

0425 Web Marketing

Word count: 526

Image: Adobe stock art?

Headshot: On file

Author bio:

Richard Zimbalist, OD, FAAO is the owner of Ignite Medical, a medical digital marketing agency (ignitemedicalco.com), and COMO Web Designs (comowebdesigns.com).

Head: Web Marketing Tips and Tricks: Optimizing URL Structure for Your Ophthalmology Private Practice Website

Deck: A well-structured and optimized site can make all the difference in establishing trust with your patients and building credibility.

A well-organized website ensures that visitors can quickly locate details about your services, office

hours, and how to book an appointment. One key but often overlooked factor? Your site's *URL structure*.

Why Your URL Structure Matters

Think of your URL as a roadmap. A clear, readable URL makes it easier for both your patients and search engines to understand where they are on your site.

When URLs are structured logically and clearly, patients can easily navigate through different sections. Search engines can also efficiently index your pages, leading to better rankings on search results. The better your URLs, the more likely people are to find your services when they search online!

Primary subhead: Best Practices for URL Structure

Secondary subhead: 1. Make Your URLs Easy to Read

Your URLs should be simple, intuitive, and meaningful. Avoid long strings of numbers or confusing characters that make it difficult for patients

to understand where they're navigating. Instead, use concise, descriptive words that clearly indicate the content of the page.

A clean URL reassures visitors that they are on the right page and helps them feel more confident when navigating your site. Additionally, search engines prefer user-friendly URLs, which can positively impact your rankings.

Secondary subhead: 2. Use Relevant Keywords

Including keywords in your URLs can help improve your search rankings. Think about what your patients are searching for and make sure your URLs reflect those terms. If a patient is looking for LASIK surgery, they are more likely to click on a URL that explicitly mentions "LASIK" rather than a generic or vague page name.

By incorporating relevant keywords, you increase your chances of appearing in search results when potential patients look for specific ophthalmology services.

Secondary subhead: 3. Stick to Hyphens Instead of Special Characters

Using hyphens instead of underscores or special characters makes your URLs easier to read and ensures they are properly indexed by search engines. Search engines treat hyphens as space separators, which improves readability, whereas underscores and special characters can make URLs appear cluttered or hard to interpret.

Additionally, avoid symbols such as &, %, or \$, as these can create technical issues or make URLs look untrustworthy to users.

Secondary subhead: 4. Keep a Consistent URL Format

Consistency is key to creating a seamless browsing experience. A well-structured URL hierarchy helps both users and search engines understand the organization of your website. When URLs follow a clear pattern, it becomes easier for patients to predict where they need to go next.

Primary subhead: Best practices for URL formatting

Website URL's not only need to have a consistent format, they should also stay within best practice

guidelines to make it easier for search engines to crawl and rank your site. Make sure your URL reflects the following:

- Use lowercase letters to avoid duplicate content issues.
- Keep URLs short and descriptive.
- Structure URLs hierarchically to reflect page importance.

Primary subhead: Worth the Effort

Your URL structure may seem like a small detail, but it plays a significant role in making your website easy to navigate and discoverable online.

Remember, a well-optimized URL structure can contribute to higher search engine rankings, increased website traffic, and ultimately more booked appointments. OM

Commented [MOU1]: Could you add a sentence or two here on how formatting differs from structure? Just trying to make a clearer segue between the two.