

Welcome to the Bentson Clark reSource

Thanks to all the doctors that visited our booth at the AAO Annual Session in fabulous Las Vegas. It was exciting to meet each one of you and hear your thoughts and feelings about the Bentson Clark reSource. Your comments are valued, and we will strive to tackle the hard hitting topics many of you brought to our attention. The time you spend with us discussing your current practice needs and situations is appreciated.

If you did not have a chance to meet with us at the annual session, we still are offering free 30-minute consultations to discuss practice valuations, transition, listing and opportunities. Feel free to give us a call and we will gladly schedule a time to discuss a specific topic of interest.

With the summer finally arriving, practices across the nation will be filled with carefree children enjoying their

summer vacation. Most of them would rather be at the beach or the swimming pool, so make their orthodontic visit enjoyable by bringing a summer theme into the office. That's right; create a summer-like atmosphere inside your practice. This leads me into introducing a new column to our newsletter. Each quarter the reSource will include an article specially focusing on marketing within your practice. Many upcoming articles will discuss ways to create a fun atmosphere for your current and future patients by getting them involved in your marketing efforts. I hope you will find this new column both educational and practical.

Thanks for reading!



Chris B. Bentson
President, Bentson Clark

Rewarding Professional Practice Referrals

Referrals are one of the main ways that new patients walk through your front door. They hear about your orthodontic office from a friend, family member, past patient or possibly from their general dentist. In most practices, how a patient is referred is often forgotten once treatment starts. It is extremely important to follow-up with the person who referred your new patients, especially the physicians, dentists and dental hygienists.

There are many ways to reach out to these professionals. As a personal thank you, consider taking one dentist to lunch each week. Continue this cycle, and once you get to the end, start at the beginning of the list once again. Depending on the size of your list, it could be 8-12 months before you see the same dentist. These lunch meetings will allow you to sit down to say thank you and, in addition, allow you time to catch up on each other's personal and professional careers. It is quite possible for your relationship with each dentist to become more than just professional acquaintances once this cycle begins to repeat. If you know that a dentist would rather play golf than have lunch, change the activity according to his or her personal preferences.

Another unique and appreciated idea is to deliver cookies or a delectable treat to current and potential referring dental offices once each quarter. An attractive, personalized, handwritten note should be delivered with baked goods so it will be clear who sent the items. Feel free to drop off a dozen

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self-addressed, stamped x-ray envelopes to the doctors along with the baked items. This will allow them to easily refer any of their current patients without the hassle of finding your office's contact information and spending money on postage.

As a general courtesy, strive to keep the referring dentist up to date on the referred patient's progress. Send a simple thank you note with the patient's treatment outline and progress. After the treatment is complete, send before and after images to the dentist and a final thank you note. These notes not only serve as a notice of appreciation, but they will also increase your practice's brand recognition because of the repetition of contact.

One final idea to present to you is to consider hosting an event for referring dentists, their staff and families. This could range from a theme park outing to an evening riverboat cruise to even a formal dinner and dance event. Events like these will allow you time to mingle with many people at the same time. Adapt this idea according to your location and budget. Referrals will continue to roll in with the hopes that the event will not be a one-time gesture.

It is easy to forget to acknowledge the professionals responsible for your referrals. Thank them often and accordingly, remembering that they can easily send their referrals to another orthodontic practice. Make sure to allow them to feel that they are the most important referral source to your practice, even if they only refer a minimal amount of patients. Take care to keep them updated on your practice and the patients they referred. Your practice, through the contacts that you make and keep, will thrive on the tiniest of gestures recognizing the help of others. 