

## Is It Protected?

By: Chris Bentson

**Y**ou have worked your career to build *it*. Most doctors spend more time with *it* than with anything else in their life. For many, *it* has produced a quality of life far beyond what one could have ever dreamed. For many, *it* is the most vulnerable and unprotected asset in one's portfolio. What is *it*? Your orthodontic practice! Protecting *it* in the event of an unplanned departure is the subject of this article and several others in this issue of the *Bentson Clark reSource*.

Bentson Clark & Copple works with several practice owners each year who require the sale of an office due to an unplanned event in the owner's life. The reasons are many and can include burnout, family circumstances, marital discord, and loss of licensure. However, the most typical reasons are a medical diagnosis, disability, or death. If an eminent sale of the practice is ever required, how do you best protect the value of this most prized asset?

## Solving the Orthodontic Sudoku Puzzle - Part 1

By: Debbie Best

**R**eliability, responsiveness, feeling of value, empathy, and competency – they shape the first and lasting impressions about your office. Having the determination to always do what is in the best interest of the patient is the backbone for creating systems that allow the seamless delivery of excellent, consistent patient care. Patients are looking for the "silver bullet" in orthodontics – the enthusiasm, the WOW factor, countless other spoken and unspoken moments, and then some. It is the culmination of several little things that all add up to the patient's perception of your office, from the initial referral through the completion of the retention phase.

Just as a precise combination of numbers is required to solve a Sudoku puzzle, orthodontic practices must have detailed systems in place that are closely integrated throughout all areas of the office to meet and exceed patients' expectations. When one number is out of place, when one system is weak, the patient's perception of your practice suffers. A network of closely monitored protocols and systems is critical to the success of today's orthodontic practice.

## How to Reach the Top of Google & Why You Should Do It

By: Ali Husayni

**R**unning a successful orthodontic practice means overhauling and perfecting smiles, building relationships with your patients, and bringing in new customers. The first two parts should be natural – those are the parts you trained for, but attracting new customers may be tricky.

The best way to get new customers is to increase your visibility. With today's customers spending loads of time on the Internet, it is a no-brainer that your business could skyrocket after landing at the top of Google. There are two ways to get there. You can pay for a sponsored spot at the top of Google, or you can jump into the search engine optimization game and watch your business climb.

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## Planning for One of the Two Certainties

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*By: Daniel Sroka*

**F**or the family and business partners of a deceased orthodontist, the personal loss, difficult enough, is unnecessarily aggravated by the lack of a previously agreed to and well documented succession plan for the practice. The goodwill built up by the orthodontist, often over decades, can erode rapidly in the weeks following death, with potentially ruinous financial consequences to heirs and practice co-owners. The grieving period is by far the worst time to create from scratch, while under time pressure, a feasible succession plan for the practice; so do it now, while there is time to be calmly, and with the input of competent professionals, craft a plan that is predictable and readily implemented.

Except in the rare instance of a practice with multiple owners having right of survivorship (i.e., an ownership interest in the practice immediately passes from the deceased orthodontist to the other owner(s) upon death, thereby bypassing the deceased's estate) the ownership interest of a deceased orthodontist will pass immediately to his or her estate upon death. This is true whether the practice is a sole proprietorship, a partnership, a corporation, or a limited liability company, and whether or not there is a buy/sell agreement.

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## Facebook: The New Water Cooler

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*By: Rebecca Crane*

**N** EWS FLASH: An employee's inflammatory rant against his/her employer on Facebook can be a protected activity. No, you didn't misread that; it's true. A recent settlement by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has employers all over the country scrambling to understand what this may mean to them.

At issue is whether you can discipline and/or fire an employee for badmouthing you or another co-worker on Facebook or any other social networking website. What if s/he complains about working conditions or salaries? What if s/he posts lewd or racial comments? What about confidential information? Where is the line between an employee's social networking freedom and your rights to protect your practice?

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## Locum Tenens: A Valuable Practice Management Tool for You and Your Practice

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*By: Forest Irons, DDS*

**D**o you ever have a desire for worry-free extended vacations? Is the vitality of your practice and its cash flow guaranteed if you become unable to work? Do you sometimes think about a "no-strings attached" associate to help with periodic workload? Is your exit strategy complete? These are just some of the areas Interim Professional Service or Locum Tenens can become part of a well-managed orthodontic practice.

The concept of locum tenens has a long, successful history in the health professions. Currently, many general dentists, as well as specialists such as orthodontists, are using the concept to enhance their productive years in practice, while at the same time providing security for what is most likely their most valuable financial asset.

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## Enrich the Family to Effectively Market to Moms - Part 2 of 5

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*By: Maria Bailey*

**M**oms control approximately 80% of household spending and have influence on most spending decisions, which is why it is critical to speak to the five core values of mothers. Regardless of age, race, ethnicity, family size, or geographical location, these five core values that drive Mom's decisions are Health and Safety, Family Enrichment, Value, Simplification, and Time Management. These core values should be the starting point for every program or engagement you create with or for a mother. The first core value – Health and Safety – was covered in last quarter's newsletter. In this article, the next in a series on marketing with Moms, the topic is Family Enrichment.

Family Enrichment covers topics including learning, loving, and raising confident children. Boomer mothers (defined as women born between 1946 and 1964) invested in child enrichment as a way to compensate for the time they were away from their children in the workplace. They spent money on expensive cultural lessons, language schools, personal athletic coaches, and private schools to allow their offspring to reap the benefits from the fruits of their labor. The result has been twofold.