

Webinar Title: The Guide to Honest Online Growth for Your Practice

Date/Time: Friday, November 8, 2024 at 1pm ET

Host: Hello, and welcome to today's webinar, The Guide to Honest Online Growth for Your Practice. This topical webinar is paid for by TherapySites. TherapySites integrates professional website design, posting, and content that is HIPAA compliant. The all-inclusive solutions come bundled with tools to make it simple for practitioners to manage their websites.

Some important points before we get started. Mario Rios and Seth Weiner, the presenters for today's webinar, have working relationships with TherapySites and Internet Brands. As such, they have both a financial and intellectual interest in the content. The purpose of this presentation is to provide a balanced view on marketing tools and strategies in mental health practices. APA does not endorse any products or services. The content was created by TherapySites and does not reflect the views of APA or its editorial staff. Email advertising@apa.org to learn more.

Next, this program does not offer CE. However, we will email everyone watching live today a certificate of attendance. Certificates will only be issued to those who watch for a minimum of 45 minutes. TherapySites has generously offered to give a free 30-minute website consultation to four attendees to be chosen at random. To qualify, you must stay for the full presentation.

A recording of this presentation will be emailed to everyone in two weeks' time. The recording will include the presentation slides. During our time together, you will be on mute. You can communicate with us using the Q&A box located on your webinar screen. Have a question for our presenters? Type them in using the Q&A box located on your webinar screen. A link to the presentation slides will be posted in the chat box of your webinar screen. If you miss them, don't worry. We'll email them to you with the recording.

Now, let me introduce our presenters. As a seasoned digital marketing expert with a decade of experience, Mario Rios has dedicated his career empowering mental health professionals to reach their goals and their private practices. With an impressive track record of assisting thousands of mental health professionals, Mario's expertise lies in streamlining administrative tasks, creating multi-state digital marketing strategies, unleashing the true potential of social media and taking their practice to the next level.

Seth Weiner boasts over 15 years of experience in search engine optimization, specifically in the medical and mental health field. He is not only a Google AdWords certified professional, but Google Advanced Search Certification as the SEO manager for Internet Brands. Seth specializes in top industry trends and their applications to provide paid, organic, and other types of search services to thousands of medical and mental health professionals seeking an effective digital marketing presence for their practices. Welcome, Mario and Seth.

Mario: Thank you very much for the kind welcome. We are both very excited to be here. Anytime we get the opportunity to present for the APA, we jump at that chance. We really enjoy being able to provide hot topics, especially when it comes to digital

marketing and being able to market your practice online. We love the opportunity to be able to come up with some new relevant content that you can utilize for the practice to help you guys grow at the rate in which you're looking to grow individually.

We thought we'd try to do something a little bit more fun today as we start the webinar. What we're going to do is start with a poll question because we know and realize and understand that a lot of the practitioners that are attending today's webinar are in different junctures and different states of how they're recognizing themselves online, how they're managing their current online presence.

As you can tell on the screen, there are some questions and just, we'll give you guys a little bit of time to read through them and answer to the best of your ability so we can get a nice little gauge on what doctors and practitioners are looking to get out of the webinars as they attend. As we're looking through some of the answers coming in now, as expected, there's a lot of, hey, doesn't really have much of a strategy involved. We may have a website, but don't really have a game plan yet. Trust me when I say that is the norm. You're not alone.

A couple of you guys got some stuff in place here. It's looking pretty good as well. Let's take a look here. Got a few, hey, what is SEO? Luckily for you, we're going to dive deep into that during this presentation. Hopefully by the time we're done, you'll have a full, clear understanding of what it is and how it's going to help. It looks like we got quite a few responses in here. Looks like we have a couple of trickling in, so we should be okay.

A nice wide range of expectations in what you're looking to get out of the webinars. This is great information. We're going to go into some of the little bit more technical elements, but my main mission anytime working in the mental health field with establishing online presences and using your website as a tool in online marketing is we got to go make this in language that we can all understand. At the end of the day, using \$12 words is a great thing, but really understanding what each section of digital marketing is going to do is going to be super important.

As we progress through the webinar, we'll hopefully have a full, true understanding of how everything's going to work there for you. All right, I think we are ready to move on now. Let's go ahead and get into the hot topics here. All right, perfect. Getting found on Google the right way. Once again, the whole point of this is to help introduce what search engine optimization is and how it helps the practice.

Understanding the basics and what are the must-haves and how to utilize search engine optimization with your website. How search engine optimization can have a negative impact if you're using it the wrong way or you're trying to take advantage of the system and how it could potentially help or harm the website or your online presence or the practice as a whole. Then throughout this presentation, we want to be able to provide some actionable steps that you can take. What you can do on your end to help increase how you're being recommended by Google and help you reach the audience that you're looking to reach.

Before we get into the basics, what is SEO? What is it, what does it stand for, and how is it relevant to me? SEO, and I'll probably refer to this as SEO for the duration of the presentation, it stands for search engine optimization. What a search engine

is, it's a resource that we all use in our day-to-day life, if I had to guess, probably 99% of us here. It's services such as Google, Bing, DuckDuckGo, Yahoo. Those are just some of the more commonly used search engines out there. We use them as a resource.

At the end of the day, when we're looking for questions to answers, general stuff, we're looking for locations or services, chiropractics, dentists, mental health, we're looking for where the nearest Walmart is, we're using a search engine to get that information. The most commonly used search engine in the world by a landslide is what we call Google. Everybody's understand and is familiar with Google. It is the king daddy when it comes to the search engine optimization realm. It's traditionally most practices main priority.

What we want to be able to do and what search engine is in a nutshell is the frequency in which Google is going to recommend your practice when someone is searching for X, Y, and Z. In this case, X, Y, and Z would be mental health related resources. You have someone in your area that's looking for a doctor, a therapist, a counselor, a social worker, psychiatrist, psychologist, you name it. They don't have a referral. They don't have a direct response from an insurance.

What's the first thing that they're going to do? They're going to look at the search engines

for results, see what Google says. Where your website is being recommended, that is the optimization piece. How frequently is Google going to be recommending your practice in your area compared to the other practitioners that are in your specific area? That is the optimization side.

We're only going to scratch the surface. We want to get to the basics of this, but the algorithm in which Google uses to recommend practices, to recommend businesses, to recommend resources, it's extensive. You really want to go through a web of information. You can get a little bit more detailed on the exact algorithm that Google's using, but it shifts so dramatically. We're going to focus on a couple of the tangible ones, the ones that you can have some influence on that will organically help this process. SEO and search engine optimization is an organic means. What that means, first and foremost, it's natural.

Google's recommending your practice based on a criteria of resources, your online reputation, any social media integration that you're utilizing, the strength of your website, how long you've been in practice, the maturity of the practice. A lot of these things go into how you're being recommended by Google. Let's be honest, it's slow. When you think of the word organic, when you think of natural, it's not an instant fix. It's not a one-and-done solution.

It's not something that you can just incorporate and then be done with it like years past. 10, 15 years ago, there wasn't a whole lot of change to it, but now that Google's algorithm is consistently changing, it's something that upkeep is one of the most important elements. With the search engine optimization and SEO, it's something that you have to feel is going to be for the long haul. It's not an instant fix. It's not, I'm going to focus on SEO this month and I'm going to have 40 clients or 40 patients calling me the next month. It just doesn't work like that.

It's very different than you guys may be familiar with the Google ads. It's a more direct, a faster approach. We'll touch on that here in a little bit, but this is more of Google's natural way of providing the best answers for that person's questions. In this case, best psychiatrist near me, best social worker near me. How you're being recommended, how that website populates, that's what's essentially taking place with a traditional Google search and organic search engine optimization.

What Google uses to finetune that is commonly referred to as a keyword. When we use the term keyword, what I want you to think of that as are your bread-and-butter services, your specialties. The things that you feel that your patients will be utilizing the search engine for. It's how you feel that they're going to do the searching and those are the words that you really want to focus on. You want to consider keywords that fit your practice's conditions and the areas that you serve.

It'd be silly to market yourself five hours away from a potential patient or client knowing that telehealth is a viable option. We're going to touch on a little bit of that as well. For the most part, websites are specifically designed to produce locally first. It makes sense when you think about it. You're looking to order a pizza. Everybody looking for a new pizza joint to go to, we go to Google, we're typing in pizza near me.

I'm going to bet my left shoe Google's not going to recommend something eight hours away. They're always going to recommend something local first, work their way out based on that search criteria. Use the same keywords within your metadata as your website dashboard. To dissect this, there's two sections to your website. There's the front end, and that is what we see when we get to the website. That's the information that's being provided, the pictures that are selected, the content, so on and so forth.

Then you have the backend. The backend is more focused on the coding. On how the website's built, how it's constructed. Then the metatags and descriptions are what Google uses as part of the algorithm to help determine the type of website this is. That's the easiest way for them to do this besides taking your copy, is to scan it or crawl it is the old school term as they use. That helps them determine the best answers. Because believe you me, if Google isn't providing the right answers, people are going to stop using it. Using the pizza example again, if we're searching for pizza and they're giving us a bunch of Thai restaurants, Google's not doing the right thing. The website wasn't crawled correctly.

At the end of the day, that's Google's job is to be able to provide the most accurate answers. That is one way that they do it. Keeping those keywords consistent on both the front end and the backend of your website is going to be what's going to better serve you down the long haul.

Include the keywords and location service consistently throughout content on your website. Remaining consistent. We don't want to have a smorgasbord of keywords and do what we call stuffing in the industry where we're just going to use every word in the world. Hey, someone's going to be typing this in. I want them to get to my website. Great in theory. It worked 20 years ago, but it doesn't work anymore. Google caught on to that. Now it's restricted. We want you to focus on your primary services.

Less than 10 for sure, three to five is going to be that sweet spot on those words that you would want somebody to type into Google to help populate your website. Touched on a little bit earlier, for quicker results, you're going to want to look at something like a paid ad via a Google ad or a Facebook ad as it's going to be more direct. It's a bit different than an organic search, which is going to naturally happen. Paid advertising is as it says, you're paying Google for that placement.

There is no organic optimization included with that. What that should mean to you is as soon as you're done paying Google money, Google's taken away that ad. There's nothing naturally keeping you there. We have to focus on both ends of that spectrum. If you are indeed running ads, you also still have to focus on your SEO, your organic optimization. Otherwise, this is just a temporary fix, a Band-Aid on the solution until you get more funds to be able to produce more ads.

All right, so we thought it'd be fun to show you a couple examples. These aren't real people or real practitioners, just some common instances that we come across daily. Example one, Dr. Daniels is using an outdated website template or design that does not respond well on mobile devices. He has extensive content on the website, but employs keyword stuffing, like we mentioned before. It's just, let's just use every word that we can.

As of now, that's a negative SEO tactic that purposely uses the same keyword in excess and without regard to the patient's experience reading the article. It's just using counseling, therapy, therapy, therapy, therapy for no reason. They're just putting in there as many times as they can because they know that will attract Google's attention. Website has not been updated since 2015. Boy, you'd be surprised how many practitioners and doctors I talk to on a daily basis that, yes, probably 2015 sounds about right.

It hasn't been updated since 2015. Their search results are heavily with Google, keep up with technology. Most mobile responsive advanced technology for website builders out there, that's going to be the number one thing that you can do. You want to provide relevant content for the website, keep things updated, update your picture, update your information.

Example two, Dr. Taylor takes time each month to ensure that our practice website is updated to reflect current trends. For example, sharing brand new blog posts about mental health awareness days or providing new information about staff updates or acknowledgements and how to expand their services are offered. She also has careful consideration to the design of her website and even has a patient finds it on a tablet or cell phone, works seamlessly, can be easily navigated, it's updated.

These are the things that Google's looking for just on a base level, just on the foundation of your website. This is just a matter of, hey, yes, I remember I have a website. Haven't been to it in 10 years too. Hey, once a month, I'm going to go in there, make sure things are still working, make sure things are still in order. That's all it takes. You don't need to spend five hours a day on your website. A glance here and there is going to definitely keep you more in line of what Google's going to be looking for.

All right, so Section 2, we want to power the position versus, at the end of the day, there are some up-to-date current methods that you can use

to help with your SEO. Then there are some old school methods that still take place today that is more of a negative, that it's slightly more frowned upon when it comes in the eyes of Google as they're adjusting their algorithms and adjusting the ways that they're using the metrics to determine. Because people take advantage, just like in anything else. People find ways, easy solutions, workarounds, take the easy way out. Google tries to eliminate that as much as possible.

What we want to focus on is providing accurate content, meaningful content, quality over quantity. We'll touch on each one of these and then go over some of the penalties for some of these negative SEO tactics.

Content with purpose. No matter what marketing company you work with, anybody that's experienced on the digital marketing side of it, the first thing that they're going to tell you, I can almost bet is that content is king when it comes to your website, when it comes to your Google rankings and how people are finding it. Content is the number one thing and the number one influence that you can have as a practitioner or doctor when it comes to how you're getting found. It's the easiest thing that you can do. All it's going to require is time. Mario, that's great. I'm busy. I got 10 patients a day. I don't have time for this content.

At the end of the day, this is the number one thing that you can do, the most affordable thing that you can do to your website to help advance it without spending and breaking the budget, trying to figure out ways to bring in more patients. How am I doing? How am I going to get more people in? Content is one of the biggest elements of this. The more information, the more content that you can provide, the more reasons you're giving Google, the more information you're giving to Google. It makes sense when you think about it.

Google can't recommend EMDR therapy for you if that content is not on your website. How is Google supposed to know that you are EMDR, CBT, that you do play therapy? These are all elements that have to be represented in detail on your website in order for Google to know and understand how to recommend it. Old school approach. I'm just going to use a bunch of bullet points. I do this, this, this, this, this. That's it. No descriptions, no indicators. Google has that one word, which 10 years ago was fine, it was relevant, but now what they want is for you to individualize each service, potentially put each service into their own page.

Have one page dedicated to EMDR therapy, have one page dedicated to this, and be descriptive. I know what most people are probably thinking. Mario, attention spans aren't what they used to be. Nobody's going to my website to read a novel. You're 100% right. They want that information. Our attention spans are, we want instant gratification, I want to be able to go to your website, boom, done, I got the information that I need, now I'm good to go.

On the flip side, Google does look for that information. What we would traditionally recommend doing in this situation, just to accommodate both ends, the top of your website dedicate to your clients, have those bullet points. Hey, this is what I do, this

is what I cost. Pertinent information. Because most people aren't going to read the rest of it anyway. They're going to get the information that they need, and then leave.

Google, though, we want to be able to provide that information. Underneath that, let's individualize things, let's highlight items, let's highlight your services, highlight your features, ensure that we're providing Google with that information so that they can properly recommend this page on your website for that person that was looking exactly for this.

We can also verify the information that you're sharing. Once again, if we don't help with EMDR, if we don't want to highlight services that don't pertain to you and your practice, it's clickbait. It's getting people to your website by tricking them, over-sensationalizing, highlighting a hot topic right now that has nothing to do with your practice just to get people to the website.

That, once again, doesn't help your purpose. In the industry, we consider that fluff. Sure, it's going to bring someone to your website, but are the odds of them actually converting into a patient at that point? Probably quite minimal. Are you really helping yourself? In the eyes of Google, not really. There's a term in the industry called bounce rate. Sure, we got that person to the website. We did our job. They're here, but they don't interact.

They realize, "Oh, this wasn't what I was looking for," and they leave right away. They don't take any action. They don't click on a button. They don't go to a second page. That can negatively affect you. You have to provide the right information, ensure that the right content is being displayed, and not try to trick people into getting to the website. Once again, prioritizing the quality of the content, which I understand that most practitioners have-- That's the hardest thing.

Not only finding time, but I hear it every day, I am great at my job, I can explain my job, and I can do my job very well, I just can't write it in words. Coming up with that copy is the hard part. It's hard for a lot of people. You're not alone. There's thousands of mental health practitioners out there that this is the hard part for them.

There are many, many solutions. Plenty of copyright services out there that can essentially take care of this for you. At the end of the day, it doesn't have to come from you specifically. It doesn't have to come from your words. You can, at the helm of getting help from a third-party resource, just getting that content on there, though. Utilizing the tools at your disposal to be able to provide significant content for not only Google, but for your patients.

How Google rewards and punishes SEO tactics. Fun. Some do's and don'ts. For our do's, insert relevant keywords you want to rank for in your website content where it naturally organically fits. Don't use keyword stuffing to try and force search engines to notice your content. Using the same keyword in excess will also read poorly to patients viewing your website. Makes sense. You've probably been to plenty of websites where you've seen an example of this, where stuff just doesn't match up. Was it a bot that typed all this stuff out? It's hard to pick up. Translates into a bad experience.

Do's. Use alt text on your images appearing on your website for added relevancy in searches. For those of you that are not sure what that is, or probably don't even know this, but when you go to a website and there's pictures, images, videos, so on and so forth, in the coding, behind the scenes, there's actually a description where there should be a description of said image. It's not anything that we can see as we visit the website. It's something that Google reads as they crawl your website.

Then there's, for the visually impaired, there's services called screen readers. That's how they're able to navigate your website. With ADA compliance, Americans with Disabilities Act, this is required in many states, where you have to be able to have your website function with a screen reader so that someone that is visually impaired is able to navigate your website.

When they're hovering over that picture, there's an indicator back there that's telling them what this picture is, what it's about, what purpose is it serving. Back in the day, a lot of companies tried to hide keywords and text back there. They tried to put a bunch of words or indicators inside of those areas, knowing that nobody could see it, so it doesn't hurt, to help manipulate their rankings.

Google, once again, catches on to those types of things. Yes, we want you to, whoever's building your website, if you're familiar with doing this, just ensure that you're getting those indicators inside those alt text formats. That's going to be huge. It's one thing that Google's looking for as they crawl the website. If those are in there, it will show up as a red flag if they are not filled out.

Another do for us, earn backlinks to your content by building a consistent, updated schedule of high-quality content and sharing your resources with others. What I always like to say, this is a great opportunity, and anytime we can share your website with an affiliate, whether it be Psychology Today, Doctor.com, WebMD, CareShare, any directory or affiliate that you're associated with, usually has an opportunity for you to directly link your website to that resource and vice versa. That's super important. Anything that you can do on your own to drive traffic without having to rely on Google is going above and beyond. It's one of the best things that you can do.

Some of the other ones are create a QR code for your website. Super easy to do. They're free. You don't have to pay for a QR code, I promise you. It's super easy to do. You can literally just Google search how to create a QR code, and it'll take you 15 seconds. Super impactful. People love that. They want to be able to just

take out their phone, take the picture of the QR code, and get to the website. Nobody wants to type stuff in anymore. Creating link from your email signature to your website. These are all links. Not necessarily backlinks, but these are all ways to help sustain and drive your own traffic to the website.

What you don't want to do is buy backlinks or associate with solicitors like RhinoRank, BacklinkBoss. There's probably a hundred of them out there right now. What these do, they force feed traffic to your website to try to trick Google into thinking, "Oh wow, there's a lot of people coming to this website. It must be super impactful, must be super important."

At the end of the day, what they want to do-- People pay for these services. If you're familiar with the social media and the trends of getting followers and attracting followers and likes and that sort of thing, it's in the same realm where you're basically just paying for clicks, paying for people to get to the website. Not an impactful solution, especially as it very rarely will translate into a patient.

Section 3, action steps for ethical online growth. Keeping up with the consistently changing trends of search engine algorithms. It seems like every year, their algorithm shifts more and more consistently. It used to be once a year, once every eight months, not once a quarter. With technology, Google has a lot to keep up with. There's new phones coming out. There's new ways and website builders out there that will try to integrate all the bells and whistles as technology advances. Google's algorithm is going to consistently change.

Once again, SEO is not a one-and-done solution. It's not a set it and forget it because I can assure you by the time you're done modifying your SEO, your keywords, Google's already shifting things around. It's one of those things that you have to keep on top of, that you have to be able to consistently manage in order to keep relevant. Also investing in your website as a digital version of your practice. Your website's going to be your virtual commercial, your billboard. It's going to be important to make sure that you're utilizing this the best way possible.

Conquering Google. What can we do? Just you at the entry level, what can you do as a practitioner to help this situation. Some easy, basic recommendations if you're still in the process of getting that website, you haven't gotten this far yet, or you're still early in your journey as being a mental health practitioner. What we would traditionally recommend is use a template-based design that is going to be less complex.

It's easy to fall into the trap to go to Squarespace and look at all these cool gadgets and gizmos and all the technology that you can circumvent through a website. The problem is in the mental health field specifically, most people aren't going there, going to your website for those things, like the bells and whistles. It's great for restaurants, you want it to look snazzy and snappy and great and it's very appealing and that food looks awesome, which it works for that type of situation.

In the mental health field, a fine line of too heavily being medicinal to too casual, you want that entry level, middle ground, as that's going to be the most advantageous thing. Simple is better sometimes, but yet still being able to represent you in your practice as a virtual commercial, represent you as a brand. Start simple. Start with make your life easy, get something that's organized for you. It's a fill-in-the-blank type situation instead of starting off with gung-ho custom built from the coding all the way up to the website. It's going to be a little bit harder to be successful with that approach.

Keeping your website updated regularly with blog posts and most accurate information about your practice. This is the hard thing to do. It's easy to put your website on the back burner. I totally get that. Patients, clients, family life, practice, filling out EHR, all that fun stuff, it just doesn't leave a lot of time for this type of stuff, but it's still super important. We still have once a month. It doesn't take a whole lot

just to be able to provide some new relevant information for the practice. Huge. That's the best thing that you can do.

Ensure your website is secured with SSL certificate and encrypted, priority in the mental health field. It's got to be HIPAA compliant. It's got to be secure. You took the oath to be a mental health practitioner, and that's a big piece of it. Keeping your patient and client's information secure. Make sure it's mobile responsive. You almost think this is a, well, duh. 80% of the people are going to be visiting your website, they're going to be on a phone. According to Google, it's 83%. Most of the people are going to be visiting your website, they're going to be on a phone. How it functions on a phone is super important.

If I had to guess, many here have gotten to the situation where you get to a website and you're trying to scroll on the phone and it's stuck or it doesn't move or only moves left to right, doesn't move up and down. You go to click on a button, the button doesn't work. You go to click on the navigation menu, the navigation menu won't drop down. The pictures look out of disproportion. They're out of place. All that's pretty common. Unfortunately, you think that's the standard at this point, but not every website builder out there focuses on mobile. They just focus on desktop view, which old school approach.

For the most part, I'm just going to say, hey, nobody really cares what it looks like on a desktop anymore. Except for some of us old school guys that it's still important to us, but for the most part, everyone's on their phone. How it's representing itself on the phone, how it functions on the phone, super, super important. That is one of the huge pieces of Google's algorithm. That's exactly what they're going to be looking for.

Using your website as an investment. A lot of what we're talking about now is how to utilize the website in a way that it's going to reach your target audience. That's going to help establish yourself online and create what we call your online presence. This is a big piece of how you're going to grow. Most practices, and if you're in a position where you're a year or two away from retirement, you're not actively engaging new patients, you're on the downswing of things, these types of things aren't going to be as important. A very basic website is probably going to serve your purpose. You don't need to really focus too much on search engine optimization.

In most cases, most practitioners are still looking to grow. They still want to have themselves established online, even if it's just someone's Google searching for confirmation. You may be a referral from another patient that you graduated out. Hey, go check out Dr. So-and-so. What do you think the first thing that they're going to do? They're going to Google your name. It's natural. That's what's going to happen. A lot of times, if they can't find that foundation, that website piece, it's going to throw up a red flag.

It's 2024. That's what people are expecting to see. They're expecting to see a tangible website that they can go to get the information, even though a website didn't give you a doctorate. A website didn't make you a mental health practitioner. In the mind of a searcher or a client, it does. For some reason, they think professional. They have a website, look, they're official. They're professional. It's just the way our brains are wired to think.

Having this professional presence is super important, even if you're not actively accepting a ton of new clients or patients. At the same time, it's still a way for you to get found, peers searching for you, so on and so forth. How can we use this as a resource. Pretty cool stat. Some of you may not know, but 75% of the people that visit your website don't go past that first page. There's a reason why they call it a landing page. That's where most people are going to land when they get to your website.

It's super, super important that your homepage is your bread-and-butter page. It's providing all the appropriate information. It's providing the information that a potential new client, and this is their first impression. They landed here. This is what they're seeing first. How are they going to react? What we have to do is ensure that everything that you want them to know is at least briefly mentioned on this page.

We want you to have inner pages, of course. We always get a lot of questions on, well, do I just need a landing page? What do I need all these other pages for? Having a landing page can be impactful, but at the end of the day, when we go back to content and there's no content on there, what do you think Google's going to do? They're going elsewhere. You don't have enough content on your website.

We always recommend you have your main landing page, your central hub, have your inner pages with all the other information. This is where we can do the

design elements come into play. This is where you can be really creative and have videos playing, choose the colors that you like, have your logos present. This is where you want to shop yourself. This is where you want to help them determine if it's going to be a good fit, and those inner pages is going to be able to provide the information to help sustain that.

What's really neat about your website is you can focus on specific pages to rank. Some of the more common ones would be like your homepage, of course, your landing page, your about page, your services page, contact page, rates, insurances, super popular. Most people, if they have a certain insurance, that's what they're going to be looking for.

Psychiatrists, Blue Cross, Blue Shield, near me. That's how they're going to base some of their searches. We can actually individually index those pages. When they're doing a search, it may not be your homepage that's populating because they were looking for insurances. Now it's going to direct them to your insurances page. You want to make sure you have a way for them to contact you on every page of your website, phone number, email address, a form.

Then you want to provide prospective clients with a solid image of what you offer versus competitors. Once again, this is a way for you to highlight you and your services, what separates you, what are your specialties, how you can help, what can you utilize in your practice that maybe they may not be able to find elsewhere. It's a way for you to identify yourself as an appropriate means as opposed to just being generalized. In some cases, that's okay too. You want to have a fine mix. Highlighting you, highlighting your services, using your website as a digital marketing tool is super important.

A key thing to remember is that even with a fantastic website and you spent \$5,000, you worked with a professional designer, they built you the best website in the world, but they didn't touch your SEO. They didn't work on any of that backend stuff. Guess what? It's pointless. If nobody can find it, what's the point? You have this fantastic tool. It's like having, you finally saved up, you got that brand new Ferrari in your driveway. You fought every penny went to it. You finally got it though.

Can't afford to eat, but you got that car. Now guess what? You want to go take it out, but no fuel. Oh, they didn't give me a full tank of gas when I brought it home. I can't afford to put gas in it. It's just going to sit in my driveway. Same concept. You have that great shiny new website, it's out on the internet, but nobody's finding it. It's irrelevant. You might as well have just put it together yourself and save yourself \$5,000 to \$10,000 for that designer, for that developer. Same thing like Nike, they're known for having great billboards.

Here in the Chicagoland area, we just had the Chicago Marathon a couple weekends ago. If you're anywhere downtown, some of the most beautiful billboards, some funny billboards, all Nike, all running-related. A lot of money goes into that. Placement is going to be key. They're focusing on placement and visibility. If you're going to spend that money on your website, think like Nike, think about the visibility. How am I going to get people to this website? How am I going to ensure that people are finding it and we're getting that appropriate information? That's going to be a key here.

You find that middle ground, that maintenance piece is the hardest part. Anybody can build the website. Even you, you, and you. You can probably build a website. You're probably, "No way, no way. I can barely get into my emails each morning." I promise you, there's so many YouTube videos out there. There's so many how-to methods, how to build a website. You could probably piece one together. Believe it or not, it's the easy part. The hard part is the functionality, making sure that it's doing something for you, making sure that it's active, making sure that people are finding it. That's the maintenance piece of it. That's the hard part.

Key webinar takeaways. Use focus keywords in the content of your website that are aligned with your specialties and the locations that you serve. You want to market to your local areas first. It's almost like planting a seed. Once you grow in your local area, Google is naturally going to spread you out. It's just the nature of the beast and how that works. Keep your website updated consistently, even if it's just once a month, with SEO-friendly content, blogs, and practice updates. Once again, content, content, content. Being able to provide relevant information to patients and clients, of course, is great, but being able to provide that information to Google is equally as important.

We didn't jump too much into social media during this presentation. However, this is becoming more and more of a factor when it comes to establishing your online presence. Using your website as a central hub for all your social media landing pages, whether it be most notably like Facebook and Instagram, LinkedIn. Those are some viable resources.

That's more traffic being generated to the website by people finding you through a Facebook group. So impactful. You can get up one to 200 clicks to your website just

through social medias on a monthly basis on top of what the website's going to naturally do for you. It's just snowball going down the mountain.

Be careful not to over-customize your website or hide keywords or links. Some of the no-nos, don't go too fancy. You don't need that in this field. It just doesn't make a whole lot of sense. We want you to have a nice website. We want it to be great, but we also at the same time want to ensure that we're doing it the right way with the right approaches, and that's going to keep you relevant through the long haul.

I know we went over a lot of content. It probably sounds a bit daunting and overwhelming, and it is. A lot of this is you don't really think about this when you hear website. Most people have that 10-year, 15-year-ago mantra, set it and forget it. If you build it, they will come. I already got my website. I'm pretty much hands-free at this point. For a long time, that was the case. That's back in a time where not everybody had a website. I think it was 40% of small businesses had a website all the way back in 2010. We're not talking about dinosaur time here. This is 2010. Not even half the small businesses out there had a functioning website to utilize.

Here in 2024, over 80% of small businesses, and that's what we would classify the mental health field. It's a small business. It's a must. It's a mandatory. It's a thing that you need to have if you're still looking to grow your practice. Yellow pages are a thing of the past. Referrals are fantastic and lovely, and I'm sure those are some of the best patients and clients that you receive.

Once that well runs dry, what happens after that? It's hard. It's hard to do. It's hard to keep up with this. It's nearly impossible when you're trying to run your practice. There are options. There are solutions. There are companies that focus specifically in the mental health field, and that's what we do here at TherapySites. We want to take that work off of your shoulders.

At the end of the day, we can be the central hub for you. You can't come up with content, we have solutions. Don't have time to update or manage content or update the website, we have solutions. We are your number one premier resource when it comes to that mental health field, with over 12,000 mental health practitioners actively engaging in the platform. As an offer, I'll give you guys plenty of time to scan that, hey, QR code to make it easy for you.

That is my direct line on the screen as well. That'll get you to me directly if you have questions about the service. I have a pretty cool promotion offered to all the practitioners. If you're interested in learning more about TherapySites and we have an appropriate solution for you, a couple of free months of services, plus \$100 Amazon gift card just for making the switch. I know we got to go twist your arm. I wouldn't do with a free Amazon gift card there. It's a little-- I'd be in trouble. Have that as an option here. Take a look, let us know if you have questions.

I think we are now going to navigate into some questions. I know you guys have had - I've been looking at the chats. There's a lot of great questions coming in. I'm going to leave it over to Seth. I might chime in here for a time or two, but it looks like we have plenty of time for you guys. Hopefully we can get to plenty of these questions and get you guys back to your day here shortly.

Seth: All right, hello, everyone. My name is Seth. I've been answering most of your questions in the chat. Keep them coming, but I haven't seen much in terms of the same questions. A lot of them

do talk about content. I want to talk about that a little bit. Seems like there's been some questions about AI over and over again. The best thing I can say when it comes to AI is it's a good tool to use for getting ideas or getting structure for the content. I would always spin the content into your unique personalized situation.

If you're looking for a way to put things together, it could give you that information, which is great, but at the same time, who knows how many other people they're giving that information to. What you want to do is take that and put your own little personal spin on it to create that uniqueness that Google is looking for, that Mario spoke about, to differentiate you from your competition. That's how I would use AI. That's how I've used it in the past, and that's how I would continue to use it until it takes on more than what it is right now.

Other questions. Is it worth spending time writing and pitching articles for other publications for the backend? Also, what if they only offer nofollow links? Nofollow links is going to-- The whole point of a nofollow link is so that you tell Google not to follow that. There's certain reasons to have a nofollow, whether it's duplicate content on your website or it's something that you don't want Google to index in there.

In terms of spending time writing and pitching articles for other publications for the backlinks, it depends where you're going to put the backlinks. The backlinks really depend on what site it's coming from. If you want to use high-quality backlinks, you don't want to create a nofollow link. If you're doing some backlinks that are not the greatest, you would obviously want to have them nofollow links at that point, because there's really not going to be too much SEO benefit in that.

If we're not quite ready to go into private practice, would it still make sense to connect with you all if we don't have a website? Yes, it's always good to get your name out there whether you have a private practice or not. If you're part of a hospital, people are still going to be looking for practitioners, whether it's at a hospital or individually. I still think a website would be beneficial for you. We have plenty of multidisciplinary practices that have 10 to 15 doctors, and some of them decide, "Oh, we'll just have a generic website for the practice." Others will say, "We'll have one for the practice as a whole. We'll also have one for each individual practitioner." Because they all specialize in different things.

There's always benefits to having your own website, whether you work privately or in a hospital setting.

Mario: To touch on that as well, even just building a strategy. Having that game plan for when you are for sure 100% going to individual private practice, you already have that timeline in place. A lot of times, practitioners will jump right in, not realize, well, I should have had my website online three months ago before I'm ready to start taking on new clients or patients. 100%, even it's just to talk about strategy, build that timelines for yourself. It's going to make your life a lot easier when that time does come.

Seth: Correct, yes, and that goes back to what Mario was saying earlier about the timeframe involved with building up SEO. It does take a while, especially if you're in a more competitive, saturated city. That takes even longer. If you're not ready to go into private practice and you're working at a hospital, as Mario said, starting that up and getting the work done when you are ready to transition, you've already established your presence, it's already out there, you've done a lot of the work, and it's a relatively easier switch than starting from scratch and being like, "Okay, I don't have any patients for a year. What happened?"

It would be a lot better to have that presence and switch it from the hospital setting to your own private setting at that point. AI tools like ChatGPT, it's what I talked about earlier. It's good to use it as a structure information tool, but you always want to tweak it to your own practice and use it that way, not basically copying, pasting what they provide over to you.

How do we keep up with the search algorithm changes Mario suggested? You go to Google and type in Google algorithm changes, and they'll give you the most recent one that they put out there. It's not any type of hidden information, it's all out there for you. When they do change their algorithm, they're not going to give you a heads up about it, they're just going to say, "Hey, we made our algorithm change today, now you need to figure out what you need to do from there." They're not going to give you a heads up about it, but no algorithm is hidden, there's always going to be ways to figure out what it is.

All you got to go do is just Google algorithm changes and you'll see the most recent one they put out there. Any idea how long on average from start to finish to good enough SEO? On average, like I said, it really depends on the competitiveness of your area and the saturation of it. Obviously, someone in the middle of a rural area is going to build up SEO a lot quicker than someone in New York City, for example.

When you're talking about having five therapists competition versus 5,000, there's going to be a big difference between how long it could take. It could take anywhere from a year to a couple of years, it all depends on how good the website is built and how much work you really put into it. In terms of really saturated areas, like Mario spoke about earlier, it's good to do the split between getting your SEO work done, but also using a PPC AdWords campaign to supplement that at that time.

You're able to build up, generate the traffic to your site while the SEO is building up. There are different strategies that you could go about to take it. It's almost like a graph. You'll have the PPC campaign going this way, then your SEO will go. Then at that time you could decrease the spending on the PPC as your SEO takes off. There's really no way I can give you a definitive timeframe as to how long it takes. It really depends on the area.

Is there a risk to changing the homepage picture design, et cetera? Not really. The biggest thing when it comes to changing a website is making sure there's no large downtime. You don't want the transition from your site to be, you were with a company, then you signed up with another one, the site went down for three or four months. That's not a great thing. As long as it's a seamless transition, there's no problem changing designs, pictures, anything like that. That really doesn't have too much relevance on the SEO itself.

Are there any other ways you assist to protect your IP and make sure others aren't using your materials? Unfortunately, that's just the nature of the internet. Your information is out there. If you catch it and it's copyrighted, you can take action on it. Someone just taking your material, unfortunately, there's really no easy way to stop that unless it's copyrighted.

Mario: I think that might be all the time we have right now, Seth. I think we got to wrap up, unfortunately.

Seth: I'll answer the next couple of questions in the chat here. Thank you, everyone.

Host: Thank you so much for joining us, Mario Rios and Seth Weiner. Thank you to all of our listeners for your participation. We'd also like to thank TherapySites for making this webinar possible. As we mentioned at the top of the hour, TherapySites will be choosing four people who stayed for the entire presentation to receive a free website consultation. Keep your eyes peeled. A recording of this presentation will be emailed to everyone in two weeks' time. The recording will include the presentation slides. As soon as the webinar has ended, a short survey will appear on your screen. Please take the survey and give us your feedback. We thank you for your attention and hope you have a great day.

[00:59:02] [END OF AUDIO]