Dental Buyers Guide 101

Don’t Get Fooled: Top 10 Questions to Ask When Hiring a Dental SEO Provider
Deciding who to hire as your trusted dental search engine optimization (SEO) provider can be difficult. It’s an unfamiliar world to most, and it seems like every company claims to have “the best” SEO solution for your practice.

We know how important it is to choose a company carefully, so we compiled a comprehensive list of key questions to ask a potential provider to help you make the right decision for your practice.

1. **What strategies will you implement to improve our rankings?**
   The company should provide great detail about their plan on how they will work to get you better rankings. SEO strategies are very involved. You want to make sure the company you hire is transparent and thorough in their processes.
2. **How do you plan to create backlinks?**
   
   Backlinks are an important component in your SEO strategy, but not all backlinks are created equal. High-quality backlinks can be extremely difficult to obtain but, when done correctly, have an incredibly positive impact on your rankings. On the other hand, low-quality backlinks may be “easier” to get but can backfire tremendously in the end – potentially even getting you banned from search engines.

3. **How often will you report on my progress, and what will that report look like?**
   
   SEO companies should provide some type of benchmark data and reporting each month. You should confirm how these reports will be shared with you, and if you will have a formal check-in to go over results and potential adjustments to strategies.

4. **Can you share the experience of other clients?**
   
   Look for companies that can demonstrate success with client reviews, testimonials, and case studies. While it’s probably not feasible to share their entire client list, they should be able to provide some examples.
5. **Can you guarantee that we will rank #1 for a major search term?**

If a company says “yes” – run. No one can guarantee page 1 placement for SEO search terms. Additionally, if a company claims that they are Google certified – this is a red flag. Remember, Google does not offer SEO specific certifications. However, they do offer Google Partner certification for AdWords and Analytics programs – so make sure to clarify what is actually meant by “SEO certified.”

6. **Is there a contract and what happens if we cancel early?**

It isn’t uncommon for SEO companies to require a contract for at least a few months, as SEO does take time to resonate before results and search ranking improvements are seen. However, to protect your dental practice it is important to go into the agreement understanding the fine print.

7. **Why should we choose your company as a dental SEO provider?**

This is open-ended and there isn’t a “right” answer – but you do want to listen to their answer carefully. Do they intentionally make false claims or outright bash competitors? This may be a defensive signal and potential red flag. Ideally, when someone answers this question they’ll share the success of their clients and detail how they can help your practice.
8. **What types of SEO will you perform?**

SEO has many facets, but the three main categories are technical SEO, on-site SEO, and off-site SEO. Technical SEO involves back-end items on your website that search engines care about and need to crawl and index your site. On-site SEO involves updates to your content and user-experience (low bounce rate, time on-site, etc.). Off-page optimization involves efforts outside of your website, such as building a strong backlink profile and enhancing your business listings. Deep knowledge of your website is critical in developing both technical and on-site SEO, as well as building off-page optimization to provide a comprehensive strategy.

9. **How do you stay up-to-date with the latest algorithm changes?**

According to Search Engine Land, Google changes its search algorithm around 500-600 times a year. While most changes are minor, there’s a handful of updates that are noted as “major” and affect results in big ways. Ask your potential SEO provider how they stay up-to-date with these changes – ideally, they will be able to name forums and SEO communities in which they participate.

10. **How will we determine success?**

Make sure that you and the SEO provider are on the same page when it comes to determining what success looks like and what metrics they will track (e.g. rankings, traffic, conversions, etc.)

Look for a company that has processes in place to truly understand your practice and its goals, and who can provide a tailored plan on how they’ll help you meet them.
In conclusion, remember that SEO is a long-term investment and it does take time to see results. Use these questions to make an informed decision and find an SEO company that you can trust.

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