Who knew?”

Laura had to laugh, but she still wasn’t happy.

“That seems like a problem to me, Alex.”

“It doesn’t seem that way to me. For one thing, it’s a new website. I don’t expect to be ahead of people who’ve been working on their websites for years—at least not right away. But even more important, I’m seeing ten people who looked for me or my practice and clicked through to learn more. That’s ten people who probably wouldn’t have thought of us last month.”

“They’d have gone to that other practice with the very similar name, because they already had a website.”

“Exactly,” Alex agreed. “And of those ten people, I know that two called, because they mentioned that they

found us on the web. And one made an appointment.”

“So, given the lifetime value of a new patient...”

“I’ve already paid for my website.”

Laura looked back at the screen. “Honey, if you learn what all this stuff means, you might be able to improve those numbers.”

Alex agreed. He wasn’t sure when he’d find the time to do it, but it was on his list.

What can the Search Queries report in Google Analytics tell Dr. Friedman?

Getting Social

“Let me show you one more thing in Google Analytics,” Alex said, pushing some buttons on his laptop.

Laura snuggled up to him and peered at the screen. “What are we looking at here?”

“These are the people that came to the website by clicking on social media. Don’t tell me the numbers are small, because I already know that,

and I'll say again that it's a brand new website."

"I get that. And the numbers aren't that small. 6 from Twitter, 5 from Facebook, and one each from Blogger and Pocket. What's Pocket? And I didn't know you tweeted. Or had a blog, for that matter."

"I don't tweet. I don't blog. I didn't even know what Pocket was, but I looked it up and it turns out it's this app that lets you save things on your phone to read later." Alex pointed at the screen. "And see where it says 'Conversions'? That means someone filled out a contact form. So we're getting value from social media without even doing anything."

"That doesn't make sense."

"It turns out that some people at the Rotary Club presentation I gave tweeted about it. And maybe posted at Facebook, I don't know. But they put in my website's address, and people

clicked on it and shared it and this is what happened. That's what's called earned media—when other people share things for you."

"So how can you encourage that? Give more presentations?"

"That's bound to help, but I can also set up social media accounts for the practice, which the AMA is telling us to do anyway. Then I need to get some more content on my website. Owned media, they call it."

Laura looked puzzled. "You mean you'll post articles and things at your website, and you'll own them?"

"Exactly. Then I can share those things on social media and people will click through to read them and I guess they'll fill out the contact form. When people start sharing those things with their friends and followers, we'll have more earned media."

"We use social media a lot for the school," Laura remarked. "It's a great way to communicate with parents and share useful things. It's not always content that we own—usually we

share fun things we've found online—but I know it adds value for our customers."

"Sure. That's what social media is for. And if you add value, you can also share information about your business. I have some relationships with colleagues at LinkedIn and it's beneficial on both sides, and of course Facebook is an essential." He smiled at his wife, who checked in on Facebook several times a day. "I'd say I don't know why we haven't set up social media accounts for the practice before, but I do know—we don't have time."

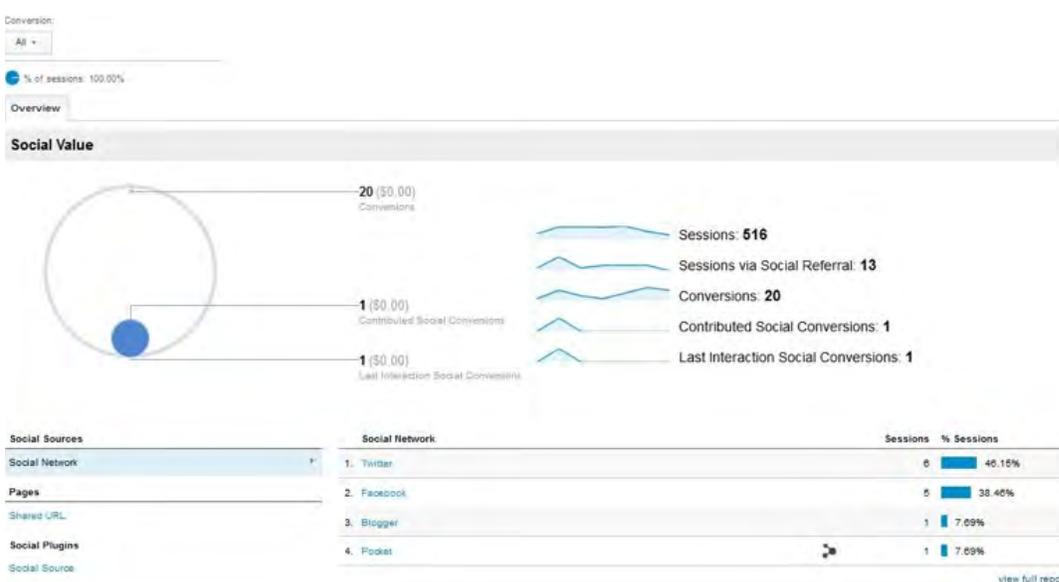
"Maybe you have a staff member who could take it on. Some of your team members are probably active in social media already."

"True. We also need to create content at our website, though. Maybe when one of us publishes a paper, we could write it up in a simpler way."

"Or you could post the answers to questions people ask you all the time. Then you could send them a link to the website instead of typing it all out every time."

"There are lots of possibilities," Alex agreed.

How can social media help Dr. Friedman get the word out about his practice?





The Experts Respond

Kathleen Casbarro

Kathleen brings more than 30 years of experience in Practice Management. She currently heads the Billing SWAT department at Vericle, where she is responsible for the billing performance of over one hundred billing professionals covering over 500 practices and posting more than \$14 million in monthly insurance payments. Kathleen also assists the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services as pilot tester for web-based training courses and reviewer of publications.

In the age of the Internet, medical practices must overcome a number of obstacles to make themselves stand out. Just having a website isn't enough; you can't be sure that anyone's going to see it. In the old days, a billboard may have been a blunt advertising tool, but you could be sure that people saw it. But now, as Laura points out, you only have 10 to 20 seconds to make an impression. So even drawing people to your site isn't enough; you have to provide succinct, informative content that can convince visitors that your business is worth a second glance.

Google Analytics is a good place for Alex to start in terms of figuring out how well his website is put together—how long people are staying, what pages they're visiting, etc. But he still hasn't made the jump from establishing

a web presence to using the Internet to effectively market his practice. It's pretty easy for his existing patients (and referrals) to find him, but what about potential patients? What is he doing to let people know where he is and that he's open for business?

Even social media, if it's not properly harnessed, is an inefficient tool for reaching people. What's the result of posting to your Facebook page if you've only got a handful of followers? Based on the conversations that Dr. Friedman is having with his wife, he needs help. Fortunately, he already has one tool in place that will be of great assistance: ClinicMind, his practice management software. That's because the software is integrated with a number of applications—and has established relationships with others, such as TherapyEverywhere—that offer the kind of marketing services that he needs. At this point, he's gotten himself moving in the right direction, but only with some advice from web professionals will he begin to see just how far he needs to go.

Jason Barnes brings 12 years of operations management experience in enterprise level process development. Currently, he leads a team of over 200 professionals supporting thousands of users on a mission to change healthcare one patient at a time.

The Internet can be an exceptional means of reaching prospective clients, but only if those efforts are concentrated in the right areas. It

doesn't sound like Dr. Friedman really has much of an idea of just what needs to be done, but he at least is receptive to the idea of getting onboard. That's a start. And Internet marketing, like any kind of marketing effort, starts with client buy-in.

When he meets with a professional from a marketing firm, he's sure to learn about social media and where to advertise, but also about more advanced techniques, such as retargeting. These are all means of not only generating new leads, but continuing to deliver your message, even after the person leaves your website. But even before that, Alex needs to determine what his message is. "Open for Business" is not a message; he needs to explain to people seeking treatment just why he's the therapist they should see.

As with any endeavor, it can be said that "there's no such thing as a sure thing." There are plenty of proven methodologies for Internet success. Blueprints people have followed in building their business online. And Alex could simply follow the playbook and appreciate the results. But there are no guarantees. For a small business, like Dr. Friedman's practice, with a localized audience, it requires a different kind of effort. That's why it can be extremely beneficial to work with a specialist, such as TherapyEverywhere, that works specifically with mental health practices to help them understand the landscape—and stake a claim to their little corner of the Web.

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