

What Do You Believe About Your Practice?

By: Chris Bentson

Last Christmas, a family member gave me a copy of Steve Jobs' biography written by Walter Isaacson. I enjoyed the book, read it quickly, and put it down thinking that no one could ever do what this very intense and conflicted man did with Apple Inc. Having been a PC user for most of my career, Steve Jobs and his Apple products entered my life by storm, it seemed. It started with iPods for my kids, then purchased Mac computers for home use, then for the Bentson Clark & Cople office, followed by iPads, and more recently, iPhones. During a conversation regarding investments with my oldest son over the Christmas holiday, he wanted to purchase some shares of Apple stock; I advised him against the purchase. If you follow the stock, the lack of wisdom concerning my advice is apparent. Apple was trading for just under \$400 per share last Christmas. Apple's 52-week low was last August at \$385 per share, on April 10th of this year the stock price eclipsed \$626 per share.

A Practical View of Orthodontist Office Lease Negotiations

By: Daniel Sroka

The relationship between an orthodontic practice and the location of its office is strong. Other professionals, such as lawyers and accountants, generally suffer minimal loss of goodwill or client base when relocating, perhaps because they provide a substantial portion of their services over the Internet and the telephone. Orthodontists, however, provide their services in person and strive to create an inviting, comfortable environment that is readily accessible to as large a targeted patient base as possible.

An unwanted relocation of an orthodontic practice can be a very negative financial event, making attention to the office lease a priority for a well-run practice. A lease negotiation, like any business conversation, involves due diligence, an assessment of market conditions, reliance upon prior relationships, and the gumption to play a bit of hardball from time to time.

Business Lessons Not Taught During My Orthodontic Residency

By: Jennifer L. Eisenhuth, D.D.S., M.S.

I've learned many lessons during my career as an orthodontist: big lessons, little lessons, and minor ones in between. I would like to share some of the top lessons I have learned, not in any order of importance. My goal of sharing these lessons is to allow you to avoid the mistakes I made. I understand that each doctor's circumstances and goals may be different and some of these lessons may not apply to you; however, the majority can be applied to established orthodontic practice owners as well as new doctors who are just getting their practices started.

After ten years of post high-school education, I thought the learning would be over. In fact, the learning was only beginning the day I opened my clinic.

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Engaging with Mom Means Relationships

By: Maria T. Bailey

It's no secret that Mom is the glue that holds the family project together. Mom drives the kids everywhere, juggles orthodontist appointments with soccer games, and often works outside the home. In today's world of being the "multi-tasker extraordinaire," it is more important than ever to understand what drives a Mom's behavior and choices, and, most importantly for businesses, which tactics appeal to Mom's core values while helping to make her life easier.

Regardless of age, race, ethnicity, family size, or geographical location, there are five core values that drive Mom's decisions. *Health and safety, family enrichment, value, simplification* and *time management* are the core values that should be the starting point for every program or engagement you create with or for a mother. Through the lens of health care providers, the first core value - *health and safety* - is at the top of the list for a reason and is the one we will focus on.

The Same Sun Shines on Us All

By: Ben Burris, D.D.S., M.D.S.

The doctor across town is killing it while the rest of us struggle to keep our numbers flat or even lose ground. What thoughts are going through your mind? "He/She must be lying, cheating, stealing, or a combination of all three!" "I don't want to run a mill!" "I'm about quality treatment and patient interaction, not about business!" "He can't be doing quality work!"

I know you hear these often spouted comments about the successful...and I hope your own thoughts didn't immediately focus on the negative when I mentioned the guy across town! It is human nature to assume that those who are more successful must be cutting corners because we believe that we are doing all that a person can possibly do! To admit otherwise is to face the facts that there are smarter, more talented, and faster people who can and do produce quality work. This takes courage but opens the door for us to learn from these masters and enhance our own situation. Let's leave the knee-jerk, derogatory assessments behind and try to determine how practices in the same market can have such different realities when it comes to their level of success.

Creating a Buzz with Social Media Video

By: Dusty Green

For several years now we've been preaching the power of video to orthodontists across the US and Canada and have seen remarkable results. And it's no surprise - after all, video is without question the most powerful form of marketing and communication in our history.

But more than that, as an orthodontist consider how video affects, and is affected by your primary target market: young people. Thanks to the internet, video is more a part of the lives of young people today than at any point since its inception. They're using it to chat, to create content, to capture memories, to share, to learn, and yes, to make judgments and decisions. And because of that, businesses, industries and marketers worldwide are taking notice - pulling billions of dollars a year away from more traditional forms of advertising and investing in internet video instead, hoping to take advantage of such a large and influential audience. An audience which continues to grow at a booming pace, by the way.

Smartphone Meets Digital Radiography

By: Bryan Delano

In simpler times for orthodontists, many of you opened a practice and purchased a film x-ray. This investment was put in the same category as a chair in the clinic, cabinetry, or a sterilizer. It was a critical component that was scrutinized greatly at the time of purchase, then installed and in time became somewhat of an afterthought.

The dental x-ray machine and the technology around it remained basically unchanged for years. Flash forward to today: everyone has a mobile phone. Most of you have a smartphone and everyone reading this article will have a different phone at some point in the next 1-2 years. Similarly, most of you have gone "digital" in your practices, some have even adopted 3D and a great number of you will have a different x-ray system at some point in the next 5-7 years. Is this because the machines are failing? No. The new machines are offering technology that you feel your practice cannot live without.