Peggy Mihelich: Hello, and welcome everyone. I'm Peggy Mihelich, Associate director of member content here at APA. Today's webinar is titled, Supercharge Your Presence: How to Develop an Online Marketing Strategy for Your Practice. This presentation will cover the following topics.

How to decide which areas to focus on in your marketing efforts. How to evaluate the performance of various online marketing strategies and decide if you should continue them, stop them, or make adjustments. How to put yourself on a pathway towards sustained improvements in regards to online marketing.

Subjects such as how to create compelling websites and how to use SEO and Google Ads to attract search traffic recovered in earlier webinars. All registrants and attendees will be emailed a link to these recordings in about two to three weeks.

Today's presentation will conclude with a short five minute demo of a new APA tool Psychologist Locator. This searchable database allows potential clients to view your professional profile while they can learn about your areas of expertise, background, treatment options, office hours, and more. Be sure to stick around for it.

Now some important notes before we get started. The views expressed in this presentation are those of the presenters and may not reflect the views or policies of the American Psychological Association. Next, this program does not offer CE, however, we will email everyone watching live today a certificate of attendance.

During our time together, you will be on mute. You can communicate to us using the questions box located in your webinar control panel. We have handouts for you to download. You can access them in the handouts box, also located in the webinar control panel. These can be downloaded at any time during the presentation.

We'll email you the handouts along with the recording in a few weeks. Have a question for our presenter? Type them in using the question box located in your webinar control panel.

Now, our speaker for today. Daniel Wendler is founder of marketingfortherapists.org and author of Clicking with Clients: Online Marketing for Private Practice Therapists. He's currently a doctoral student in clinical psychology at George Fox University and uses insights from his previous career in online marketing to help psychologists reach their professional goals online.

He's provided an online marketing consultation to over 100 therapists and he's excited to share his insights with you. Learn more about Daniel by downloading his bio from the handouts box in your webinar control panel.

Here is Daniel Wendler.

Daniel Wendler: Hello everybody. Let me hop on the webcam real quick just so I can wave at all of you and you can see that I am a real person and how excited I am to be a part of this webinar. This is my fourth webinar with APA and I am hopeful that this will be the best one yet. So, gonna turn the webcam off now so we can focus on the slides, but let's go ahead and jump in.

So, a couple things before we begin, just to kind of get you guys oriented. First, you may notice that there is an otter on the slide. If you have joined me for any of my other APA webinars, you know that this is an intentional decision. All of the stock photography related to online marketing and things of that nature, it's very boring. It's some guy in front of a white board writing success and you really don't want to watch a webinar full of those things. So instead, I have an animal theme for each time. This time it's otters, because, who can argue with otters?

However, we did get some feedback last time that there was a couple people that wanted a more professional look, so, never fear. If you are in the no animals camp, I also have some nice PowerPoint art to go with my presentation. So hopefully both people will be satisfied.

I also kind of wanted to orient you to the goal of today, which is to kind of talk about the idea of strategy for an online ... For the online marketing for your therapy practice. If you don't have a private practice, maybe you are a researcher, maybe you're a graduate student, this is probably still gonna be helpful for you. You might just have to adjust some of the things that I talk about to meet your unique circumstances.

Then also, this is sort of like a high level strategic overview rather than a tactical overview, so I'm not gonna give you as many specific, here's how you do this particular skill, and it's more of how you choose the approaches to invest in. If you want to learn a little bit more in depth technical knowledge, then my previous webinars on websites and search engines and also LinkedIn are going to have a little bit more of that.

Let us jump right in. The problem that a lot of therapists come up with is that everybody wants new clients, and everybody knows that you have to get traffic to your website or to your profile, or to some other place where that traffic can turn into clients. The problem is, a lot of therapists don't really have any idea of how to go about getting that traffic that will turn into clients. They sort of know, "Okay, I need to put myself out there. I need to somehow get people to discover me, but how do I do that?"

A common approach, which doesn't work very well, is to just sort of try things at random. So, maybe you listen to pro colleagues, so that they had some good success on Twitter and so you open up a Twitter account and you start tweeting and maybe you attend some conference and there's a guy there and he talks about how blogging is the next big thing, and so you decide to go and blog for a little bit. Then, you can't forget, build up referral relationships, so maybe you try to find some local doctor's office that they can link to your website. You're just sort of trying all of these things, without really a coherent strategy or idea for what's going to be helpful for you.

You're just doing it because it feels like you ought to, or because you really are not sure what else to do. Then, as you start on this approach, then at some point, you're gonna make a change, but that change is based kind of on impulse. Maybe you start up a blog and you write three blog posts, then something distracts you. It starts to feel tedious. You had writers block, then you abandon your blog, and then you never return to it.

Or you open up a Twitter account, or let's say even a better example, maybe you start an advertising campaign and you fiddle with it a little bit at the beginning and then you just leave it running for a year spending a certain amount every month and you never look at it, you never change it because you haven't really had the impulse to do that.

So there's not really data driven decisions going into adjusting your marketing approach, you're just sort of doing stuff. This isn't because you're stupid, obviously all of you are psychologist or psychologists in training. You're very intelligent people, it's just that this kind of thinking isn't necessarily what's taught in graduate school.

So you sort of have to do all these things and just kind of hope for success. There's a better way. There's what I call the portfolio approach to online marketing. Basically what I mean by that is that you build a portfolio of traffic sources with the idea that any one given traffic source might not on its own bring you all of the clients that you need, but if you sort of build up a number of different traffic sources, then over time you can create a collection of streams of traffic that's gonna work pretty well for you.

However, just like creating a financial portfolio, like a portfolio of investments, you don't just choose at random what to do or buy a bunch of stocks and then never look at them again. You have to sort of be constantly adjusting and modifying what kinds of marketing efforts go in your portfolio. If you're able to do that, then you're able to create really sustained, really dependable traffic and traffic that's robust.

Because, one of the other benefits of this portfolio approach is that you're not dependent on just one source. Earlier this year, Google changed it's policy so that if you were substance abuse clinician and you were advertising on Google, over night, they disapproved all of your ads. They said, "We will not accept ads for addiction services," because there was abuse from shady rehab centers. But they just decided they were gonna ban everybody.

If instead of a portfolio, if you had put all of your eggs in one basket and you're a substance abuse psychologist, suddenly over night, all of your traffic goes away. You want to create this portfolio that gives you sustained, dependable traffic. And I'm gonna sort of go into how we create that portfolio.

I first want to just warn you though, there are so many different things that can go in this portfolio. So, maybe it's social media. You say, I'm gonna try and get a lot of followers. I'm gonna try and get people to find out about my practice through sharing my content. Maybe you decide to get to the top of the search engines, either through SEO or advertising. Maybe you want to get referral links so you do a guest post somewhere and hope that people will follow that link to your website.

Or you reach out to a local organization and you say, "Hey, you're a community health clinic, I offer low cost therapy, can you link to me?" I don't need to go through all of these options. The point is, there's a million different things that you could choose to try to bring in traffic and find marketing success.

So, how do you know what to go after? You only have so many hours in a day and you only have so many dollars in the bank. Where do you invest your time and your money to try to bring us sustainable client referrals to your practice?

And the approach that I suggest for that is the powerful portfolios approach. I just made this up, but I created sort of these three categories of questions that you want to think through, then I used a lot of alliteration to hopefully make it easy to remember.

The first part is strategic selection. This is how you choose what goes in your portfolio, and all of these, this is the outline for the talk, so I'm gonna go more into detail if you're a little bit like, "Wait, what? I don't know how to do this yet." Don't worry, I'm gonna get there in just a second.

But so the first part is, how do you choose what to put in your marketing portfolio? How do you choose what avenues to go down to try to bring in traffic. And then, let's say you try something out, how do you make a data driven decision to decide what to keep in your portfolio?

There's a famous quote that says, "50% of my advertising budget is wasted. I just don't know which half." A lot of people, maybe it's 90% of the time and the money that you're putting into advertising is wasted, but you just don't know that. If you can gather data, analyze data, then you're gonna be able to make informed decisions. And I'll tell you how to do that.

And then finally, how do you make impactful investment of your time and money to start to multiply the returns that you're getting? If you find something that works for you, how do you make it work two X, three X, 10 times more than it's working right now. If you try something and it doesn't work, how might you adjust your approach so that maybe you could get your blog to actually start bringing new traffic, or maybe you could get those advertisements to start turning a profit.

That's kind of the outline for today. And we will jump right in. First of all, strategic selection. How do you choose what sorts of marketing options go in your portfolio. And again, by marketing options, I mean everything from social media to search engine optimization. But it's more specific than that. It's not just, "Oh, I'm gonna try social media in general." It's, "I'm gonna try specifically on Facebook. I am going to try to get people to click a link on a Facebook post that I share to then come to my site."

It's really well ... It's sort of specific, not just like a vague thing. You want to be a clear pathway between what your plan is and how people can find you. So, how do you choose a portfolio choice. How do you add something in your portfolio and know that's probably gonna be a good choice?

First, you want something that's likely to reach your ideal client. If your goal is to do, let's say you do couples counseling for older couples. That's kind of your area of specialty. You're probably not going to want to try to become the next big thing on Snapchat or Twitter because, your target demographic just isn't going to be there. Or if you decide I'm going to start a blog and I'm going to get lots and lots of readers.

Well, if you live in a small town of 5000 people, even if you get lots and lots of readers, probably very few of those people will actually be from the geographic area that you're located in, so that's not very likely to reach the people that you actually want to reach, like the people that will actually be able to spend money in your practice.

You want to think something through and figure out how would this reach my ideal client. And you really want to think of like, a specific story. If you imagine a client, could you imagine that person in sort of a reasonable and feasible way becoming a client of yours through this effort? If it's really hard to imagine how that could happen, you're like, "Well, I'm posting inspirational tweets, but I really can't figure out how somebody would decide to sign up for an LD eval with me because of those tweets," then that means that that's not as good portfolio choice.

Also, you want to make sure that the portfolio choice that you choose is easy to do or enjoyable to learn. There's a lot of things in online marketing that are pretty technical. If you tuned into my previous talk on search engine optimization and Google Advertising, you would know that the Google Advertising, that's very technical work. It's a pretty nitty gritty, you've gotta do a lot of study, a lot of homework to learn how to do it, and some people really like that. A lot of people don't.

So, if you don't, that's probably not gonna be a good choice for you. If you do like it, or you would enjoy learning it, then that could be a viable choice to try to experiment with. Or, maybe it's just something that's pretty easy to do. Like, creating a Yelp profile for yourself. That's really not that hard.

Even if you don't like it, you can learn how to do it fairly well without a lot of effort. So, you want something where it's not gonna cause you to tear your hair out. Finally, you want an affordable initial experiment.

Again, all of this is going to be experimental. You want to make data driven decisions about what to keep in your marketing portfolio and what to shift away from. So, if you decide, okay, I'm going to spend 10 thousand dollars on a new website, I mean, maybe like some of you that might feel affordable, but for a lot of folks, especially folks who are just starting out, 10 thousand dollars as an up front investment, that's not gonna be an experiment you can afford to have fail.

So you wanna come up with things that are gonna require a reasonable investment. This investment also refers to time. If you say, "Okay, I'm gonna try this approach and I'm not gonna know if it works or not for a year, and I'm gonna have to put in 20 hours a week into this thing, I'm exaggerating, but, that would show you that that's probably not something that's worth trying because you're gonna have to invest so much before you can even see if it's gonna work or not.

Then conversely, a bad portfolio choice, a marketing option that's probably not worth trying out is just the opposite of these things. If there's no clear path to your clients, if you say, "Okay, I don't really now how recording these videos and putting them up on YouTube is going to help my clients and my local area discover me," then probably those YouTube videos are not gonna be a high priority for you.

Or if it's really tedious and it's really technical. If you say, "Okay, I guess I could figure out how to write a blog post, but I really just hate that. That just feels so ... It feels so tedious to me to put together blog posts or I don't really know the first thing about graphic design. My attempts to make posts on Pinterest just ... I don't have the technical skill to do that." Again, that's not gonna be a good decision.

And then, if an investment is going to require you to bet the farm and really invest a ton of time or money, that's probably not a good idea. You probably want to do something where you can make an initial investment that it would be okay to lose rather than saying, "Okay, I'm gonna put 10 thousand dollars into this. I'm gonna hire some guy who promises miracles. And I'm gonna pay him all this money. And if he doesn't work out, then I'm just sunk."

You want it to be safer. Let's keep on cruising.

Here's an example. Let's say you start a private practice offering services for children and adolescents in your area. You only have a small budget to start, but you have lots of free time and you enjoy graphic design. So, you notice that the colors kind of match between things about you and things about the approach that you chose.

Your local area has several active parenting groups. If it's a parenting group from your local area, that's going to be an easy place to meet your ideal client who are the parents who are deciding whether or not to bring their kids to therapy. There's a very clear path from your ideal client to your practice through these parenting groups and so that makes sense. That's a good choice.

Then you decide you are going to create two image posts per week containing a child, mental health, or parenting tip. And you enjoy graphic design and so making image posts, that's something that's very congruent for you. That really makes sense. You're not gonna be tearing your hair out trying to figure out how to work photo shop. You're not gonna have to spend hours, and hours, and hours, and hours putting it together 'cause it comes naturally to you. That's sort of a good fit with what you offer.

Then finally, every post takes about 30 minutes to make, it contains a beautiful image, it'll link back to your practice, so there's a very clear way that somebody can discover what you're about through this marketing effort. You also spend maybe one hour per post talking in the comments of each post, offering free advice within ethical boundaries.

So, you're spending for each post, you're spending maybe 90 minutes. You're doing two posts a week. You're spending three hours per week on this thing. But, you have lots of free time, probably three hours a week feels very reasonable.

This would be an idea of something to add to your marketing portfolio that fits really well with the psychologist in this example. It matches up with, there's a strong match between how this thing is gonna find their ideal clients and what their ideal clients actually are. There's a strong match between their abilities and what this requires and then there's a strong match between the investment that it requires and what they ... and that investment feeling affordable and pretty low impact.

So, that's kind to just set you up how to choose what to experiment with. But, any experiment, anything that you initially try is just going to be an experiment because you don't know if it's gonna work for you. The therapist down the street might have been successful with search engine optimization or Twitter or whatever, but that doesn't mean that you will be. So, how do you decide if something is working for you or not? You wanna make data driven decision.

And in order to do that, you need to gather two kinds of data. First, you need to gather outcome data. What is the outcome of this marketing effort? And so, outcome data could be the amount of clicks that come to your website from a particular effort. It could be the number of times that people watch a video that you've created. But, what you want is you want to gather data that as much as possible connects to your bottom line. You could gather data about the number of likes that somebody liked ... somebody gave to your post on Facebook, but a like doesn't necessarily correlate to a new client.

Somebody could like your post and then never come in for therapy. So, it's much better to collect data on things that suggest, that more correlate to your bottom line. If it's possible for you to somehow track exactly how many people actually sign up for therapy through a particular method, then that's going to be the gold standard of data. But even if you can't quite get there, you want to get as close as possible.

So somebody who clicks on an ad and comes to your website, that's going to be a stronger data point than somebody who just likes a Facebook post or watches a video or something like that. Also, you want to measure outcome data that has been cleaned up.

I was recently consulting with a psychologist and they were very excited because they had started a marketing effort and their search engine traffic had doubled over a period of time. But as we dug into the data, we found that almost all of the traffic growth had come from outside of their country and they don't offer any kind of international services. It was nice that people were coming to their website and reading their blog and doing things like that, but none of that was going to translate into new clients for this psychologist.

And so, you want to clean up the outcome data by basically taking out any data that's not going to correlate to your bottom line. If your post gets a lot of shares, but half of those shares are from your family, that maybe doesn't count. Or if you get a lot of traffic, but some of that traffic is from geographic locations that are outside of where you practice, again, you want to exclude that data in your analysis so that you're actually able to see what is the data that effects my bottom line?

Then finally, you want to make sure that you are also measuring the time and money invested in the outcome. It can be sometimes common for people to think, wow, I got a new client from Facebook. Hurray. Then, if you spent 50 hours on Facebook this month and that led to one new client, if that client sticks around for two sessions, probably your hourly rate on that client is very, very low, it probably isn't worth it.

So, you wanna try to measure the time and the money that you invested to get whatever outcome it is that you're looking at. There's a lot of ways that you can gather this data. There's software tools such as Google Analytics, which you can install on your website for free. It's pretty easy to set up, but if you've got like a web design person, they can definitely do that for you.

Facebook also has a built in tool called Facebook Insights, which, if you have a page or something like that, it will give you insights into your data. You can also try to gather data directly from clients, especially data about where they signed up.

You probably don't want to spend time in your first session figuring this stuff out, but, if you can ask your intake person, like whoever handles their paperwork to just ask one additional question, like, "Hey, where did you guys find us," or put a box on your intake form where they can write that down and try to ask a little bit of a more detailed question.

Like, if somebody says, "Oh, I found you through Google." See if you can ask a follow up question that says, "Well, was it from an ad or was it from the main results? Or do you remember what you searched for that helped you find us on Google." Something like that. Again, don't require people to answer it, if they don't want to answer it or they don't remember that's fine. But sometimes just asking for a little more information can give you the data that you need to be able to make a really accurate decision.

Then finally, just develop your own system for measuring your own time and cost that you put into something. And this can be something that's formal. There's apps for time tracking. You can set up accounting software, or you can just use an Excel Spreadsheet or just roughly jot down some estimates of the time and the money that you're putting into things. It kind of depends on how elaborate you need to be, but just make sure you have some kind of system so that even roughly your able to kind of estimate how much you had to put into a particular marketing effort.

Let's continue our example. After a month of creating these images posts, you decided to check in, see how they've been doing. First, you look at the likes that your images received, but then you realize, "Wait, Daniel told me not to do this. Likes don't necessarily lead to new clients, so that's not a good data point for me to look at. I'm just gonna ignore that more or less."

So then you look at your Google Analytics data and Google Analytics has a feature where it lets you see where people came from when they first visited your site. So, you're able to see the number of people who came to your site from Facebook, and you found, "Wow. That number has tripled over the first month since I started sharing these image posts."

And, you can also set up Google Analytics to track the number of people who fill out the contact form on your website. So you can see that, "Oh, three people clicked on a link on Facebook, then came to my site, and then filled out my contact form. So, I think that I have three new clients that came from Facebook."

And then, because you really care about evidence based practice, you're also gathering data through your intake paperwork and you've discovered, again, that three clients found you through Facebook. You also were tracking the time and the money that you spent on this and you figure out that you spent 12 hours putting this all together and you had to pay $100 to get the licensing rights for your images so that you were within copyright laws.

So, as you're sort of evaluating that, you would probably say ... I'm getting a little ahead of myself. I think we do that in a second. You have this data, and then now what do you do with it? First, you want to make sure that you decide a stopping point where you will analyze your data, because some people just collect data forever. And then it's like, "Well, I've been gathering this data for the past two years, and I've never made a decision based on it. I just sort of collect it," and that's honestly worse than doing nothing because you're spending some amount of extra time and effort gathering the data. If you're not gonna put it to work, why bother.

Decide some sort of stopping point. If you decide, "Okay, I'm gonna start this new campaign, I'm gonna start this experiment, maybe decide after a week a month, six weeks, three months, or a certain amount of dollars, like maybe after I spend $300 on this advertising campaign, whatever it is, decide some kind of stopping point where you're going to check in and you're going to analyze the data. And broadly speaking, the more data that's coming in, the shorter the time frame.

If you are only getting maybe a couple of clicks per week, then it probably makes sense to wait at least a month, maybe longer, to look at your data so you have some, so you have a reasonable sized end. Whereas if you decide, "Okay, I'm gonna spend $1000 a week on advertisements," you probably want to check that after a week, or maybe even a couple days because the data that you're getting is gonna be coming in so much faster.

Then, if the data is good, if you say, "Hey, this looks as if it's a success," then consider increasing the investment or the effort. And the investment is the financial investment, and then the effort is how hard are you working on this. Could you put in some more hours, or could you increase your skill so that you could do a better job at this?

Could you go and take a graphic design class so that you're image ads ... so that your image posts become even better. And then if the data is bad, don't just keep doing the same thing that's not working. Either stop it or change something. If you launch an advertising campaign and at the end of it you realize that you've lost money, don't just keep that advertising campaign going, either shut it off or find some way that you can change it that you think will get you better results.

So, let's go back to our case study. The three clients that you got are a great fit. They've come in for multiple sessions, so you definitely earned your $100 back. That's a plus and you really liked making these images. Even if you hadn't gotten clients out of it, it would still have been a form of stress relief, and so that feels like a really good use of 12 hours.

So, you've analyzed the data and you've decided by looking both at the input and the output, this was a success. So, let's go ahead and grow our investment. You decide to start advertising on Facebook, 50 bucks a week, not too much. But you are going to try to advertise on Facebook to get these images in front of a new audience so that you're expanding beyond these parenting groups.

And, you're going to spend a couple hours of your time taking an online course that you found about the basics of Facebook online marketing, so that if there's some tip or trick that you could apply to make this even more effective, you wanna make sure that you learn that. And then you set a calendar alert a month from now, you're gonna review your data again and very importantly, you're going to see if these improvements have paid off, because, let's say a month from now you once again get three clients.

That's good, but that suggests that maybe those ads that you're running aren't really doing anything, or maybe that online course that you took didn't really help you if your results are sort of staying stagnant. So, you want to sort of always be analyzing your data and then always be making decisions based on that data. In this case, you might say, "Okay, maybe if the Facebook ads haven't really helped me, instead of just spending $50 a week for the end of time, I'm gonna stop that or I'm gonna change up my ads or I'm gonna do something different."

But basically, just because this piece of your portfolio worked well initially, doesn't mean that it gets a free pass to just always go unchallenged. You always wanna be referring back to the data.

So, let's go on to the final piece which is impactful investment. So, let's say that you've identified an area of your portfolio that seems to be working pretty well. Like in this case, you decided, "Okay, I've made these Facebook image posts, I'm getting some engagement. I'm getting some new clients. I really wanna double down on this and I want to really grow the benefit that I get from this. Or, maybe you try it out and it doesn't work and you say, "Oh, I really think there's something here. I think I can get it to work. What can you do?"

The first one is to gather more data. The researchers among us will know that the quality of your decision is only as good as the quality of your data. So, you can try to gather more data, kind of through a couple of different ways. One is through what's called AB testing, and AB testing is a staple on my marketing and basically all it means is that you give people two different versions of the same experience and then you see which one gets you better results.

Maybe in our image post example, maybe you decide to say, all right, I am going to spend a month where I only post my images on the weekends because I think that maybe parents are going to be really active on the weekends, and then I'm going to spend another month where I post it more regularly, and I'm going to sort of compare that.

Then you'll see, does choosing the timing impact the performance? I mean, that's kind of a bad idea. I don't know that that would necessarily impact anything, but you kind of get the idea, you find something to change and then run an experiment around.

Or, find a way to get better data collection. If you were making decisions just based off of clicks, for instance, could you find a way to tie it to your new client referrals? Or even if you couldn't tie it to new client referrals, could you still get a little bit more data, like, for instance Google Analytics lets you see how long did people stay on your website?

So you could maybe look at that as a metric or something else. Try to ... Real, maybe you go back and you look at the comments that people are putting on your posts and you use that as a form of data. Also, the other thing that you and do is you can increase your skill, and there's a lot of really solid, completely free online marketing courses that are out there.

I would generally speaking be pretty suspicious of the people who sell these master class, $500, online marketing courses that you just gotta do it, I'll solve every problem for you, because the fact is, we've been doing online marketing for a long time, and there's not really a whole lot of super, super secrets that are out there that you need absolute premium access to get to. I'm sure that they exist, but I'm also sure that the people who have them are not selling them to you for $500. They're using them to get to the top of the search results in some really lucrative industry and they have no intention of sharing their secrets.

But, there are some sort of big name, reputable organizations that have kind of compiled sort of the best practices of online marketing and they've made them available pretty much for free. And so, hubspot.com, copyblogger.com, moz.com. These are three great places to start that have just like oodles of three high quality resources on online marketing and this is the stuff that the professionals look to.

It's not something that's been watered down specifically for psychologists, it's something that the guy at the marketing agency down the street that you might consider hiring, he's reading the same guide, or at least he did at the beginning of his career. So, this is a place that I would definitely go.

Finally, consider bringing in outside help. So, maybe you try a certain approach and it either works or it doesn't, but you say, "I think that there's potential for more here." Consider hiring a professional of some kind, but if you're going to hire a professional, only do it if they can make a data based argument.

And what I mean by that is, if you've collected this data, and you can sort of show the cause and effect and you can say, "Okay, I put in this much time, I put in this much money, I got this outcome," you should be able to show that to whatever professional and say, "Can you tell me how you would improve these results?" And they should be able to give you specifics of, "Here's what I'd do to improve the results. Here's how much I think these results would improve."

Obviously, they're not gonna be able to guarantee performance, but they should be able to give you sort of like an articulate, well reasoned answer. Whereas, if they were like, "Uh," and they sort of hedge or they sweet talk you but they're not really able to give any specifics, then that's a sign that that's maybe not a person who's going to be able to give you really ethical performance and you should go somewhere else.

So, those are some of the options that you have for boosting ... for when you find an aspect of your portfolio that you want to double down on, these are some of your options. However, I would be remiss if I did not mention one last thing, which is to not forget the bottom of the funnel.

Again, you notice that you got traffic that are coming to your website and then some percentage of that traffic turns into a new client. But usually it's only a small percentage, and that number is called a conversion rate. If you have 100 people come to your site, two of those people become clients, then your conversion rate is two percent.

And even a small difference in your conversion rate, you know, even moving from two percent to three percent, that's just a one percent difference. But it means that you have 50% more clients with the same amount of traffic and it can oftentimes be easier to nudge that conversion rate from two percent to three percent than it is to increase your traffic by 50%.

Don't forget about opportunities to increase your conversion rate and make it so that when somebody actually comes to your website they're more likely to sign up.

I could give a whole talk just on this, but there's a couple of very quick things that you could do to try to improve your conversion rate. First, take a look at your website design. Does it look professional or does it look like something that was slapped together in the 90s or that was made by somebody who doesn't really know what they're doing. Get some brutally honest friends to give you feedback, and if they say, "Yeah, it really doesn't look that good," consider taking some classes on, looking at some resources on web design, improving your skill, or hiring a professional.

Also, does it load quickly? In some cases you could have websites that will take five, six, seven, eight, nine, 10 seconds to load and a lot of times people will get out of there before it even loads.

There's a variety of things that you can do to improve page speed, but one of the easiest ones is to locate the images that you're using, and if you're pasting in an image from your digital camera that's eight megabytes, that's going to slow your page down really fast. So, try to make sure that your images are not too big. That's one easy fix.

Also, make sure that your website content, and by that, I mean the stuff that's actually written on your website is effective. Ask yourself if it grabs their attention at the beginning. When somebody first loads your page, is there something there to cause them to keep reading, or is it just like a picture of some clouds and your name and they have to scroll down to actually find out what you're about?

And then, at the end, does it kind of teeter out, or does it invite them to sign up and to take action? You want to end all of your pages with some kind of statement that says, "Hey, I'm here for you, sign up for therapy. Here's a big button that takes you to my contact form."

Then finally, is it high quality, basically. Is it well written? Is it easy to read? Is it informative? Would somebody read that and say, "Man, whoever wrote this, I want to talk to this person about my most sensitive problems," because if not, then you're gonna want to revise your writing or maybe even hire a writing coach or something like that.

This was a little bit of whirlwind, but I wanted to make sure that we had enough time for Q and A, so hope you guys found it helpful, and I am ready to jump into the questions, and then I have some time at the end to learn about the APA Psychologist Locator tool, which I think is worth adding to any portfolio because the investment is so low. It's already for you as APA members.

But yeah, I'm getting ahead of myself. Let's do the Q and A.

Peggy Mihelich: Oh, that was a really great presentation. Lots of good information, Daniel. Thank you. Yeah, we have a lot of questions about social marketing. Let's take this one first. What are your thoughts on a Facebook page for my practice? What legal/ethical concerns are there with the Facebook page?

Daniel Wendler: Yeah, so the biggest, I think, legal/ethical concern that you run into with a Facebook page, it's gonna be two things, and they kind of overlap.

The first one is that you are all of the confidentiality rules that you have regarding your clients are the same even if they happen to follow you on Facebook or comment on your page, something like that. So, you have to be very careful to not engage with your clients in any way that would indicate that they're a client of yours.

And so, that can be a thing that can get you into trouble. There can also sometimes be a little bit of a negative temptation. Let's say you have a client that follows you and they don't really have their profile secured, would you experience a temptation to click at their profile and learn a little bit about their life, you know, we're human, we have curiosity, but that can get you into some ethical troubled waters.

So, if that could be a potential issue for you, that might be something to be cautious about. Also, there's the issue of testimonials. Like Facebook as the ability for people to write reviews, write testimonials and the problem with that is, number one, because there's such a power differential between you and the client, there can be a sense that you compelled the testimonial or somebody doesn't feel safe offering a true testimonial, and that can cause problems.

Then, let's say somebody writes a bad review, you can't acknowledge whether or not that client actually saw you. That really limits how you are able to respond to them and let's say they say something mean, you might be, in the heat of the moment you might say something that lets it slip that you did see that person and suddenly you've committed a HIPAA violation.

There is a lot of risk in a Facebook page because of how much personal engagement that creates the possibility for. I think that you definitely can still do it. You just want to be careful about those issues. And I would suggest having a policy in place that is published, maybe even on your Facebook page that you stick to.

Maybe you say, "Hey, you're welcome to leave a review if you want. I never solicit reviews of my clients. And if you post a review, whether it's positive or negative, I will never respond to it because yada, yada, yada."

Peggy Mihelich: Okay. After this, leads into a couple questions we've had about testimonials. Let's just kind of talk about reviews and testimonials. What are the ethics behind getting them, again how you deal with a bad review, what are your thoughts?

Daniel Wendler: Yeah. So, let me speak a little more on that. Again, I think you want to be, first, do no harm is always the most important rule. You always want to be careful about the legal issues, the ethical issues, never giving up client information, never making somebody feel pressured. But you also, if somebody leaves a bad review, you also kind of want to have some way of defending yourself.

So, what I would say is maybe the best approach is to have some kind of a boiler plate response that you can give to every review. Or maybe you have one boiler plate positive response, one boiler plate negative response. But you make it clear in the response, "I can not respond to you specifically. I can not say if you're a client or not. However, this is my standard response." Then in that standard response, if you could refer to some kind of objective data, that would be really helpful.

If, for instance, you gather outcome data on the assessments and you say, "Hey, 90% of my clients saw a decrease in their symptoms by X session," or, "80% of my clients, when they terminated, said that they had reached their treatment goals." Something like that that is objective, you can then just say that. And then you can't respond to the specific objection, but you do have some way of kind of defending your practice in that way.

I would also say that, again, you want to be very, very careful to never ask somebody to leave you a review, but one thing that could potentially be a work around would be to like, at your front desk or in the window of your practice, something like that, just put a thing that says, "We're on Yelp." Something of that nature, sometimes that's enough to kind of prompt somebody to go on Yelp.

You're not asking for a review. You're not indicating that you want a positive or negative one, but it just lets people know, "Oh, I could write a review if I wanted to." That might be one way of playing the review game.

Peggy Mihelich: So, we actually had an audience member ask if it was ethically okay to solicit on Yelp. So it is okay to do that?

Daniel Wendler: No. So I would say it's not. It's not okay to directly solicit. You never want to tell a client, "Hey, by the way, I'm on Yelp if you wanna leave a review." Or like, "Hey, positive reviews really help me out." If you run a food cart, that's totally okay to do, but with a client because there is that power difference, that's sort of taking advantage because a client might not want to leave a review or might feel pressured to do that.

I don't think that you can ever ask a client for review. What I think what might be acceptable, I will have the caveat that I'm not an ethics expert, you would maybe want to ask somebody who's a little bit, I'm still a graduate student. So you might want to ask somebody who's a little more higher ranked, so to speak. But, my sense is that if you just in a very, very passive way make the information available that you are on Yelp, and then maybe somebody decides to make their own decision to go on Yelp and to leave a review, then that's maybe the one thing that you could do.

But I would never ask somebody to leave you a review or even aggressively put up a sign that says, "Please review us on Yelp," something like that. I would maybe just make the information available that you do happen to be on Yelp.

Peggy Mihelich: Okay. And you also think, would you include it on your website?

Daniel Wendler: You could. And again, I think if you do it in a very, completely passive way, you're never asking a website visitor to leave a review, [inaudible 00:44:27], but again, I don't claim to be an authority on ethics. I just know what I know from my graduate training. I would ... The gold standard is always to consult with somebody else in talking with the consultation before you take a step that you're not totally sure of. I would consult with some colleague, if you decide that you really want to try to gain some more Yelp reviews.

Peggy Mihelich: Okay. We are having a little bit of break up in your microphone. We apologize for that.

Daniel Wendler: Uh oh.

Peggy Mihelich: It might just be, just 'cause when you're over the computer, sometimes just there's a little bit of a computer voice over IP, breaks up a little bit. But we're gonna keep going here, and we apologize to the audience if it broke up a little bit on you there.

All right, let's move on from testimonials. What about, how important is LinkedIn to this marketing strategy?

Daniel Wendler: So, my first webinar for APA was on LinkedIn. And, I suggest that if possible, you go back and you review that for sort of all the tips, but the 10 second summary is that LinkedIn is really valuable because, for the amount of effort that you need to put in, it has one of the highest levels of impact.

Is LinkedIn alone going to fill your practice, definitely not, but, in the space of an hour, you can get your LinkedIn profile to a very, very good position and then it will keep that very good position for the course of years.

So, you really don't have to put in that much effort to move the needle on LinkedIn and to get a good benefit from it, whereas, other things like search engine optimization, you've gotta put a fairly sustained amount of effort before you ever see a result.

I would say LinkedIn, it's not the biggest fruit, but it is one of the lowest hanging fruits and so I would definitely say that anybody should spend an hour and get their LinkedIn profile fully optimized.

Peggy Mihelich: Okay. So, speaking again of social media. Can you have an online presence only on social media and work on a website later, or should you have both?

Daniel Wendler: Oh, yeah. You can do whatever you want. And there are people that have success following all sorts of different pathways. I typically would not recommend it. And the reason for it is a couple of things. One is that it's just going to be, it just makes you look less professional. There's a credibility gap that will happen.

So again, we've talked about conversion rate. I think that your conversion rate is going to be lower if you just have a Facebook page, 'cause it makes you look a little bit more like an amateur or a fly by night kind of thing. It also means that your marketing efforts, you're not really able to gain sustained benefits from something.

If you go and you do a guest post somewhere, you do an interview somewhere, instead of linking back to your website and letting your website grow in the search results, its just going to your Facebook page and that's not helping you as much. I would say, it's not that hard to create a very, very basic website and for like, four bucks a month on Weebly, you can have that thing hosted and so, even if you don't really want to put a lot of time or effort into your website, I would at least create a very, very basic version of your website and use that as your primary landing page rather than a Facebook page, even though I'm sure that there are people who have been successful just on a Facebook page.

I would not typically recommend that.

Peggy Mihelich: Okay. Well, we are quickly running out of time. Here's another question. How do I market myself online with a teletherapy practice? How would you handle that?

Daniel Wendler: Yeah, so the first thing that I would say, is I would say that teletherapy is more difficult to market than typical therapy because with teletherapy, number one, a lot of people that are looking for therapy are not looking for teletherapy and so you run into again, the conversion rate problem, even if somebody clicks on ... Maybe you advertise for therapy, somebody clicks on your ad, if they're not looking to do something over video, then they're gonna leave and you're not gonna be able to sell that person.

Secondly, with local therapy, generally speaking, you're mostly competing with other people in your local area, and those are people that are gonna have similar levels of marketing expertise and similar budget to you. Whereas, if you're doing teletherapy, you're competing with better help, you're gonna be with Talkspace, you're competing with people that have very deep pockets and teams of full time marketers. And it's just gonna be harder for you to stand out in that space.

I think that people can sort of get caught up in the allure and, "Oh, I'm gonna do my thing just from my own home." So, I would first say, think through if teletherapy's really gonna be the right choice for you because it is gonna be hard to market.

If you do decide to go for it anyway, I would say that you want to have a strategy to really break through the noise and target sort of some specific niches, because again, you're probably not going to ever get the traffic for the people that are looking for just online therapy in general, better help is gonna snap that right up. But you might potentially be able to specialize in some way where you become well known as somebody who does teletherapy, specifically around social anxiety.

People who don't want to leave the house, that could be a really good fit. Or people who are in a specific population, again, that's going to allow you to be a little bit more targeted. That's gonna let you build referrals specifically from other organizations that work with that population. Like if you say, "I do teletherapy specifically for this ethnic group, or LGBTQ, or this age group, whatever." Again, that lets you gain access to referrals that people won't be able to gain access to if they're just targeting it in general.

I think that that's maybe not as full of an answer as I would want to give, but it's a complicated topic and I think that if you're gonna go for teletherapy, you want to go into it with eyes open that it is gonna be tricky and you're gonna have to do a lot of work to be successful there.

Peggy Mihelich: Okay. Well, if we ... we can squeeze in one more question, maybe we can make it sort of a short answer. This is a lot of information, of course. It can feel overwhelming to try and take this all on. When is it wise to just say, "You know what, I'm gonna hire a professional marketer to handle this for me?"

Daniel Wendler: Yeah, so it's a good question. I would say that, you want to ask yourself first, kind of like the time versus money question. Marketer's always going to cost more, doing it yourself is always going to take more time. And so, depending on where you are in your career, it might make more or less sense to hire a professional. What I would generally say, is rather than hiring a professional right out of the gate, I would let yourself do at least a little bit of research on doing it yourself before making that decision.

If you decide, do I hire a professional web designer? Give yourself, before you spend $1000 on a professional website, give yourself three hours and go and use the free version of Squarespace or Weebly or whatever, and just see what you can do within that three hours. If you feel like, "Man, I'm making progress. This is coming natural to me." Then maybe you just saved $1000 bucks. And if you're like, "Okay, this isn't working at all," now you have confidence in knowing that a professional is going to be right for you.

Same thing if you decide, "Oh, I want to try advertising." Maybe you put in a couple of hours, put $50 into it, see what kind of results that you can get. Do like a mini do it yourself experiment and then, if that doesn't go well, that's a time that I would think more seriously about getting a professional.

Peggy Mihelich: Okay. Great. Okay, well. We've gotta move on. Thank you audience for all the great questions. And Daniel, thank you for sharing your knowledge with us today. Now, I would like to turn things over to my co-worker Tanya Carlson, Senior Director of APA's member insights and innovations group.

She is going to demo Psychologist Locator, and online marketing resource that connects potential clients to your professional profile. It's free for all licensed APA member licensed psychologists.

Tanya Carlson: Welcome to this demonstration of the newly updated APA Psychologist Locator. The locator is free for all licensed member psychologists and is a great way for you to highlight the services you offer and help potential clients find you with robust search and filter tools and intuitive interface.

Plus, you'll get the support of APA promotions to drive traffic. Now, I'm going to walk you through how to get started. The first step of adding your listing to the Psychologist Locator is to register. Remember, in order to be eligible, you must be an APA member with a valid license for clinical practice.

Go to locator.apa.org and click on the register button here at the top right. Once you've published, you can come back and use the edit profile button to make changes to your listing at any time. Clicking register pops up a screen that requests a bit of information to verify your membership. Please complete all of the fields and when you're done, click register.

After a few minutes, you'll receive an email like this one, verifying your eligibility and giving you instructions for building your profile. Just click the 'Create Your Profile' button. If you're not already logged into your My APA account, you will be prompted to do so at this time. If you are already logged in, you'll go directly to My APA where you'll find a link to edit your profile.

This is the first page of the edit profile section of the locator. This is where you can upload a photo and provide your basic contact information. Once you've completed the fields on this page, click 'Save and Continue.'

In office hours, again, simply complete the field as appropriate and then hit 'Save and Continue.'

In services, you can detail the top services that you offer as well as up to 10 others.

The locator also gives you the opportunity to indicate whether you're accepting new patients, what insurance you accept, and any group specializations, like sexual orientation or ethnicity. Once again, when you're finished, hit 'Save and Continue.'

On this final page of editing your profile, you can provide some additional biographical information like a personal message to display to potential clients, your years of experience, educational details, and professional affiliations that you might like to share, like, the American Psychological Association.

When you're finished, hit 'Save and Finish.' Agree to the terms and conditions and click 'Publish Profile.'

Success. Now you can view what potential clients will see. As you can see, all of the selections are displayed here, plus directions. And now, potential clients can find you quickly and easily.

Your locator snapshot indicates some of the information that potential clients are looking for with just a glance. Things like, your three top specialties, the insurance you accept, and whether you are accepting new patients.

Again, the Psychologist Locator is a wonderful, free opportunity for APA member psychologists to promote their own businesses and drive new potential clients right to their doors.

Peggy Mihelich: Thank you Tanya. Again, the new tool is called Psychologist Locator and we are sending the video link now over chat in case you had any trouble watching the video. And, of course, we're gonna send you the link to the locator and you can get registered and get connected.

A recording of this presentation will be emailed to everyone in two to three weeks. The recording will include links to the handouts in case you had trouble downloading them today. As soon as the webinar has ended, a short survey will appear on your screen. We hope you'll take a few minutes to complete the survey and give us feedback on how we did and how we can continue to improve.

We thank you for your attention, and we hope to bring you future Super Charge webinars in the months ahead. Until then, have a great day.