



## Digital Marketing Strategy to Attract New Customer for Dental Clinic (Case Study: Bandung Dental Center)

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**ABSTRACT:** Recently, there has been a growing interest in online marketing within the healthcare industry, including dental care. Utilizing the internet and social media platforms has become crucial for reaching the target audience effectively. While positive word-of-mouth remains significant for dental clinics, having a strong online presence and an appealing website can greatly contribute to attracting new patients. Bandung Dental Centre aims to enhance its services and compete with other clinics through digital marketing. The general manager of Bandung Dental Centre expressed dissatisfaction with the clinic's performance, observing a decline in the number of patients which has resulted in stagnant revenue growth. The author conducted a survey among 52 customers to evaluate the influence of the internet and social media on their decision to visit dental clinics. The survey results highlight customer service as the most influential variable, while the clinic's reputation and dentists had a negative impact on customers. Therefore, these aspects require evaluation and improvement. The author provides recommendations to enhance Bandung Dental Centre's digital marketing strategy, including Instagram Optimization, SEO improvement, Google Maps optimization, and the possibility of hiring a digital marketing agency. Furthermore, an implementation plan was developed to guide BDC staff in executing these strategies, even without a specific budget for hiring a digital marketing agency.

**KEYWORDS:** Attract new customer, Dental clinic, Dental marketing, Digital marketing, Social media.

### INTRODUCTION

Effective communication with current and prospective patients is crucial for healthcare establishments. It enables enlightening audiences, arousing interest, attracting patients, and gaining market share [1]. Communication forms the foundation of medical life and healthcare, positively impacting patient-provider dynamics. It facilitates better patient education, proactive health strategies, understanding, trust, and compliance with provider recommendations [2]. The message and its elements play a vital role in the communication process. Integrated marketing communications, such as direct marketing, help understand how messages influence consumers. In the healthcare industry, online marketing and social media have become prominent, allowing healthcare services, including dental care, to reach and impress their target audience [3]. Patients often seek information online to find dentists in their area and choose the right clinic. Dentists with engaging online platforms and effective online marketing messages can benefit from these consumer habits. The internet is an ever-updating medium, and a well-optimized website and strong online presence increase a dentist's credibility and reputation. However, a poor web presence can harm business, emphasizing the need for clinics to adapt and follow current trends. People of all ages, including those over 50, rely on the internet for health-related information [4]. Promotions on the internet significantly influence patients' choices of healthcare facilities or services. Healthcare institutions, including clinics, should utilize digital platforms to provide accurate information, minimize misinformation, and promote their services and clinical programs. Digital marketing through social media, websites, search engine optimization, email, video marketing, and applications is essential not only for attracting patients but also for ensuring public satisfaction and trust in healthcare services [5]. Bandung Dental Center should focus on developing services with added value to the community through digital marketing to compete effectively with other healthcare institutions.

### BUSINESS ISSUE

Health institutions must actively engage in the ongoing technological changes and transformations of today. In modern marketing, it is no longer sufficient to solely focus on developing a high-quality product or service, setting attractive pricing, and ensuring accessibility. The growing competitiveness within the healthcare industry emphasizes the significance of marketing. Healthcare organizations should utilize marketing communications to gain a competitive edge, boost sales revenue, promote their services, and



influence customers. Subramanian (2022) identified seven major challenges encountered by dental businesses, with the primary challenge being the competition from other dental practices [6]. The abundant presence of dental businesses in Bandung presents a considerable hurdle. To overcome this competition, it is crucial for dental professionals to be motivated and strive for improvement. When faced with intense competition, enhancing the marketing strategies and quality of services provided can prove instrumental in attracting a larger patient base. According to the manager of Bandung Dental Center, they promote their clinic by leveraging existing resources, specifically their staff. They do not employ a dedicated marketing team to carry out digital marketing, thus they have not been able to focus on managing digital platforms such as their website, social media, email, and digital advertising. The manager also mentioned that BDC Instagram account was hacked in early 2023 and was not successfully recovered due to the difficult and time-consuming process involved. As a result, they created a new account in late April 2023.

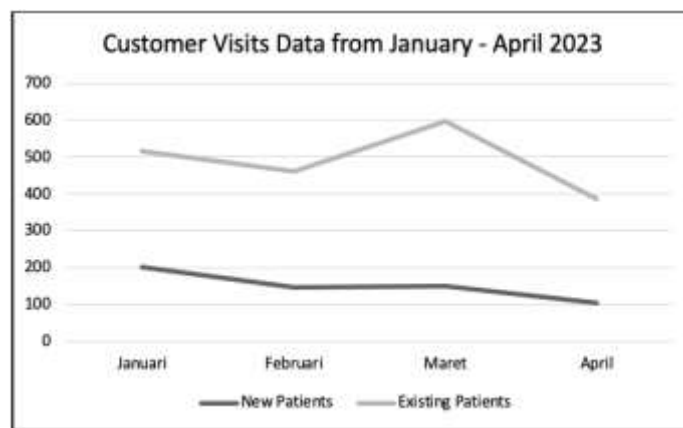


Figure I. Customer Visits Data

Source: Bandung Dental Centre Internal Data (2023)

The figure above shows the number of customer visits at Bandung Dental Center over a 4-month period from January to April 2023. The range is taken from the time when BDC's Instagram account was hacked until the present. The data was provided as secondary data to analyze the influx of both new and existing patients. Based on an in-depth interview with the BDC manager, the number of visiting patients has decreased for both new patients and existing ones. This certainly affects BDC's revenue growth, which remains relatively stagnant. The author analyzes factors influencing the matter, one of which is in their digital marketing.

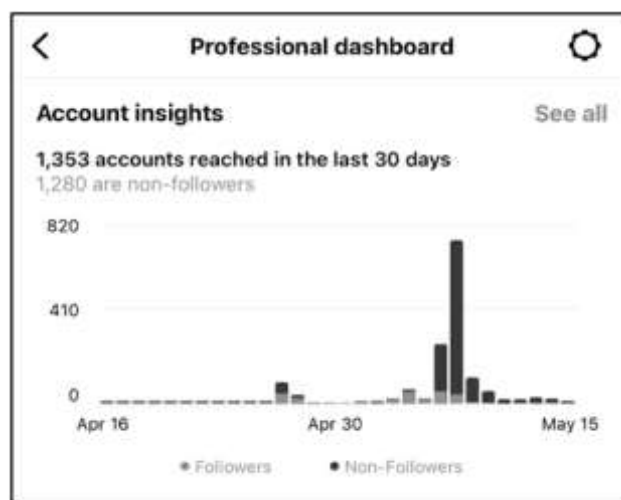


Figure 2. Bandung Dental Centre Instagram Insights

Source: Bandung Dental Centre Internal Data (2023)



From the presented figure above about Instagram insights, the highest reach was observed in early May when the BDC Instagram account was heavily promoted by stakeholders and involved individuals. During that period, the BDC Instagram account received high reach and engagement numbers, but after that, the number of insights declined drastically. It means that after that, there was no compelling presence to attract the audience to visit the account. This can be improved by creating more engaging content that can involve users to provide reactions. Therefore, the author attempts to assist in addressing this issue so that social media platforms can function as an effective digital marketing strategy for Bandung Dental Center as expected. An effective social media presence is anticipated to serve as a good marketing platform to enhance brand awareness among potential patients and attract new customers to seek dental treatment at Bandung Dental Centre.

**METHODOLOGY**

**A. Study Participants**

This study employed a descriptive verification approach, and the research methodology adopted was quantitative. As this research is quantitative, it enables the extension of data analysis to broader populations beyond the sample size. The study applies the central limit theorem, which asserts that if a study gathers random samples of considerable size from a population (with replacement), the distribution of the sample will approximate a normal distribution [7]. This theorem remains valid regardless of whether the source population follows a normal distribution or exhibits skewness, as long as the sample size is sufficiently large ( $n \geq 30$ ). Therefore, the final sample size was 52 patients who visited Bandung Dental Centre, collected by the author over a period of 5 days within a specific timeframe from June 5th to June 10th, 2023.

**B. Survey Instruments**

The survey method is used to collect primary data by presenting a series of questions to each respondent. The survey primarily focuses on assessing brand awareness and decision-making processes based on customer experience and their considerations of the clinic's digital presence. The instrument used is an online questionnaire via Google Forms, which contains 55 observed variables and 10 latent variables (9 exogeneous variables and 1 endogeneous variables). The exogenous variables included clinic reputation, dentist, technology, customer service, facilities, social media use, brand awareness, website presence, and Instagram presence, while the endogenous variables included impact to customer. The indicators (items) were assessed using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questions presented in the questionnaire are adapted from various journal sources, as outlined below.

**Table 1.** Variable Measurement

No.	Variable	Items	Description	Source
1.	Clinic Reputation	CR1	The dental clinic visited has a good reputation	(Meilatinova, 2021)
		CR2	I was familiar with the dental clinic visited	
		CR3	I find this dental clinic to be among the finest, and it provides me with a sense of comfort	(Clow et al, 1995)
2.	Dentist	DN1	Quality of care from the dentist	(Coe and Qian, 2013)
		DN2	The dentist's concern or sensitivity to the patient (responding to your pain and fear)	(Jaapar et al, 2017)
		DN3	Dentists have a good reputation	
		DN4	The professional attitude is shown by the dentist	
		DN5	Dentist's attention for initial diagnosis and after treatment	(Coe and Qian, 2013)
		DN6	Dentist's competence or expertise	
		DN7	Dentists use the most up-to-date techniques in treatment	



		DN8	Provide explanations about treatment, involving me in choosing or deciding on treatment	
3.	Technology	TECH1	Equipment in a good dental clinic practice room (such as TV, sound system, and others)	(Cetin et al, 2012)
		TECH2	Major devices as the state-of-the-art dental chair	
		TECH3	The latest or complete dental support equipment such as tooth scaling, teeth restoration, and others	
4.	Customer Service	CS1	Complete provision of information and services is provided by the dental clinic	(Jaapar et al, 2017)
		CS2	Dental treatment by appointment	
		CS3	All staff at this clinic provide good service	(Mazzei et al, 2009)
		CS4	The payment system is efficient and easy	
		CS5	The management of patient waiting queues is well-handled and organized.	
		CS6	The punctuality of dentist and staff working hours is good	(Limirang and Bachtiar, 2021)
		CS7	The treatment cost corresponds to the services provided	
5.	Facilities	FAC1	Cleanliness	(Jung et al, 2018)
		FAC2	Convenience	
		FAC3	Aesthetics	
		FAC4	Accessibility	
6.	Social Media Use	SMU1	Using social media to search for dentists/dental clinics	(Saadeh et al, 2022) with an improvement by author
		SMU2	Dentists/dental clinics with a good social media presence demonstrate good clinic credibility	
		SMU3	Dentists/dental clinics with a strong social media presence make you feel confident about receiving dental treatment	
		SMU4	Using social media to market dental practices has been proven effective	
		SMU5	Dental clinic marketing will be successful through social media and enhance the credibility of dentists in the future	
7.	Brand Awareness	BA1	Knowing about Bandung Dental Center	(Alalawi et al, 2019) with an improvement by author
		BA2	Where to find out about Bandung Dental Center	



		BA3	Treatment experience at Bandung Dental Center
8.	Website Presence	WP1	Easily searching for information about Bandung Dental Center on the Internet
		WP2	The website of Bandung Dental Center has an attractive design
		WP3	The website content of Bandung Dental Center covers comprehensive information
		WP4	The language used on the website is easy to understand
		WP5	The website is easy to use (user-friendly)
9.	Instagram Presence	IP1	Easily searching for information about Bandung Dental Center on the Instagram
		IP2	The Instagram profile of Bandung Dental Center has an attractive appearance
		IP3	The Instagram content of Bandung Dental Center is interesting (posts/stories/reels)
		IP4	The Instagram content of Bandung Dental Center includes comprehensive information
		IP5	The Instagram content of Bandung Dental Center educates
		IP6	The language used is easy to understand
10.	Impact to Customer	IC1	The need to improve the quality of social media for a dental clinic
		IC2	The improvement in social media quality influences the interest in receiving treatment at Bandung Dental Center

**C. Statistical Analysis**

The data analysis in this study utilizes Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which is a multivariate statistical analysis technique combining factor analysis and regression analysis. The purpose of SEM is to test correlations among variables in a model. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a cross-sectional and global statistical modeling technique. The SEM analysis used is variance-based (VB-SEM), and Partial Least Squares (PLS) is one of the VB-SEM statistical methods designed to address multiple regression issues in certain situations, such as small sample sizes and missing data. PLS testing involves both an outer model and an inner model. The outer model was assessed using reliability and validity tests. The reliability test employed Cronbach's alpha with a minimum value of 0.7 for the indicators. Composite reliability was also used to gauge the reliability of the outer model, with a minimum value of 0.7 indicating satisfactory internal consistency [17]. For the validity test in PLS-SEM, two methods were used: convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity is determined by a set of indicators that represent a single latent variable. In this study, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was used to measure convergent validity, with a minimum criterion of 0.7 [17]. Discriminant validity requires meaningful differences between the two measured concepts. Cross-loading is used as a criterion for assessing discriminant validity. If each indicator's loading is higher than its respective cross-loading, discriminant validity is achieved.



**RESULT**

Table 2 shows the characteristics of the respondents, including gender, age, occupation, types of dental treatment usually received, social media used, and referral source. It can be observed that the majority are female totaling 29 people (55.77%). In terms of age, it is evident that the majority of respondents fall within the 26-40 age range, comprising 24 individuals (46.15%). Regarding occupation, it is notable that the majority of respondents are private sector employees, amounting to 17 individuals (32.69%).

**Table 2.** Respondent Profile

Characteristics		N (%)
Gender	Male	23 (44.23%)
	Female	29 (55.77%)
Age	10-15 years old	1 (1.92%)
	16-25 years old	15 (28.85%)
	26-40 years old	24 (46.15%)
	41-55 years old	10 (19.23%)
	55 years or older	2 (3.85%)
Occupation	Housewives	4 (7.69%)
	Students	14 (26.92%)
	State-owned Enterprise Employee	6 (11.54%)
	Private Sector Employee	17 (32.69%)
	Entrepreneur	4 (7.69%)
	Retiree	1 (1.92%)
	Civil Servants	6 (11.54%)
*Types of dental treatment usually received:	Tooth extraction	11 (12.94%)
	Dentures	7 (8.24%)
	Dental fillings	31 (36.47%)
	Pediatric	7 (8.24%)
	Aesthetic dental (veneer, bleaching)	2 (2.35%)
	Orthodontic treatment (braces, invisalign, retainer)	8 (9.41%)
	Scaling	19 (22.35%)
* Which of the following do you have an account on?	LinkedIn	7 (5.34%)
	Facebook	20 (15.27%)
	Instagram	49 (37.40%)
	Twitter	13 (9.92%)
	Whatsapp	42 (32.06%)
* Source of information about dental clinics	Website	2 (3.8%)
	Social Media	14 (26.9%)
	Internet	11 (21.2%)
	Advertisement	2 (3.8%)
	Recommend by others	36 (69.2%)
* More than one answer could apply		

Source: Internal Data (2023)





Among the respondents, the most commonly used social media platform is Instagram, with 37.40%, while only a few of them use LinkedIn, with 5.34%. When asked about how they find out about dental clinics, the majority indicated that they know about them through recommendations from others, with 69.2%, while only a few of them found out through websites and advertisements, which accounts for 3.8%.

Table 3 and 4 displays the results of the convergent validity and discriminant validity analyses. Based on the results of the convergent validity analysis using loading factors, it was found that each indicator of the latent variable has a loading factor value >0.7, indicating their validity. Furthermore, the convergent validity testing is also determined by the average variance extracted (AVE) values. The results show that all variables have AVE values >0.700, indicating that the variables used in the research have good convergent validity.

**Table 3.** Convergent Validity

Variables	Item	Loading Factor	AVE
Clinic Reputation	CR1	0.779	0.795
	CR2	0.935	
	CR3	0.950	
Dentist	DN1	0.854	0.714
	DN2	0.780	
	DN3	0.877	
	DN4	0.822	
	DN5	0.744	
	DN6	0.841	
	DN7	0.921	
	DN8	0.908	
Technology	TECH1	0.837	0.694
	TECH2	0.791	
	TECH3	0.868	
Customer Service	CS1	0.888	0.733
	CS2	0.876	
	CS3	0.713	
	CS4	0.884	
	CS5	0.808	
	CS6	0.928	
	CS7	0.879	
Facilities	FAC1	0.906	0.770
	FAC2	0.795	
	FAC3	0.913	
	FAC4	0.891	
Social Media Use	SMU1	0.773	0.691
	SMU2	0.766	
	SMU3	0.886	
	SMU4	0.896	
	SMU5	0.826	



Brand Awareness	BA1	0.900	0.812
	BA2	0.91	
	BA3	0.886	
Website Presence	WP1	0.832	0.786
	WP2	0.909	
	WP3	0.942	
	WP4	0.841	
	WP5	0.905	
Instagram Presence	IP1	0.812	0.684
	IP2	0.794	
	IP3	0.868	
	IP4	0.902	
	IP5	0.718	
	IP6	0.856	
Impact to Customer	IC1	0.921	0.845
	IC2	0.917	

Source: Data Processing (2023)

Based on the data analysis results, the discriminant validity was obtained using the Fornell-Larcker criteria as shown in Table 4. The criteria states that the square root of the AVE value for each construct or variable should be greater than the correlation between two or more indicator variables in the model. Therefore, based on this criteria, the variables in this study can be considered to have achieved discriminant validity.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity

Constructs	Brand Awareness	Clinic Rep.	Cust. Service	Dentist	Facilities	Impact to Customer	Instagram Presence	Social Media Use	Tech.	Website Presence
Brand Awareness	<b>0.901</b>									
Clinic Reputation	0.632	<b>0.892</b>								
Customer Service	0.639	0.740	<b>0.956</b>							
Dentist	0.474	0.623	0.629	<b>0.845</b>						
Facilities	0.436	0.459	0.603	0.442	<b>0.878</b>					
Impact to Customer	0.579	0.731	0.944	0.619	0.720	<b>0.919</b>				
Instagram Presence	0.615	0.711	0.917	0.620	0.628	0.908	<b>0.827</b>			
Social Media Use	0.639	0.817	0.763	0.598	0.533	0.793	0.733	<b>0.831</b>		
Technology	0.400	0.439	0.671	0.488	0.727	0.800	0.686	0.530	<b>0.833</b>	
Website Presence	0.459	0.618	0.575	0.754	0.417	0.558	0.561	0.574	0.455	<b>0.887</b>

Source: Data Processing (2023)





**Table 5.** Composite Reliability

Variabel	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability
Clinic Reputation	0.875	0.920
Dentist	0.943	0.952
Technology	0.800	0.871
Customer Service	0.938	0.950
Facilities	0.901	0.930
Social Media Use	0.887	0.918
Brand Awareness	0.885	0.928
Website Presence	0.932	0.948
Instagram Presence	0.907	0.928
Impact to Customer	0.816	0.916

Source: Data Processing (2023)

Table 5 presents the results for composite reliability. It can be observed that all variables have Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values >0.7. This indicates that the variable constructs have good data reliability and can be considered reliable.

The second testing was conducted through inner model testing. The inner model testing examines the relationships between constructs. In the second testing through inner model testing, several tests were conducted, including R-square, Q-square, and path coefficient. Table 6 shows that the obtained R-square value is 0.968. An R-square value > 0.67 for the latent endogenous variables in the structural model indicates a significant influence of the exogenous variables on the endogenous variables, falling under the category of good influence. Approximately 96.8% of the contribution from the exogenous latent variables, such as clinic reputation, dentist, technology, customer service, facilities, social media use, brand awareness, website presence, and Instagram presence, can be attributed to the endogenous latent variable, "impact to customer," at Bandung Dental Center.

**Table 6.** R-square

	R-Square
Impact to Customer	0.968

Source: Data Processing (2023)

Q-square measures how well the model's estimated parameters align with the observed data. Q-square value greater than 0 indicates good predictive relevance, while a Q-square value less than 0 suggests a lack of predictive relevance. Here are the calculated Q-square values:

$$\begin{aligned}
 Q\text{-Square} &= 1 - (1 - R^2) \\
 &= 1 - (1 - 0.968) \\
 &= 96.8\%
 \end{aligned}$$

Based on the calculation results, the obtained Q-square value is 96.8%, which falls under the category of good/strong. This indicates that the amount of data variability used in this research is 96.8%. Next, the hypotheses in this study can be understood through the calculation of the model using the PLS (Partial Least Squares) technique with bootstrapping. The bootstrapping calculation provides values for each relationship or path. Hypothesis testing is conducted at a significance level of 0.05. A hypothesis is accepted if the significance (p-value) is less than 0.05.



Table 7. Path Coefficient

Path	Original Sample	t-statistics	Sig (P <sub>value</sub> )	Conclusion
Clinic Reputation → Impact to Customer	0.012	0.174	0.431	Not Accepted
Dentist → Impact to Customer	0.162	1.507	0.066	Not Accepted
Technology → Impact to Customer	0.242	4.371	0.000	Accepted
<b>Customer Service → Impact to Customer</b>	<b>1.146</b>	<b>5.244</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>Accepted</b>
Facilities → Impact to Customer	0.136	2.094	0.018	Accepted
Social Media Use → Impact to Customer	0.152	1.838	0.033	Accepted
Brand Awareness → Impact to Customer	-0.087	2.204	0.014	Accepted
Website Presence → Impact to Customer	-0.187	1.665	0.048	Accepted
Instagram Presence → Impact to Customer	-0.517	2.203	0.014	Accepted

Source: Data Processing (2023)

Table 7 shows that the factors that can have an impact on customers at Bandung Dental Center are technology, customer service, facilities, social media use, brand awareness, website presence, and Instagram presence. However, clinic reputation and dentist are not factors that have an impact on customers' decision to visit Bandung Dental Center. Additionally, when considering the provided customer service, it is observed that it is the most dominant factor influencing customers to visit Bandung Dental Center.

**DISCUSSION**

The research findings reveal that out of the nine variables studied, only seven have a significant influence on patients' purchasing decisions at Bandung Dental Center. Customer service emerges as the dominant factor impact to customers (Table 7). Moreover, demographic data from the respondents indicates that a majority of them (69.2%) visited BDC based on recommendations from others (Table 2). This aligns with previous research highlighting the significance of word-of-mouth (WOM) in influencing customer purchasing decisions [18]. Customer satisfaction also plays a vital role in recommendations and is shaped by the customer's perception of high-quality service performance [19]. Service quality, as an indicator of customer satisfaction, can contribute to positive WOM [20]. However, two variables, namely clinic reputation and dentist, yield negative results in terms of their impact on customers, indicating the need for evaluation. Previous studies emphasize that the reputation of a healthcare business, including dental practices, is a crucial factor for consumers when choosing services [21]. The reputation can be shaped through market signals such as advertising and word-of-mouth [22]. Online reviews also hold significant influence and can contribute to building trust [23]. Dental practitioners should actively participate in online conversations, address misunderstandings, and incorporate positive patient comments to counteract the effects of negative reviews [23]. Moreover, dentists should adapt to modern dentistry, changing demographics, and consumer preferences to enhance their reputation, and social media can serve as an effective marketing strategy [16].

**CONCLUSION**

Improving performance in the realm of social media is crucial for dental clinics and dentists, especially in today's era, considering the influence of customer service and online reputation on customers' decisions.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**A. Instagram optimization**

Creating a new attention among the audience about the new Instagram account to receive the latest updates regarding BDC is important. When searching for BDC's Instagram account, the hacked old account appears first, so it is important to inform the audience that the BDC account has moved from the old one to the new one. And then, setting a consistent posting schedule is essential for engaging your Instagram followers. By maintaining a consistent presence on Instagram, you will increase familiarity with your clinic among the audience. Also you have to create more engaging content that can involve users to provide reactions. By



exploring new formats, such as reels, along with utilizing hashtags, attractive story, informative and educative contents, can all contribute to enhancing your content's visibility.

### **B. Put your website on the first page**

Improving SEO is key to making your website appear on the first page of search engine results. There are two approaches to achieve this: technical SEO and non-technical SEO. Technical SEO involves optimizing code, metadata, and link profiles to improve search results. Non-technical SEO focuses on content, user experience, and promotion strategies. Enhancing content, such as blog posts, and providing relevant and valuable links are important aspects. Adding engaging media like images, videos, and infographics can also increase audience interest. Strategic placement of keywords in titles, section titles, meta descriptions, and sparingly within the content is crucial. It is important to maintain natural keyword usage that doesn't compromise readability. Both technical and non-technical SEO strategies work together to improve your website's ranking in search engine results, particularly on Google.

### **C. Google maps optimization**

Optimizing Google Maps is essential for businesses to improve brand visibility. When users search for local keywords, Google's algorithm displays Google Maps as an option in the search results, attracting traffic to your business. Google Maps provides a review section where potential customers can access comprehensive information and read about the experiences of previous visitors. This serves as a valuable reference for those planning to visit. Additionally, the presence of Google Maps enhances the clinic's credibility and instills trust among customers, contributing to a good reputation and overall integrity. To maximize the benefits, it is important to update and revise the information on Google Maps, including adding the latest clinic photos and details about the new Instagram BDC account.

### **D. Hire a digital marketing agency**

A digital marketing agency can assist clinics in expanding their reach to potential patients by implementing effective online marketing strategies. Their expertise includes developing and managing SEO campaigns, optimizing website content for search engines and user experience, and executing and monitoring social media campaigns. Additionally, they provide analytics services to track campaign performance and offer recommendations for improvement. Collaborating with a digital marketing agency ensures that clinics and healthcare providers have a strong online presence and effectively reach their target audience.

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