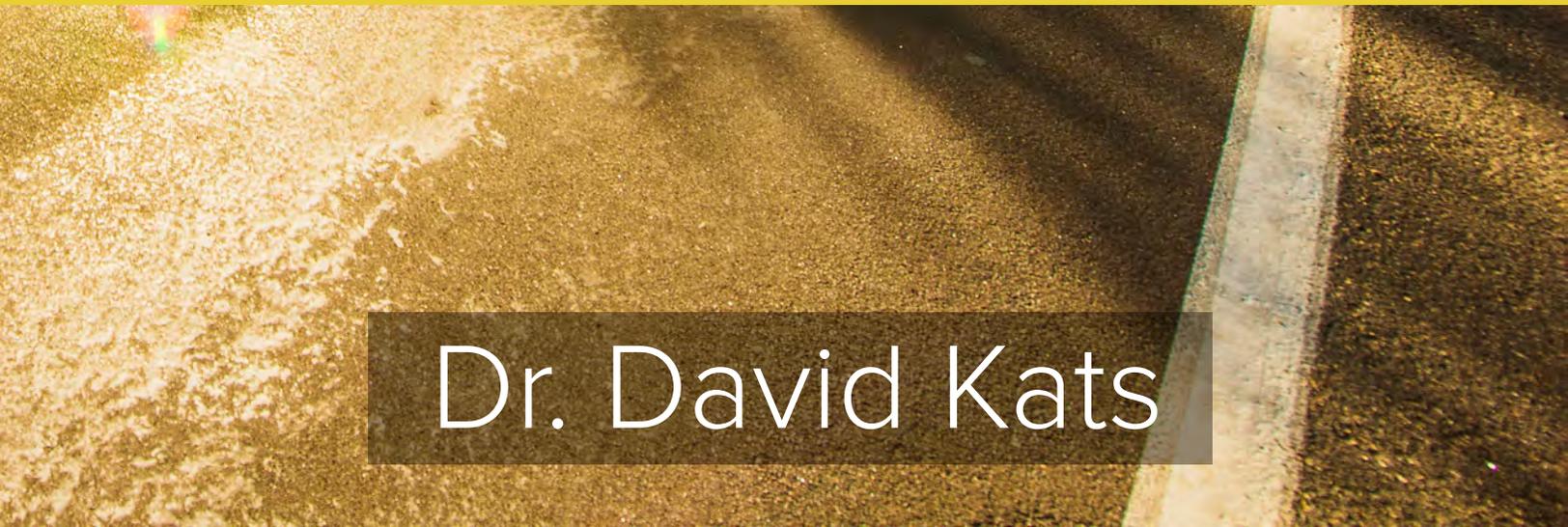




THE  
CHIROPRACTOR'S  
*Roadmap*  
for  
DIGITAL SUCCESS

**7 Steps for Attracting  
New Patients Online**



Dr. David Kats

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## **Preface**

I think we all realize the important role the Internet plays in the success of a chiropractic offices. Unfortunately, most chiropractors feel they don't have the time to navigate all the information available into measurable results. I'm writing this book to give the chiropractic community the benefit of the information I've learned over the years as a consultant and business owner. I just wanted to give back to the community that has been so good to me all these years.

This book isn't going to cover all the topics in depth, and may be out of date by the time it's published, but it will give you the basic information you need to get started. By following the steps provided, you will be able to raise your office in search engine results thus increasing the number of new patients calling your chiropractic office. It will also show you SEO doesn't have to cost a lot of money, only your time.

# CHAPTER ONE

## Attracting New Patients

I think we can all agree the major reason for a website is to attract new patients. Many chiropractors have websites I call cyberspace junk. Their web designer created an impressive looking website, but it's not optimized, so it's worthless because no one will ever find it. It's just a website floating out in cyberspace. About the only way to find it is by typing either the exact URL or a dozen keywords in the browser search box. In this book we are going to show you easy ways to raise your web listing on Search Engine Results Pages (SERP).

How a website looks does matter if it doesn't perform its function, bringing new patients in the door. Plug-ins like spinning spines on your website have no value if they are not formatted correctly. Plus, no new patient will ever say, "Well, I was just so mesmerized by the spinning spine on your website that I decided to become a new patient."

While the look of the website certainly has importance, you have to agree, that in many cases, two of us can't even agree on which website we like best? Attractive to one person is unattractive to the next.

Unfortunately, most websites are not designed to attract new patients, they are designed to educate the public. Ninety percent of chiropractic websites are nothing more than canned education. Your website has to be designed strictly to attract new patients. It's okay to have some patient education on your website but which would you rather have from your website-10 new patients or 10 more educated people in the community. I vote for the 10 new patients, since the education will occur in our office.

Now I've found there's one very simple trick that encourages people to become new patients. It sounds too simple to have value, but I have found it that if you put a large "button" on your website that says, "Click Here for Special New Patient Offer," you attract twice the number of new patients than without the button. The next question I always hear is, "What should we offer?" The answer is, it doesn't matter what you have for your special offer. The fact that you're making the offer is what causes them to take action. Some doctors just give away a consultation at no charge, while others give away more substantial services. You do what you feel is best.

You should be getting 50 to 80% of your new patients from the Internet. I have a clinic that averages 40 new patients a month and 20 to 30 of those new patients are directly from the Internet. I know it's hard to believe, but in most Internet savvy practices, more new patients are generated through the Internet than by referral. Some doctors will say, "That's not true of my practice, I am getting 90% of my patients by referral." Well, that could mean one of three things: (1) you are very good at asking for referrals, (2) you have a very poor Internet presence or (3) you have a combination of good referrals and poor Internet presence. Regardless of how many

new patients you get each month by referral, the fact is, you will get more new patients with both patient and Internet referrals.

Most chiropractors have only a vague idea of what constitutes an Internet presence. If you ask them about their Internet presence they speak in general terms such as, "Well I have a nice looking website and I think I have a business Facebook page." They really don't know what they have or need as far as Internet presence is concerned. They just close their eyes and hope it will fix itself. They use the ostrich technique, where they stick their head in the sand, but when you stick your head in the sand you know where you're going to get kicked. When quizzed in more detail I find that most of them have a smattering of Internet activities but very few have an organized approach to creating a good Internet presence.

Now, the kind of Internet presence you create will vary depending on the type of business you own. For instance, if a business markets internationally they want a global Internet presence but as a chiropractor you want a strong local presence. I hired an Internet presence provider once that tried to use the global approach, but after a few months I only got a couple of chiropractic inquiries, one from India and the other from Pakistan. I don't think they would have made good patients – it is too far to drive! As a chiropractor, you need great local presence, so you should limit your efforts to a radius of about 30 miles from your clinic. Even though you may draw patients beyond 30 miles, you won't do it with enough consistency that it pays to advertise beyond that 30 mile radius.

One thing that surprises me is that most young doctors know how to run every techno-gadget known to mankind. They know how to run the latest smartphone before it's even released for sale but have very little knowledge about how to develop an effective Internet presence for their chiropractic office.

I've talked a lot about Internet presence but what does Internet presence actually mean? You hear about website optimization, search engine optimization (SEO), social media, blogs, posts, reviews and pay per click advertising. How does it all fit together? I have developed a very simple plan for creating an effective Internet presence that generates lots of new patients. The good news about this plan is you can probably complete it by yourself with very little cost. An increased Internet presence doesn't have to cost a lot of money, but it does take time. Time, acquiring the knowledge and implementing the plan.

There are seven specific steps you need to take to improve the rank (location) of your office during an Internet (Google) search. These steps improve your pervasive internet presence. However, before you take those steps, you need to know what Search Engines want. Here is the answer: All the major search engines want to see you have a pervasive internet presence and that your information is identical throughout the internet.

## CHAPTER 2

### Identical Information

Here's what I mean, search engines, like Google for instance, have software called web crawlers, also known as spiders. These web crawlers methodically scan through the web looking for information about you and your practice. They will rank you higher in their search engine results if the information about your business is found on the Internet in multiple places and displayed exactly the same. If your business name, address, phone number, website address and other similar information is the same from place to place on the Internet, Google assumes that it must be right. On the other hand, if Google sees your information on the internet under various names, addresses, phone numbers etc., they can't determine which one is correct so to serve their customers better, they will rank offices with more reliable information ahead of yours. Think about it this way. Why would Google send people to you when they aren't sure if the information they are providing their customers is accurate?

Now we think all of our information on the Internet is fairly accurate. But consider these scenarios:

1. You are listed by your clinic name one place, your personal name in another and your clinic name with your PLLC (or other business designation) in a third. Which is right? Google doesn't care. They will just rate you lower.
2. The Internet never forgets. You may think your address is the same all over the Internet but if you have moved in the last 10 years the Internet will still have places with your old address. Web crawlers see this as a conflict, so they rate you lower.
3. When your practice first opened you may have used your cell number as the primary contact number. Now you use the office landline but you also have an Internet (VoIP) number. Again which one is right?

As you might imagine, there are companies who, for a fee, will correct all your inaccurate information on the Internet. They are called digital location management providers. I've found Yext.com is one of the best companies to use for this, but Get Found by Go Daddy is also good. All you do is give them the right information one time and they do the rest of the work.

Now you may think you have fairly accurate Internet information but I suggest taking the free test on yext.com just to be certain. I think you'll find you have dozens if not hundreds of inaccuracies on the Internet.

The cost of joining yext.com is about \$50 a month and they want you to join for a year. Get Found, on the other hand is less expensive plus you can join for as little as three months. Either way its money well spent.

Remember, there are two things that search engine web crawlers are looking for; a pervasive presence and accurate information. Hopefully, we've covered everything you need to know about creating accurate information. The rest of this book will cover the steps for creating a pervasive presence.

## CHAPTER 3

### Pervasive Presence

As we said earlier, there are seven steps you need to take to create a pervasive presence on the Internet. They are:

1. OPTIMIZE your website (Search Engine Optimization)
2. Register with ALL the major search engines
3. Actively post on ALL major social media sites
4. List yourself with all the free Chiropractic referral directories
5. Having good reviews on major review platforms
6. Try some pay-per-click advertising
7. Frequently update your articles or blogs

While these tasks may seem pretty daunting, the good news is, you can do most of it by yourself and most have little or no cost attached.

#### STEP ONE - OPTIMIZING YOUR WEBSITE (SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION)

Now that you've created a website designed to attract new patients, you have to somehow tie what used to be cyberspace junk to planet Earth. This can only be done by optimizing the website. A website can be built in several different platforms and some are easier to optimize than others. At this time WordPress seems to be one of the easiest to work with for the average person. While it's easy to create your own website with drag-and-drop software is like Wix or Weebly, their optimization abilities can be limited.

The process of website optimization has evolved over the last several years and will continue to evolve. Let me take you from the past to the current.

Meta Tags. During the early days of website optimization, web designers were encouraged to put meta-tags on the websites they developed. Meta-tags are simple one, two, or three word phrases that described the website and its contents. Here are some meta-tags:

- Dallas chiropractor
- low back pain
- therapeutic massage
- physical therapy

In the early days, web designers were encouraged to put meta-tags somewhere on the website. Many would simply place meta-tags on the bottom of one of the pages. As designers became more advanced they began hiding the meta-tags on pages that could only be seen by the web crawlers not the public. It didn't take long before web designers started misusing meta-tags. They would put meta-tags on a website even though they had nothing to do with the website itself. For instance they would put "therapeutic massage" on a chiropractor's website that did not have a massage therapist. They were misusing meta-tags just to get more traffic to the website.

Google soon realize this so they refined their requirements for higher website ratings. Hidden or misused meta-tags will lower your ranking.

### **Keywords**

You can't build a website without content keywords – unless it's all pictures. These are the words search engines attempt to match in the text of the website, especially the titles and subtitles in a search request. There are several free keyword tools available, such as Google Keyword Tool that can help you choose the best keywords for your website. There are also competitive keyword research tools, but for the most part the free tools available from Google or WordStream will provide all the help you need.

Keywords in the title or subtitle improve your website rankings so websites must be designed in a “keyword friendly” fashion if you want to be found. Consider these two page titles: “Welcome to Our Office” or “We're Glad You're Here!” Both sound very friendly but neither one will drive traffic to your website or your office. These phrases could be used for any number of businesses anywhere in the United States. It could be an insurance company, a medical office, a government office or a myriad of other things. Other descriptive terms such as location are also missing. Why not say, "Welcome to Denton Chiropractic." This tells web crawlers that you're from Denton, Texas and that you are a chiropractic office. Be specific and descriptive.

### **Pictures and Names**

Another early tool in website development was the use of pictures on your website. Web crawlers evidently believe in the saying “a picture is worth a 1,000 words.” Shortly after web crawlers began asking for more pictures, they declared pictures were not effective unless they have descriptive names. Creating descriptive, keyword-rich file names is absolutely crucial for image optimization.

### **Videos**

Now we've evolved up to the present day, so now web crawlers are looking for videos. Videos will increase your Internet presence. You may hear controversy related to storage of the videos. Some web developers suggest your videos be stored on YouTube or Vimeo, so when someone clicks the video on your website it will automatically redirect them to YouTube (where your video is actually shown). This option increases the chances of your videos being viewed. Other web developers believe you should store your videos right on your own website. They don't believe your viewers should be encouraged to leave your website and go to YouTube.com where the next video option may distract them. At any rate, the use of videos is a big boost to your Internet presence.

## **Coordinated Social Media**

Your website needs to integrate with your social media sites so that information placed on your website will show up on all your social media sites automatically. It's just a part of having a good pervasive presence. This will be covered in more detail in the next section.

## **Mobile Friendly**

As I give you this information, it is probably already old news since technology is always evolving. Google announced in April 2015 that if your website was not mobile friendly it would automatically be ranked lower than the mobile friendly sites. A mobile friendly site simply means that your website shows well on mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets. Today, most new website are mobile friendly but check yours to be sure. There are two ways to check your mobile friendliness. First, locate your website by doing a search on your mobile device. On the third line down it should say, "Mobile Friendly." Another way to check if your website is mobile friendly is to use a desktop or laptop computer and reduce the size of your website from full-screen by clicking the two little overlapping boxes in the upper right-hand corner of your PC. Now with your cursor click on the lower right-hand corner of your website and drag the website to change the size of the window. If your text automatically resizes as your window resizes your mobile friendly. If on the other hand, as you reduce the size your window, it simply cuts off part of your text, you're not mobile friendly.

You can see there's a lot to website optimization. You'll probably need to work with your website developer to incorporate the ideas we discussed above. With a little website modification you can improve your website ranking significantly. If you decide it's too much for you to do, you can hire companies to optimize your website. Many companies want an ongoing contractual arrangement but I've found there are a few companies willing to do a one-time optimization, which will improve your website ranking. In the rest of this booklet we will discuss additional procedures you must perform to get your website to the top of the search engine rankings. If you feel this is more than you want to tackle you may want to contact a company that specializes in the optimization of chiropractic websites and improving your Internet presence. I found the best company by far is Inception Chiropractic Marketing. The company is owned by a very successful chiropractor, Michael Hamilton. His company has become so successful that he retired from his 500 patient a week chiropractic practice and concentrates totally on helping other chiropractors achieve maximum results. His fees vary from \$200-\$400 per month but it's worth the cost. In fact, even though I know how to perform the Internet optimization functions, I still use Inception Chiropractic Marketing in the chiropractic offices I own.

## **STEP TWO - SEARCH ENGINE REGISTRATION**

Okay, we are ready for the second step which is search engine registration. This is the single most important step as far as Internet optimization is concerned. It's fairly easy to do and it costs nothing but is very time-consuming and takes a little bit of knowledge.

Have you ever wondered why some chiropractic offices have a pin in Google maps and are listed on the first page of the local listings but you're not? Well you need to list your business with the major search engines or you can be the largest chiropractic center in your area and still not have a pin in the map or be seen in the local listings. We'll look at how to get listed with Google. The rest are very similar and you can do them on your own.

Open any browser window and type "Google my business" or [google.com/business](http://google.com/business) in the browser address window. Click the "Google My Business" link that appears in the search results. You'll be directed to the Google My Business website where you will see a blue "Get on Google" button in the upper right corner. Once you click the button, you will be directed to a log-in page. If you have ever registered with Google, you will be directed to log-in, otherwise click the Create an Account link. Once logged in, click next which takes you to the screen titled Google My Business > Find your business with a search box labeled, "Search by business name and address." Type in your business name and address. In most cases, your business information will appear, once you click on the listing you will be directed to a form where you can complete your business information. As you fill out the information, Google will start to build a one-page profile for you. This one-page profile, sometimes called a landing page, will be available to Google users when searching for a chiropractic office. Once you've completed your address it will automatically give you a pin in Google maps.

You will be asked several questions related to your business like your category (chiropractic), days of operation, hours, languages spoken, etc. Be sure to answer every question and add any photos or videos. You need to fill out 100% of the information because you will be graded. If you fill out most of the information and are, let's say, 83% complete, you will not rank as high as if you filled out all the information. They will show you the percentage of completion as you fill out the form.

Once you've completed all the information, click the submit button. At that time Google will inform you there is still one step. They will text you a four digit code which you must enter into this website. Then Google will know that you are the person who gave them the information and that the information is correct.

As you can see, the process isn't that hard. It just takes a little time. Google commands over 70% of the market when people use laptop or desktop computers. That's why you need to start with Google. What makes it even more important is that handheld devices today make up more than 50% of the Internet searches, and when handheld devices such as tablets or smart phones are used, Google's market share climbs to 83%.

Google holds 70% of the search engine market share, so there is still another 30% to be reached. Most of that 30% use two other major search engines - Bing and Yahoo. This means you must register yourself with Bing and Yahoo in the same way you did with Google. Again, just search for, "Bing for business" and "Yahoo for business."

Then there's still one more step. Yahoo is too small to compete with Google in the search engine business. As a result, they rely on [Yelp.com](http://Yelp.com) to help them collect information. This means that you have to list yourself on [Yelp.com](http://Yelp.com) as well as the other three search engines.

Once you're listed on those for sites you have covered more than 90% of the searches that will take place for chiropractors in your area. However, there are literally over 100 different search engines where you can be registered. If you're doing this search engine listing project by yourself I would probably stop with the four major sites we've already mentioned. If you're going to use an outside source to help you with search engine registration you may want to use a company like Get Found. They will register you with the major search engines as well as many more lesser-known search engines.

Remember, all your information on the search engine sites must be identical to achieve a high Internet ranking.

### STEP THREE - SOCIAL MEDIA LISTINGS

The third step in creating an effective Internet presence is getting listed on all the major social media sites. Again, this process doesn't cost anything but it takes time, and just as with the search engine listing process, it's fairly easy to do. In fact, almost all of us have a personal Facebook page. We were able to create it ourselves without much problem. Now you're going to do something fairly similar except that you'll be setting up a social media page for your business. That means you'll probably have both a personal and business Facebook page.

Google is a search engine while Google+ is a social media site, which I admit can be confusing. At one time Google, the search engine company, wanted to dethrone Facebook as the social media king, so they created Google+ as their social media site. Well obviously they did not dethrone Facebook but they did create great place to showcase for your business.

You should join as many social media sites as you can but as a minimum you should join at least the following sites:

1. Google+
2. Facebook for business
3. Pinterest
4. Tumbler
5. LinkedIn
6. Twitter
7. YouTube

When I teach this material one of the first comments I get when I mention social media sites such as Pinterest is that they are not interested. They don't feel Pinterest will bring them any new patients. I agree completely. You're not joining sites like Pinterest because you enjoy the site or because you think you're going to get new patient from the site. You are joining the site to help give you a pervasive presence on the Internet-exactly what the search engines are looking for.

It is important that your social media pages stay fresh. The easiest way to update all your accounts at once is to use a social media management tool like HootSuite that allows any new information placed on your website to be distributed to your social media sites. If you're not

comfortable setting up your website so it will do it on its own, you will have to contact your website developer and make sure that you can "push" your website content out your social media sites.

## STEP FOUR - PROFESSIONAL CHIROPRACTIC DIRECTORIES

Many occupations have professional referral directories that provide them with many, and in some cases, most of their patient referrals. For instance, psychologytoday.com provides mental health professionals a great share of their patient referrals. I know many psychotherapists who receive over half of their new patients from referral sites. Unfortunately, our profession does not have a major chiropractic referral directory. Chiropractic does have various smaller professional referral directories and many of these are free. This step should take less than an hour, but if you want to create a pervasive presence on the Internet, you need to be listed on all the free national and local chiropractic referral directories. Just Google, "chiropractic referral directories." to find two or three national referral directories and a few local referral directories to join. Sometimes these referral directories require a monthly fee to get a "premium" listing. That's probably not necessary, the free listing is all you need.

Again, remember, we don't anticipate getting any new patients from these directories were just looking for pervasive presence.

## STEP FIVE – ONLINE REVIEWS

What happens if you list yourself on all the major search engines but you're still not listed on the first page of the local listings? Well there are ways to get to the top of those local listings. It usually takes a series of events, but certainly the single most important factor in getting to the top of the local listings is a large number of positive reviews.

Nearly everyone is familiar with how reviews work. A recent survey found 88% of people check reviews before buying something from the Internet, and a product or service whose reviews produce less than 4 out of 5 stars is usually bypassed. As a new patient, would you go to a chiropractor who rated two stars out of five? Most people wouldn't.

So your goal is to get as many reviews as you can and keep as close to a five star rating as you can.

I own a chiropractic clinic in Broken Arrow Oklahoma, a suburb of Tulsa Oklahoma. The name of the clinic is Kats Chiropractic. If you Google, "chiropractors broken arrow oklahoma" you'll see that we are always rated either first or second in the local listings. We usually share those two spots with another well-run clinic, Active Life Chiropractic. You can see why we're rated number one and number two. Active Life Chiropractic has 14 reviews and Kats Chiropractic has 12 reviews. The next closest clinic has two reviews.

Ideally we should have 15 to 25 positive reviews on our Google listing, but Google isn't the only place where you need to have reviews. The following sites are the most popular for

gaining reviews. While you should have 15 to 25 reviews on Google probably 5 to 10 reviews are enough for the following rating locations:

- Bing
- Yahoo
- YP.com
- Healthgrades
- Angie's list

Some doctors shy away from Healthgrades.com because it informs the public of any negative activities on your license such as malpractice cases, board disciplines and board sanctions, but if you have an active license, you have a Healthgrades listing. Healthgrades is frequently on the front page of the search engines results, so I feel you should use it to your advantage. Just claim your Healthgrades page, dress it up with pictures and information that shows you in a positive light. At the very least, look yourself up to see what information is listed about you. While you're there you may want to claim your site and upgrade it so it has a positive effect on the people that visit the site.

How do you get reviews? You get reviews in various ways. First, you should encourage patients who have experienced positive results at your office to write a review. Second, ask friends and colleagues to write reviews. Now when your friends and colleagues write reviews they must of course be truthful! They can't say, "I've been a patient of Dr. Smith for 27 years" when in fact they are just a friend. Colleagues and friends can leave reviews that attest to your good bedside manner, knowledge of chiropractic and other positive attributes. I'm sure you have close friends that you've graduated with who know you well and would be able to write good reviews. You in turn could write good reviews for them.

Reviews take time but they're well worth it. It's one of the few ways you can increase your local listing ranking in a short period of time. Remember, positive reviews show reliability to Google web crawlers.

## STEP SIX - PAY-PER-CLICK ADVERTISING

What is pay-per-click advertising and what does it do for you? Pay-Per-Click advertising is internet advertising. It is the short advertisements posted across the top or down the right hand side of the page on search engines and social media sites like Google and Facebook. When someone clicks on the webpage that has your ad displayed, a certain amount is deducted from the amount you allotted to be spent that month. For example, you decided to spend \$200 a month on Google pay-per-click advertising. The amount Google charges you per click is relative to how much competition there is in your area. If several chiropractors are using pay-per-click advertising the cost per click will go up. If fewer chiropractors in your area are using it the cost per click will be less.

To start, I suggest that you advertise only on Google and that you use the advertising program they have called, "Adwords Express." Do not use their regular "Adwords" advertising

program. While you cannot be as “audience selective” with Adwords Express as you can with Adwords, Adwords Express is much easier to use.

To get started advertising on Google simply google, "adwords express." Once you create an account you can create Google ads immediately. To see an example, Google your chiropractic clinic and city, you will probably see ads appear above and to the right of your listing that are actually advertisements by other chiropractors in your area. These advertisements can be very effective. Our chiropractic office spends approximately \$300 a month on Adwords Express but it draws 12 to 15 new patients a month. That's a great return on investment.

When you set up your ad, Adwords will ask you for a title, but you only have about 20 character limit, so something simple like, "Back Pain Relief" is adequate. Next you will need the body of your ad. Your ad can only be text and is limited to approximately 70 characters. Again, something simple like, "Same-day appointments available for back pain." Then list your phone number or website.

Your ads can be updated as often as you wish. One client said when he started advertising with Adwords, he changed his title every Saturday morning to read, "Saturday Apts. Today.” He got a new patient every Saturday for four weeks and they all came from the Google ad.

Once you've created your ad, Adwords will suggest an amount to spend, which is your budget. You can do what they recommend or you can spend a lesser amount if you prefer. If your budget runs out before the end of the month, Adwords will notify you by e-mail. If you want to continue running the ads, you simply give them permission to increase your budget. If you decide not to increase your budget, your ads will stop running until next month when the original (budget) amount is replenished.

Having Google ads has a two-fold benefit. First, it will generate new patients and second, it will help raise you in the search engine rankings. My Broken Arrow, OK clinic is relatively new to the area and should not be rated as high as it is, but since we do significant amounts of Google advertising (\$300 a month) our Internet presence is boosted. I like to spend more money, so my ads appear at the top of the page instead of the right-hand side, because I believe they are more effective.

## STEP SEVEN - UPDATE YOUR ARTICLES, POSTS, AND BLOGS

Everyone knows they should keep their Internet content fresh by continuing to change and add content to their website and social media sites. However, it also pays to update your search engine listings on a regular basis. Earlier, we discussed HootSuite, the social media management tool that distributes the information to your social media sites, but you still have to provide the content, which can be a daunting task.

Your articles can cover almost any topic and do not have to be long. A paragraph or two will suffice. Pictures and videos attached to your articles make them more visible to the web crawlers. Re-posts, in other words posting something that someone else has already posted, don't work very well anymore. The web crawlers are looking for original content.

It is suggested you post a new article at least twice a month. That's probably a good average, however, the more you post the more active your website becomes. My wife will sometimes post daily to her websites, so she has built a following. She can easily get 36,000 views within a few hours of posting new content.

If you don't have time to write your own blogs or articles, [fiverr.com](https://www.fiverr.com) is an excellent place to find writers who will provide articles for you on a regular basis. Fiverr.com is a marketplace of creative professionals will do what you need for just five dollars, which is called a gig. Sometimes they charge two or three gigs for a project but I have found there are writers willing to write articles on an ongoing basis for five dollars an article. Chiropractic and health are pretty easy topics to write about, so you should be able to find someone fairly easily who can write articles for you.

## CHAPTER 4

### The Sandbox

And now for the not so good news: no matter how hard you try or what steps you take, your new website, or newly optimize websites may not rank as high as you want for several months. Why not? Because Google will put you in their sandbox. What is the sandbox? Well, think of little child, often put in a sandbox to play by himself as the rest of the world goes by. He is out of circulation and doesn't mix with the rest of us. That's how Google will treat you for the first several months. While Google has never admitted it, a vast majority of website experts say Google has what they call a virtual sandbox. As a new business/website you are put into the Google sandbox because the Google algorithms haven't evaluated the quality of content and visitor satisfaction of your website yet. The Sandbox effect, believed to have come about in 2004 theorizes Google's Algorithm makes it impossible for new websites to reach the top of Google Search Engine Results Page (SERPs). Therefore, it can take up to a year for a website to rank to its fullest potential. Now, we can't really blame Google for making that decision. Just like us, they want to provide the most reliable websites and information to their users. As a new business (or as a newly optimize website), Google doesn't know if you're going to be around in the future or not. They'd rather play it safe until they are sure you are going to stick around.

Nevertheless, not being on the first couple of pages searched greatly affects our ability to get new patients. When searching for a product or service, 68% of searchers picked a result on the first page with 40% of clicks being on the number one listing. New websites start out with the zero page ranking, which is very similar being put on probation at work. The site will produce lower-than-expected rankings when searched, which will improve with time. Being patient and consistent is the only way to gain your full ranking potential.

Here are things some you can do while you're waiting for your website to rise through the rankings.

1. Make sure your website is up and on at all times. If a web crawler comes looking for your website and it's down (not there), they will automatically rank you at the bottom again.
2. Keep up with Google's ever-changing algorithms. This is probably a job for your web developer.
3. Periodically check that any outgoing links on your website actually lead to good quality websites. Bad links or broken links have a big negative impact on your search engine rankings. The same is true if you are linked to any URLs that go nowhere.
4. Display only complete web pages. If pages on your website, such as a testimonial page, simply says, "under construction" you will get a lower ranking.
5. Don't change your website name (address) it may drop you in the listings
6. Make sure your content uses plenty of keyword rich phrases.
7. Add high-quality chiropractic content-especially as it pertains to your personal office.

8. Add incoming links from other quality chiropractic websites. Your rise will faster than someone who has not.

So here is the final game plan:

1. Make sure your website is highly optimized, so it's a new patient magnet.
2. Register on the most popular search engines.
3. Create accounts on all the social media sites and post frequently
4. List yourself on all the free chiropractic referral directories
5. Request reviews from patients, friends and colleagues.
6. Post original and information rich articles that disseminate to your social media

accounts

7. Do some pay-per-click advertising

Working through all the activities in this book may seem tedious, it must be done if you want to have a successful practice today. Remember, studies have shown 50 to 80% of new patients come from Internet referrals, so it can mean your very existence. Viewed in that light, improving your Internet presence is an absolute necessity.

One last note, from a business perspective, when you see your clinic at the top of the Internet rankings it will be very gratifying. Now you've taken the first step by learning how to get there and how to stay, good luck in your endeavors.