

A Reason to Smile!

News and Ideas For General Dentists

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DENTAL LAB

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Practice Ideas: *Create a "Selling" Environment*

As much as we hate to admit it, selling is a critical part of every dental "business." That's right, a dental practice is first and foremost a business.

Selling might seem contrary to everything you learned in dental school, but you simply must do it to succeed. The trick is to make selling invisible to your patient, staff and yourself. You do this by creating a selling "environment."

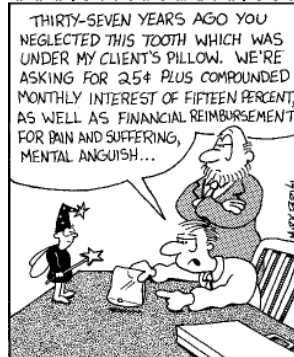
The first component of creating a selling environment is to introduce your patients...CUSTOMERS...to the products and services you offer in a way that stimulates a dialogue. For example, wall art that includes "before & after" images of various cases you've done is a good way to introduce a patient to fee-for-service cosmetic work. Any time you do an aesthetic case, take pictures, or have pictures taken professionally. Make sure you include cases that correct issues common to your practice, such as canted anteriors, diastemas, and professional whitening.

The second step is to ask, ask, and ask again! As patients sign in, along with standard oral health questions, have the receptionist ask, "Is there anything about your smile you would like to talk to Dr. Smith about today?" Or, have

your hygienist ask, "Is there anything about your smile you would change if you could?" If you ask 10 patients a day four days each week for a year, you've asked over 2000 times. If a measly 1% says "yes", that's 20 cases you get to do out of your existing patient base...and it didn't cost you a penny.

And finally, make sure you have the tools to close the deal. Your patient coordinator, or front office person should be well versed in the credit program you use. Done right, credit can be approved before the treatment plan is presented. All the patient has to do is sign and set the appointment!

off the mark by Mark Parisi
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The Bottom Line: *Practice Software*

Managing the wealth of information that flows through your practice every day can save you a lot of administrative and marketing dollars. Primarily, dental practice software captures and manages important clinical information. If your staff is using it correctly, filling the schedule, checking patients in, filing insurance claims, checking patients out, and billing should "feel" smooth and efficient to you.

Your software program should be the FIRST place you and your staff go for information, not somebody's memory or a patient file. If you don't, you're not utilizing the software properly.

Every minute your staff spends digging through old patient files is a minute they don't spend on

the phone with a patient reactivation list or following up on treatment plans?

Along with the benefit of saving time, your practice software, when used properly, is an invaluable source of prospect information. Buying a list of people within certain zip codes or new movers can be expensive, and is made up mostly of people who've never heard of you. Your patient base is filled with people who already know you, and it's FREE!

Use it to tell them about a new piece of equipment you've added, introduce them to a new hygienist, or just remind them how much you value their business.

You spend a lot of money processing information every day...use it!

The Quote "Action may not always bring happiness, but there is no happiness without action." Benjamin Disraeli

Dental Stocks ⁵² ⁵²
Low High

Colgate Symbol CL	68.10 54.0	68.1
Patterson Symbol PDCO	36.24 29.6	39.76
Amer Dental Partners Symbol ADPI	24.93 13.0	24.9
Dentsply Symbol XRAY	36.35 27.7	36.35
Hnry Schein Symbol HSIC	52.53 44.4	55.4
Nat Dentex Symbol NADX	13.66 13.7	24.5

Hot Off The Press

What's in a Name?

In 1839, Drs. Horace Hayden and Chapin Harris of the Baltimore College of Medicine founded the first separate School of Dentistry. This new school, the Baltimore College of Dental Surgery, granted the first Doctor of Dental Surgery degree (D.D.S.). A few years later, Harvard, the first university to organize a dental school, changed the degree to Doctor of Dental Medicine (D.M.D.). Harvard renamed the degree because they viewed dentistry as a branch of medicine, not just surgery, and so that diplomas could be written in Latin. Only a few dental schools followed Harvard's lead and offered the D.M.D. degree.

Currently, about one-third of U.S. dental schools award a D.M.D. degree. The curriculums in all U.S. dental schools are similar and all must meet the same ADA guidelines.

Source: American Dental Association