

Bentson Clark reSource

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Dentistry Consolidation: Past, Present & Future

By: Chris Bentson

Consolidation in the dental industry is occurring faster than we anticipated and driving changes to the way both consumers and owners view the orthodontic specialty. This article will briefly discuss the speed of the consolidation, outline some of the consolidation's current effects and provide a prediction regarding what may occur in the future as a result of the evidence presented. Like it or not, it's here - the consolidation of the dental space. What does that really mean? Let's examine this timely topic in two ways, by definition, and by illustration of another industry.

Consolidation happens in a market when there is increased merger and acquisition activity among parties that work in a similar space. By strict definition, consolidation occurs by the unification of two or more corporations, by dissolution of existing ones and creation of a single new corporation. Not only has consolidation been occurring in dentistry, but the pace is accelerating rapidly. Consider the information published in the July 2015 edition of *The McGill Advisory* (Volume 30, Issue 7); the publication reports that between 2011 and 2015, the number of practices managed by four companies, Heartland Dental, Aspen Dental, Pacific Dental and Smile Brands, increased by 85% from 1,065 to 1,967 practices over that four year time period.

AAO Cautions Consumers About Risk of DIY Orthodontic Treatment

By: DeWayne B. McCamish, DDS, MS

This year, the American Association of Orthodontists (AAO) created Public Service Announcements (PSA) to air on local television and radio stations nationwide. The purpose of the PSAs was to address a concern over the increasing amount of online videos promoting Do-It-Yourself (DIY) orthodontics and the inherent risks. What began as a simple health service message caught the attention of TV and radio news directors, as well as newspaper and magazine editors, and became the source for multiple investigative reporting stories across the country. As an added bonus, these informative reports helped drive consumers to the AAO website www.mylifemysmile.org which gives visitors the option to find a member orthodontist near them.

It sounds crazy, but there are increasing numbers of people who are trying to move their own teeth without the supervision of an orthodontist. Just type in "DIY braces" on YouTube, and you will find countless how-to videos of teens using materials like rubber bands, hair bands, paper clips, bobby pins, and dental floss to straighten teeth, close gaps or just create "real-looking" orthodontics.

Some self-care offerings suggest closing gaps between front teeth using dental floss or rubber bands. As orthodontists, you are well aware of the dangers of these hacks - changes in the bite, neighboring teeth becoming unstable and drifting as a result of the way force is exerted on them as an individual bites, chews and speaks. Root resorption caused from a forgotten rubber band that can slide under the gum line, unseen and unfelt, can destroy the bone and soft tissue that otherwise hold teeth in place.

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The Patient Experience

By: TJ Eash

Patient satisfaction is a long-standing goal for doctors, as it is the cornerstone for a successful practice. For the modern Orthodontic Specialist, a thriving practice depends on every patient receiving exceptional care and service. Patients and parents of patients who are satisfied with their care are far more likely to share the experience with their sphere of influence and submit positive reviews, which have become a part of the provider review process. From a practice perspective, high satisfaction levels are crucial to attract new patients, keep existing patients and retain key personnel. Today, more than ever, virtually every aspect of a practice is under scrutiny, which is why the patient experience needs to be priority number one.

Orthodontic patients often cannot judge the technical or clinical competency of their care right away, so their satisfaction is influenced by more intangible components of care such as staff friendliness and the quality of personal interactions - often complemented by technologies that make processes simpler. As a result, providers must ensure that personal interactions starting with the very first contact with a patient are pleasant, efficient, informative and well-planned.

As the old axiom goes, first impressions are vitally important since they set the tone for all subsequent communications. It is essential that the Orthodontist establishes a positive relationship with patients in order to understand their orthodontic treatment goals and establish a level of trust and cooperation. However, before you have the opportunity to build the relationship, often the first contact with a patient begins online.

Where Do Orthodontic Residents Desire to Practice?

By: Laura Overcash

Chances are, you have heard the phrase "location, location, location" a few times in your lifetime; however, if you're an orthodontic resident nearing the completion of your program, selecting a practice location is a particularly important decision. Regardless of whether a resident is planning to purchase a practice, enter into a partnership or accept an associate position, selection of an area of the country to live in will have a major impact on one's lifestyle; particularly if a young doctor plans to stay in an area for a long period of time. According to the most recent U.S. Census Bureau data, there are 19,354 "incorporated places" in the United States so narrowing down a single location can be quite a feat for some young doctors. It is important to make this decision very carefully, taking into account the characteristics of a particular area that are most important.

For many orthodontists, there may be a desire to practice in an area in close proximity to one's family. Other doctors may explore the possibility of moving to a place that is new, simply for a change of scenery. Still others may base their decision on acceptance of licensure, cost of living, an opportunity to become part-time faculty within an orthodontic program, or even the weather. Over the years, our team members have heard a variety of unique answers to the location question. Regardless of the reason(s), there is an imperative need to evaluate a community's ability to meet personal, economic and professional needs before making a final decision.

365 Printing: 3D Printing Technology for Busy Orthodontists

An Interview with Jay Phelps

From time to time the *Bentson Clark reSource* features a company or product we think will have an impact on the orthodontic market. The interview below is with one such company, 365 Printing. We have known and many of you may recognize the principals; the same team with some great new additions that own and manage Renew Digital. This new company focuses on delivering digital printers to the solo or small group practice, a concept that brings with it enormous possibilities for today's practice owners. As a *reSource* subscriber, the interview below will make you among the first to become educated about 365 Printing and their services, which you may find valuable for your practice.

Q: First, please tell the *Bentson Clark reSource* readers about 365 Printing.

A: 365 Printing is headquartered in Norcross, Georgia. The company was created with the exclusive purpose of distributing high-quality EnvisonTEC 3D printers to the dental and dental specialty markets. Our company's focus on dental professionals allows us to deliver unparalleled customer service and support throughout the sales and implementation process. It is important for our customers to realize a fast return on investment and to provide more efficient patient care.

