

Missed opportunities

Pam Underdown on opportunities you might have missed this summer

ow was your summer? Did you take some much-needed time off? Did you use the quieter months to do all of those jobs that you never have time to do? Or, were you so busy that you didn't get a chance for a break? Whatever you did this summer, I hope you are now feeling refreshed and refocused for the busy lead up to the festive season.

I wanted to share with you how busy my summer has been, not because I travelled the world or anything too exotic (although I did get engaged!) but because I spent my summer helping those clients of mine who were really worried about the traditional "summer slump". Numerous people had asked me what they could do to improve their income during the summer period – so I held a series of free online training seminars called "30 Days to Heat up Your Summer Profits" throughout July. If you missed the free training, don't worry, you can still access them to watch at a time to suit you.

During the training I included a number of free, low cost or paid for marketing strategies to quickly increase profits, as well as a number of ideas for easy-to-implement summer campaigns and, rather importantly, how to make the time

to fit it all in. In keeping with the summer spirit, I even held the first seminar live from my own holiday in Turkey. We had a huge amount of engagement and over 1,500 views, so the "experiment" worked.

The reason I say "experiment" is because that is what marketing is all about – finding out what works and what doesn't. Testing, measuring and improving based upon real facts and real results.

Facebook adverts are ideal for this particularly with the new features they introduced in July, which means you can really narrow down your advertising based on the demographic of the people who are responding to them, as well as ensuring you only focus your advert on the device that is used the most. I know the majority of people who watched my promotional videos were female aged between 35 and 44 and that 745 out of the 854 who saw my second seminar video advert were viewing it on their iPhone. This is huge!! Not just in terms of really making sure that your Facebook adverts are targeted for maximum impact and return, but to really show me (and you) the massive impact that mobile advertising is having on us all.

BUSINESS COACHING

to have their very own unique branded app to really differentiate their business, stand out from the crowd, reward their loyal patients and send push messaging about promotions, skincare tips or last minute appointments to instantly appear on their patient's phone. If you think about it an app notification has more chance of being seen than an email. An app brings so many benefits to an end user and the business owner, but most importantly it allows clinics to stay at the forefront of their patient's mind, by showing that you are thinking about them and that you appreciate their business. This type of app used to cost £10-15k, but now you can get it all for less than the price of an injectable treatment.

Isn't it exciting how far technology is taking us all and how easy it makes our marketing? As business owners we can now get in front of our patients and prospects in a matter of seconds and it's either free, or very low cost. It certainly wasn't that easy 10 years ago when I set up my first aesthetics business. What about you? Are you really maximising everything you could be doing to ensure that all of your patients regularly hear from you, so they feel loved, special and appreciated? Standing out against a mass of competition is a challenge for every shape, size and type of business. Your competitors are continuously seeking more influential and effective ways to build their reputation over yours.

On an average day your prospective patients are exposed to thousands of brands, from the moment they wake up to the moment they go to sleep. Wherever your prospective patients are hanging out or spending their time (online and offline), this is where your business needs to be seen and heard and where your presence needs to be felt. It doesn't have to cost you thousands of pounds. The use of social media, blogging, article writing, local business networking and local charity work will all build your profile. You can also ask your local media if you can write a regular "ask the expert" column or be interviewed on local radio.

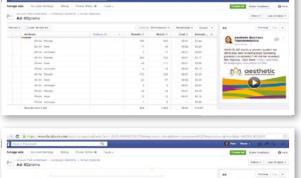
In the scramble for new business, please don't forget about your existing patients and the friends of those patients. After all, it can cost up to seven times more money for you to attract a new patient than keep an existing one from wandering off to your competitors. Here are three tips that I am sure you have come across before. But the issue is not whether you have come across them before or not, it's whether you have implemented them before now or not?

1. FOCUS ON YOUR UNCONVERTED LEADS

If you ask most business owners how they are going to increase their profits, they will say that they are going to go and find new customers. Before you do that, what about the ones who have made some kind of contact with you, expressed some kind of interest in what you have to offer and have not followed through and bought from you yet? Most people assume that if they haven't bought from you now, they never will. But that >



I also read an interesting news article by the BBC on July 30 (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-33712729) which stated that Facebook is now used by over half of the world's online users. So if you aren't using Facebook advertising and your website isn't optimised for a mobile experience, then you need to resolve that now, before you really do miss out and your competitors overtake.





In terms of really making the most of mobile, I also took the time this summer to find a very low cost but high impact way of bringing mobile apps to my client base. I had been on the lookout for the right technology that would allow my clients



is such a big mistake. We all do it – we enquire about new products and services all the time, but we don't always take action and buy straight away. Sometimes it happens weeks or even months down the line.

2. USE THE PHONE

There is still an incredible tool that most people don't use in their business and that's the telephone. Not all of your patients are created equally, some will spend more than the rest. So if you are not getting on the phone and talking to your patients regularly, then you are losing out. If you hate it, get someone else to do it. Make high value phone calls. Don't "push" things, have decent conversations instead - they are worth their weight in gold. Your patient feels valued, listened to and you never know - you may even get a booking from it. One of my clients – Jo – called her patients to say she was going on holiday and got 12 appointments booked, just by asking how

appointments booked, just by asking how they were, whether they were going on holiday and telling them the dates that she was going away. She actually had a record July because of it, so well done Jo!

3. OBSESS ABOUT INCREASING YOUR CLICK THROUGH RATE

This is the percentage of people who have an advert appear in front of them and actually click on it. The more people who see an advert and the more who

click on that advert, the more people you get on your website But this is only half the magic. The real magic is the system you get from Google. They actually reward you for having a higher click through rate. They will either put you higher up the page or charge you less. Over three or four months of really focussing on this, really obsessing about it, you will get more people to your business for the same money, or more for less. So, set up your pay per click account, then come back and watch this again. The Google PPC tool is

very marketing friendly, so take the time

to learn how to use it and never hand your hard earned money over to an "expert" without knowing exactly what they will be doing. It will pay off enormously if you can master the basics of Google AdWords. After all every skill is learnable and you could just be one skill away from doubling your profits in the next 12 months.



Pam Underdown is the founder and owner of Aesthetic Business Transformations, a business growth specialist working exclusively to help medical aesthetic business owners increase their profits and reduce their costs. Pam has more than 25 years of business development, sales and marketing experience and has specialised in the aesthetics industry since 2005. For FREE access to her online training and for more information about her new 6D Patient Attraction System please contact info@aesthetic-bt.com