

We're often asked who to turn to for development of a new physician practice or hospital website. Who's the best agency? Who have we worked with? Who's the most cost-efficient?

There isn't a correct answer to these questions. We've worked with dozens of our customers and several different agencies on web development projects of varying scales. Our eMarketing team is always happy to work with our customers on figuring out the best course for meeting their business needs online. We can facilitate and join in on conference calls with you, often leveraging the importance of a multi-project relationship with Intuitive Surgical to your benefit.

Below you will find quick profiles of various agencies that develop websites specifically for physicians, private practices and hospitals, as well as tips for selecting an agency.

We do not necessarily recommend your use of any one agency. We have worked with Practis, Inc. on many projects and have found the quality of their service to be very satisfactory to the physicians they worked - and continue to work - for. The decision, though, is entirely yours to make and should be made based on your individual business needs.

- [Medical Website Agency Profiles](#)
- [Tips for Selecting an Agency](#)

daVinciSurgery.com Web Marketing Toolkit
Web Agencies for Practice and Hospital Sites

Medical Website Agency Profiles	
 <p>Website: http://www.practisinc.com</p>	<p>Practis Work examples: http://www.practisinc.com/our_work/ Contact: 800.238.0095 Headquarters: Rochester, NY Offer: daVinciSurgery.com and PractisInc.com</p>
 <p>medical web development & management Website: http://www.vitalelement.com</p>	<p>Vital Element Work examples: http://www.emedicaldesign.com/medicalwebsitepagedesign.htm Contact: 888.566.4431 Headquarters: MI</p>
 <p>Website: http://www.aurora-it.us</p>	<p>Aurora Information Technology Work examples: http://www.aurora-it.us/portfolio/websites/?t=medical Contact: 914.591.7236 Headquarters: Ardsley, NY</p>
 <p>Website: http://www.einsteinmedical.com</p>	<p>Einstein Medical Work examples: http://www.einsteinmedical.com/html/bariatrics-showroom.html Contact: 866.337.5456 Headquarters: San Diego, CA</p>
 <p>Website: http://www.healthcommunities.com</p>	<p>HealthCommunities.com Work examples: http://www.healthcommunities.com/membership/ (View specialties list at bottom of page) Contact: 1.888.950-0808 Headquarters: n/a</p>
 <p>Website: http://www.csihealthmedia.com</p>	<p>CSI Creative Specialists Work examples: http://www.csihealthmedia.com/portfolio.htm Contact: http://www.csihealthmedia.com/contact.htm Headquarters: n/a</p>

Tips for selecting an agency:

Who's on staff?

Ask your prospective agency what medical experience they have on staff. Is their design work and content development based on a proven experience with medical environments, physician communications and patient education? Or are they otherwise generic web designers/developers that have simply found a niche in medical website design?

Having staff with direct current or past experience with medicine will obviously produce a better result for your site, particularly with content development. There is a specific skill set required to develop good content for patient audiences; make sure your agency has it.

Build in some maintenance flexibility

It's your website, and you should be able to update it if you want to. Be sure to ask the agency how the site can be set-up so that you can update it yourself without having to pay an agency for minor edits. This might be a wholesale access to all areas of the site, if you're so inclined; or it may be setting up specific areas to enable easy updating by you or someone on your staff, particularly if you have content with high-frequency updates, like a calendar of events or a blog.

Make sure you're selecting a vendor that provides you maintenance flexibility if you want it, or soup-to-nuts build and maintenance services if you don't.

Don't buy based only on search marketing

Many agencies will tout their vast experience with search engine optimization and marketing. While experience with search marketing is undoubtedly a critical element of web development, some agencies implement their projects with a focus on search engine optimization that comes at the expense of other critical facets of design. Some will produce a design that is highly effective for search engines, but visually unappealing and functionally frustrating for viewers.

When reviewing examples of the agency's work, put on your patient hat and consider how the site makes you feel. Does it feel professional? Does it provide useful information? Do you get a good sense of what the practice or hospital is like - does it capture their "brand"? Does the navigation make sense and provide an intuitive experience? Or does it look and feel like an experience designed for machines instead of patients?

If so, challenge the agency to provide project examples that balance design and usability with search engine optimization. A good agency will be able to develop a website that meets both needs.

Optimization tricks designed to fool the search engines into ranking the site higher will invariably backfire. Search engine algorithms are smarter than most web developers; if the site doesn't serve humans well, they'll know it and penalize the site accordingly.

Start from your own content

A website about a practice of physicians or about a hospital is far more effective when its content is written by the people who know it best. You don't have to be a professional writer to write your own content. Just think about what are the top three reasons a potential patient would come to your site.

One of them is invariably to get a sense for who you are, what your values are and what kind of physician-patient relationship you will offer. Begin with some simple text encapsulating the key things you want a potential patient to know about you, your practice or your hospital.

Then hand it off to your agency to develop. Ask them to use it as a base and apply their expertise on top. A good agency will be able to build from your core messages and layer on (1) effective search engine optimization and (2) effective patient conversion techniques.

Expect to invest in quality

There is both a science and an art to developing an effective website, and even more so for specific audiences like patients. You need to have high ranking on search engines, effective conversion techniques to turn casual visitors into actual new patient appointments, and you need to represent your brand in a way that's consistent, engaging and reflective of who you are.

To do this, you need a team of professionals. When it comes to web development, the old adage, "you get what you pay for", often holds true. For a decent site built from scratch that's search-optimized, designed for patients, conveys your brand, and provides you with basic functionalities, you should expect to pay between \$4,000 and \$8,000. Depending on what you want to do, the price may be higher. However, your investment might be considerably less if you have an existing site that you are just looking to refresh and to add content to it.

Call in extra help from Intuitive Surgical

There are many questions you will have about launching a new website. They cannot all be captured here. However, the Intuitive Surgical eMarketing team is happy to help you get your website project and vendor selection up and running and answer any other questions you may have. We have helped customers like you launch dozens of practice and hospital websites. While we don't have the resources to do any of the development work for you, we do have time to help you chart the waters of launching your new site. After all, we're all ultimately working towards the same goal.

Contact us at webmaster@intusurg.com if you'd like to set up a call with our eMarketing team to discuss what it is you want to achieve and how to move forward.