

Life Changing:

From Starting to Selling an
Orthodontic Practice

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“Are you kidding? We could use your dental and orthodontic skills right now...in Papua, New Guinea. How fast can you sell your practice and get here?!” This conversation took place in the spring of 2004, but the entire story began six years earlier in August 1998. At that time the only thing on my mind was, “Could I make it as a start-up orthodontist in a city that already had 28 other such specialists?” I had just completed my orthodontics residency training at the University of North Carolina, and made the decision, along with my wife, to start a practice from scratch in the suburbs of Charlotte, North Carolina near where we both grew up. Although I briefly investigated buying into an existing orthodontics practice, my intention had always been to design and upfit my own space and “hang a shingle.” If I could just get past the initial six to eight months of generating dentist referrals and a patient base, I would be much more successful in the long run. I would then have complete control of how the office was run.



Starting my own practice proved to be the right decision at that point in my life. The practice quickly formed a family of patients and dentists that appreciated our high quality and personal care. Thanks to our caring attitude towards our patients, community and other professionals, we were rewarded with lots of referrals. Financially, we grew beyond all my expectations year after year.

Why in the world would I choose to sell such a successful practice after only six years in business? I realized that God wanted me to use my dental skills to further His kingdom, rather than my own personal ambitions. My wife and I decided we would treat the dental needs of the other missionaries, as well as the native New Guineans.

The final decision had been made to sell our practice, and we needed to find the right group to value it and help with the transition. Extensive research revealed several businesses that were capable of fulfilling these needs. After further investigation and multiple phone conversations, it became clear that Bentson Clark & Copple was the best option for us. Not only did they have a stellar reputation in the industry, but they specialized in orthodontic practice valuation and were by far the quickest and most thorough when responding to my phone calls and many questions. I thought that this exceptional service would cost me a bit more financially and would have been worth it. I was pleased to discover that Bentson Clark & Copple’s fees were not only reasonable, but beat much of their competition. The deal was sealed when I realized the ethical standards and morals of this company were of the highest level and fit well with my own.

My decision was confirmed throughout the valuation and transition process. After obtaining a great deal of information regarding our practice, Bentson Clark & Copple efficiently came up with a transition plan and sales price. I was extremely pleased with the final value they calculated and felt it was appropriate for our practice. Everything was confirmed when the buyer had an independent source review all of the documents and the sales proposal. The independent source agreed to all the documents with almost no alterations, and the sales price was unchanged. The deal was completed on January 3, 2006 without a single hitch after a six month associateship

period was completed. I initially dreaded the whole process of selling my practice, but I can honestly report that Bentson Clark & Copple made it as quick and painless as possible.

Had it been necessary, we would have used Bentson Clark & Copple to aid in the search for a buyer. Instead, our buyer found us when he e-mailed me for advice on finding a practice for sale in the Charlotte, North Carolina area. He had no idea we were planning to place ours on the market within two weeks. Coincidence? Possibly, or maybe we truly were needed as soon as possible on the mission field as the phone conversation at the beginning of this article indicated! Either way, the orthodontist that called was the one and only doctor to whom we offered to sell the practice, and he is the proud owner today.

Presently, my family and I are completing the last of our training before we leave for Papua, New Guinea in June. One thing we do not have to question is whether we chose the right group to value and transition our practice. Bentson Clark & Copple did an excellent job. The people there have become more than business acquaintances. I am honored to call them friends.

Choosing to sell an orthodontics practice is not a decision to take lightly. It can be a very stressful and trying time for any doctor. The pressure and anxiety, however, can be greatly reduced by finding the right group to aid you in the process. When you do find yourself in need of orthodontic practice valuation and transition services, I would advise you to investigate several of the foremost businesses that provide these services, and, by all means, make sure that Bentson Clark & Copple is one of your top choices. In my opinion, there is a high probability that you will find their standards and expertise will meet or surpass your expectations.

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