

How to Find a Practice Opportunity

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It is recommended that your search begin immediately, the moment you begin your orthodontic residency. Start the process by narrowing your search. Identify two or three primary locations in which you would like to practice. Your spouse can be a key factor in this important decision. It's often the case where a doctor desires a certain practice location but the spouse does not. Avoid this obstacle and agree together early on where you would like to practice. In the past residents have noted that they have been influenced by other factors such as family, in-laws, climate, board requirements or even general demographics when selecting a location to practice.

One thing to note is that quite often, where a buyer is interested in living and practicing is not an area where a viable potential practice opportunity exists. Certain areas are already saturated with orthodontists or there are not any existing practices available for transition or sale. However, for a resident who is somewhat flexible in where he/she might consider practicing, many practice opportunities exist.

There is no right or wrong way to locate a potential practice opportunity. Let's explore the most common methods to go about locating a potential practice opportunity.



Send letters to orthodontists who are 45 years of age or older in your area of interest. Send a one-page letter explaining who you are, how long you have left in your residency and that you are considering entering this market. Follow up two weeks later with a phone call. Ask the following two questions: Did you get my letter? Would you be willing to speak about the possibility of entering your practice? You can learn a great deal about the market in that particular area from his or her responses. Keep in mind that most orthodontists do not want you to enter into their market unless you will be working with them.

Register with the AAO's Practice Opportunities Services (POS). This is a free, a web-based self-listing program which allows registered providers and seekers to post their information in a secure way. POS online is a free, confidential matching service for AAO members - seekers and providers wishing to hire an associate, bring in a partner, sell or transition their practices. As a member benefit, the AAO's POS is accessed exclusively by AAO members.

The POS has been recognized as a leader in providing members a "practical and accessible career center and job board." POS is also the recipient of the Gold prize in the career resource for members' category of the 2010 All Media Contest held by Association TRENDS.

Register with companies that match orthodontic buyers and sellers. Bentson Clark and Copple is one of the only orthodontic recruiting companies in the United States. Orthodontic practice opportunities range from practices available for purchase, full-time associateships, part-time associateships and partnership transactions. The company's full-time Executive Recruiter uses a state-of-the-art applicant tracking system to manage orthodontic recruiting and placement services. Each candidate is built a detailed recruiting profile (used exclusively in-house), allowing orthodontic seekers to be easily matched, based on personal preferences and career goals.

Bentson Clark & Copple's recruiting services are more than simply matching seekers with practice opportunities. Candidates are offered one-on-one consulting regarding each opportunity, its financial outcome and terms. We also assist in seekers in constructing CVs, coaching on writing cover letters, preparing for on-site practice visits and building interview skills.

Attend orthodontic meetings and trade shows. When thinking about finding a practice opportunity there is no place better to consider than the AAO and GORP meetings. These events provide an excellent opportunity for beneficial networking. Stories have been told of orthodontists who met their partners by mere coincidence in the cafeteria line or during a presentation while at a meeting. The overall idea is you should have a plan in place to maximize your exposure when attending these meetings. Make a list of companies you would like to speak with at the event. It is strongly suggested to begin with any exhibitor that deals with valuation and transition planning. These companies will have a grasp on the orthodontic market and will be knowledgeable about what practices may or may not be available. Ideally, you should be able to sit down and discuss candidly your future desires such as the type of practice you anticipate owning outright or in which you would like to become a partner.

Speak with Orthodontic Practice Consultants. Orthodontic practice consultants have a very loyal group of practices that rely on them not only for their expertise, but their knowledge of the marketplace and what is occurring at any given time within it. A consultant may have a client who needs, or is looking for, someone to enter into the practice. Additionally, throughout your career you may wish to hire a consultant, so becoming acquainted with them now is always helpful in building your practice in the future.

Network with Vendor Representatives. Vendors, such as bracket reps, are constantly in and out of orthodontic programs. These vendors often are aware of potential opportunities, simply by working with doctors in the field.

Review Industry Ads. Keep your eyes open for ads placed in orthodontic journals and magazines for practice opportunities.

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