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DENTAL MARKETING

BEFORE & AFTER BRILLIANCE

Dental Marketing: Before & After Brilliance

How to Take Great Before-and-After Dental Photos

1. Make sure you have the right camera.

The best camera for dental photography is a digital single-lens reflex camera, or DSLR for short. In addition to giving off a professional vibe, it has a clear advantage over using a smartphone and produces better photos.

Make sure to do the following with your DSLR camera to get the most out of it:

- Use a macro lens between 85 and 105 mm.
- Instead of using the camera's flash, use a ring light. Ring lights are great for intraoral photos because they get rid of shadows.
- Make sure your camera's ISO (the dial that controls how bright or dark the picture is) is set to a low number, like ISO 100.

2. Look for the Light

The saying "daylight is the best light" is true, but it is well known that natural daylight is hard to plan for. Cloud cover can have a big effect on the available light, and the fact that it changes throughout the day (being warmer in the morning and evening and cooler in the middle of the day) can make your subjects look blue or red.

The ring light came along and saved the day. A ring light is an important part of dental photography. It ensures that every picture you take is perfect and shows the real color of the person's teeth. With options that cost less than \$100, these simple devices have a huge impact on the dental photography process.

Here are some reasons why they are so important:

Consistent Brightness: Ring lights give off light that spreads out in all directions. What happened? Shadows and highlights go away, making sure that all dental images have the same lighting.

Color accuracy: By design, ring lights give off a steady, neutral light that doesn't change colors like natural light does. The end result? Accurately shows the real colors of teeth and other oral structures.

Mastery of Light: Change how bright the light is to match how you see it. Get that perfect exposure without having to fight the sun's moods.

Reflections Tamed: Are those shiny teeth or dental tools? Ring lights cut down on reflections and glares that can be hard to deal with, giving you more control.

User's Delight: Ring lights are made to be easy to use. They work well with your camera, are adjustable, and can be used by anyone, even those who aren't very technical.

Economical elegance: Since these lights offer a high return on a small investment, they are a cost-effective solution for dental professionals who want to take photos with precision and excellence.

In a field where color accuracy and consistent lighting are essential for clear documentation and good communication with patients, the ring light becomes an indispensable tool. It promises photos that are bright, well-lit, and true to what they show. This is a must-have for any dental photography project.

3. Use the Right Equipment

Use the following in addition to your DSLR and ring light:

- Dental cheek retractors (this tool, which comes in both plastic and stainless steel and lets you see inside the mouth without any obstructions)
- Occlusal intraoral mirror to capture full arch and also help buccal-view images

4. Get your mirrors warm

If you plan to use an intraoral mirror to help you take the best photos, you should have a plan for getting the mirrors to stop fogging up. Some dentists put their mirrors in hot water right before taking the picture to warm them up. Some people use heating pads to make the mirrors warmer.

5. Lips That Are Wet

As you're getting ready for the photo shoot, give your subject a thin layer of Vaseline. This easy step makes sure they are comfortable as they slowly open their mouths to smile. Also, Vaseline makes it easier to put intraoral mirrors and retractors in smoothly, which speeds up the process.

6. Make sure your patient is calm.

Whether you choose to take photos of the patient while he or she is standing or sitting in the chair, make sure:

- For front pictures, your patient should be facing you straight on without moving their body or neck.
- For profile pictures, you move instead of asking the patient to turn. This keeps the patient calm and keeps the face and neck in a natural position.
- Put your camera at a 90-degree angle to your patient's teeth. If you don't, you might get an odd view of the teeth.

Also, find the best place to take the picture. The best photos are taken a few feet away from the patient with a macro lens (like 85 mm or 105 mm), which makes it easy to focus up close.

7. Take a bunch of pictures.

Now, let's talk about how to choose which photos to take. To make sure you have a wide range of options, it's best to take more photos than you planned. By taking this approach, you'll build up a collection of images that you can use to back up your case whenever you need to.

Here is a list of the best photos to take at the dentist:

- Face Forward, Chill Out
- Face Forward and Smiling
- Put Retractors in front of your face
- The mouth is slightly open, and the lips are resting.
- Profile Chill out
- Face Profile
- Profile, mouth slightly open, lip at rest

- Lateral views of the left side with retractor
- Right Lateral Views Using Retractors
- Mouth Wide Open, Teeth Shut
- Isolated Teeth With a Contractor (a contractor shows wear, texture, and color of teeth)
- Full View of the Upper Arch
- Full View of the Lower Arch

How to Get Before and After Pictures of Your Dental Work Without Taking Them Yourself

You don't have to take all of your dental photos yourself. Giving your patients the tools they need to take their own "before" and "after" pictures can be a good idea. Even though these pictures might not be useful for consulting, they are powerful tools for social validation.

Give your clients clear instructions on how to take their "before" and "after" pictures. You could hold a contest on social media to show off your changes. This not only adds to your portfolio but also gives your dental practice a chance to meet new people who might become clients. As patients share their progress with their online friends, they end up promoting your dental services without even meaning to.

How to Use Before-and-After Photos of Your Teeth

Here's what to do next with your photos, whether you take them yourself or ask your patients to.

Add your pictures to the patient's dental file.

When you first meet a new patient, make it a point to take photos of their teeth. When patients come in, these pictures will help your staff figure out who they are. But you can also use these photos to keep track of what you've done for your patient. So, it's a good idea to take a picture during your first consultation, even if you don't need it right away.

Plan your treatment around them.

Take pictures of your patients' smiles before any work is done to help them figure out what they don't like about them. Photos make it easier to talk to your patients about what's bothering them.

Educate your patients while they are in the chair.

You can also use before-and-after pictures of other people that you've taken to show your patients how they should be treated. With these pictures, you can show your patients what you can do.

For the purposes of insurance

Before authorizing, carriers will sometimes ask for more paperwork. You can help your case with pictures.

Use as a training tool.

Help your staff understand what you do so that they can talk to your patients more intelligently about what you do.

As part of your marketing plan, you should share photos.

Show off your skills by putting before-and-after photos of dental work that you took on your website, social media, brochures, and direct mail postcards. These visual stories do a good job of showing potential patients how you can change their lives. Try to put together a collection that shows all of your services, such as crowns, veneers, bonding, whitening, gum reshaping, and so on.

Give your dental photos a voice by writing captions that describe them. Share information about the patient's background and why they came to you for help. Talk in plain English and avoid dental jargon to give prospective patients a sense of what's going on.

Remember this golden rule: Some people may be sensitive to images that are too vivid. Think about a strategic plan to make sure that everyone hears your message. When showing "before" pictures that could be disturbing, show the "after" picture first and then give a warning about what's coming. This thoughtful presentation keeps people interested while being sensitive to different people's needs.

You can also share before-and-after photos in the following places:

- A page on social media
- Newsletter by email
- As part of your office's wall art

Tips in General:

Consistent Lighting: Make sure the lighting is the same in both the before and after shots so that the changes are clear. For even lighting, use natural light or a ring light.

Standardized Background: Use a consistent, neutral background to avoid distractions and draw attention to the teeth of the subject.

Standardized Pose: To show the changes in the teeth, ask the patient to keep the same head position and facial expression.

Focus on the Details: Zoom in to capture the fine details of dental work and show how much it has improved.

Full Arch Shots: Take pictures of the full dental arches to show how the whole thing has changed.

Take pictures from different angles (front, side, 45-degree angles) to get a full picture of how things have changed.

Color Calibration: Use a color-calibrated monitor to make sure that photos of your teeth show the correct color.

Use Mirrors: Intraoral mirrors and retractors can help you get good pictures of areas that are hard to reach.

Consistent Framing: Make sure that the before and after photos have the same framing and composition.

Patient Comfort: Give the patient breaks and use Vaseline on their lips to make them feel better during the process.

Preparation instructions: Give patients clear instructions on how to get ready for the photo shoot, such as brushing their teeth and not wearing clothes with bright colors.

Shutter Speed: If you want to avoid blurriness, especially in intraoral shots, use a fast shutter speed or a stabilization method.

Macro Mode: Use your camera's macro mode to take close-up pictures with a lot of detail.

Clean Your Gear: Keep your mirrors, retractors, and camera lenses clean so they don't get blurry or dirty.

Consent: Before using photos of patients for marketing or educational purposes, you should always get their written permission first.

High Resolution: Take pictures with a high resolution so you can zoom in on details and print them out.

Cases of All Kinds: Showcase a variety of cases to show that you are an expert in a wide range of treatments.

Patient Privacy: Be careful not to show any identifying features in the photos to protect the privacy of the patient.

Interaction with the patient: Talk to the patient about what's going on and make sure they're comfortable.

Multiple Shots: Take more than one picture to give yourself more options when it's time to choose.

Professional Camera: For the best picture quality, use a DSLR or other high-quality camera.

Careful Editing: If you decide to edit the photos, do so in a way that doesn't change the real dental results.

Documentation: Keep a full record of all the photos of each patient for future reference.

Regular Practice: Use your photography skills often to get better at them over time.

Continuous Learning: To get better results, stay up to date on the latest trends and techniques in dental photography.

Calibrated White Balance: Make sure you set the white balance right so that your photos show the right colors.

Use a Tripod: Using a tripod for intraoral shots can help keep the camera steady and stop it from shaking.

Close-Up Shots: Take close-up pictures of each tooth to show how it has changed.

Keep a record of the camera settings for each patient's photo to make sure they are all the same.

Include a Ruler or Scale: For accurate measurements and comparisons, include a ruler or scale in the frame.

Carefully use retractors. Make sure they don't block the view of the teeth you want to show off.

Background Contrast: To make the teeth stand out, choose a background color that is different from the teeth.

Patient Comfort Aids: Give the patient pillows or other supports to help them keep a relaxed position during the shoot.

Check for Reflections: Make sure there are no unwanted reflections of the camera or lighting in the photos.

Stop Fogging: To keep mirrors from fogging up, warm them a little or use a solution that stops fogging.

Capture Occlusion: Include pictures that show the patient's bite and occlusion before and after treatment.

Include the preparations. If necessary, take pictures of any work done to get ready for the final treatment.

Focus Stacking: If you want the whole image to be sharp, use focus stacking for extreme close-ups.

Use a Remote Trigger: Use a remote trigger or timer to keep the camera from moving around too much.

Keep the same distance between the camera and the patient so that you can make accurate comparisons.

Talk to patients throughout the process to make sure they are comfortable and well-informed.

Think About Smile Lines: Take pictures that show the patient's improved smile lines and symmetry.

Use diffusers to soften shadows on the subject's face and keep them from being too harsh.

Document Healing: If you want to record the results of surgery, you might want to record how the patient heals over time.

Use before-and-after pictures in patient education materials to show the benefits of treatment.

Keep Equipment Handy: Have all the equipment you need ready, so you don't have to stop taking pictures.

Minimal Makeup: If a patient wears makeup, tell them to use as little as possible so that the color doesn't show up on their teeth.

Calibration: Calibrate your camera and other equipment regularly to get consistent results.

Involve Your Team: Teach your dental team how to help with photography to make sure sessions go smoothly and quickly.

Learn from others: Look at successful examples of dental photography and talk to professionals who have done it before.

Examples



