

PEARLS

FOR YOUR PRACTICE™



JOSHUA AUSTIN,
DDS, FAGD



Local Search for Dentists

We all know that marketing a dental practice today is entirely different than it was even five years ago. Social media marketing was the hot topic at state dental meetings five years ago. That is now passé; however, what spun off of social media is now the most important dental practice marketing: online reviews.

Online reviews and reputation are the most important marketing for dental practices. One of the complaints about online reviews that I often hear from colleagues is that they cannot be controlled.

I will concede to that fact: Online reviews cannot be controlled . . . However, they can—and *should*—be managed. Due to the way that search engines such as Google value them, online reviews can be leveraged into excellent search positions without requiring you to resort to crazy SEO-wording tactics or large AdWords buys.

Local Search for Dentists (LSFD) is a fast-growing company in my backyard in Texas. Its goal is to help leverage your online reviews and social media presence into higher page ranks in Google,

Yahoo, and Bing searches. LSFD starts by optimizing your social and review site pages. Information is tweaked, meta data is corrected, and media is added—all by the staff of LSFD. After optimizing your online footprint, the staff begins monitoring the various traffic across all platforms and reports back to you monthly.

I signed up for a standard LSFD package in June 2015. By July, I started seeing a rise in my search positioning for various key terms pretty quickly. After six months or so, I am now ranking within the top five results for most keywords in my area. This has happened without making the text on my website “SEO-optimized,” which oftentimes results in gibberish! This is also without any paid Google AdWords, which is impressive.

LSFD sets up a special phone number that redirects to your office phones so that it can track the phone calls your office receives that come from profiles and sites managed by LSFD. Every month, I receive a report that shows how I am ranking across the various keyword searches, as well as an index of phone calls received through the special LSFD phone number.

In October 2015, I received more than 150 phone calls through the LSFD number, which averaged more than three minutes per call. The list of calls also displays what numbers called, what happened to each caller (i.e., the phone was answered, the call went to voicemail, the caller hung up, etc.), and how long each call lasted. Longer calls obviously mean a better lead for your staff. It takes more time to set up a new-patient appointment than it does to not set one up. The monthly reports are generally more than 30 pages long and chock-full of information.

Plenty of dental marketing services will promise to do things similar to what LSFD does. I have been satisfied with what LSFD delivered and for an extremely reasonable monthly fee. During the relationship thus far, LSFD has delivered on what was promised to me. If you are looking to increase your search-engine visibility without purchasing AdWords or using wonky SEO lingo on your nice, informative website, LSFD is a great choice. Solid double down the third-base line for Local Search for Dentists! **DE**