

The Progressive Orthodontist

... CHANGE IS GOOD!

WE INTERRUPT YOUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED PROGRAM FOR AN

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

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edition...

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New Rules for a New Type of Customer

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Change is good as we have often said but few orthodontists seem to understand that change is also inevitable. If something is going to happen anyway it is far better to embrace the change and figure out how to make it work for you than to vainly swim against the current in the name of quality.

Quality is probably the most misused and dangerous word in orthodontics these days. We orthodontists say quality when we want to defend what we do though we cannot reasonably define quality or accurately assess the lack of quality of those with whom we disagree. This age old tradition of claiming the quality high ground will likely be the downfall of many an orthodontist.

A lack of new patients and case starts is the bane of the profession now more than ever and this should be doubly worrisome given the strength of the economy, lack of unemployment and high consumer confidence. With all this, dare we ask the question "Why aren't more people purchasing orthodontic services from orthodontists?" The answers are clear to those who shed their blinders and look at what we do from the

perspective of patients.

The good news is that there is tremendous opportunity for any orthodontist who is willing to adapt to the new reality and deliver what the customer wants on their timeline and within their budget. The number of people receiving orthodontic treatment will rise at an ever increasing pace of the next decade - the question is who will be rendering the treatment? Orthodontists are still in the best position to fill that need but only if we can shed our old, arbitrary and detrimental beliefs about who we are, what we do and why. This edition of The Progressive Orthodontist Magazine is dedicated to looking at some of the sources of so called disruption that are positioning themselves to harness patient demand and prosper by delivering what customers want. Enjoy!

PS In an attempt to disrupt our normal operating procedure we have also included a healthy dose of travel journalism composed and submitted by fellow orthodontists. We hope these pieces inspire you to put in the work so you can enjoy the play!

The **Progressive** Orthodontist magazine and study group are your educational resources for new trends, progressive insights and best practices for building a successful orthodontic practice in 2018 and beyond.

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Ben Burris graduated from The Citadel in 1994 with a BS in biology, spent time working in Washington DC after graduation, received a Rotary International Ambassadorial Scholarship and spent a year in Wellington NZ at Victoria University, graduated dental school with a DDS from The University of Tennessee in 2001, and graduated orthodontic residency in 2004 with an MDS from The University of Tennessee. In his short 13 year career Burris' practice grew to over 20 locations which he sold in April 2017. After the sale Burris is effectively retired and living in Orlando, Florida with his wife and two children but he's actively treating thousands of cases via teledentistry and building what he calls a lifestyle office where he plans to offer braces for 3000 dollars and Invisalign for 2000. Burris (and others) expect his new office and unheard of price point to revolutionize how orthodontics is delivered and engage a significant percentage of the population in orthodontic treatment. Burris founded S4L.org, TheProOrtho.com, OrthoPundit.com among other institutions in orthodontics and is a driving force for change in the orthodontic profession. Burris and Dr. Marc Ackerman recently released a book, Straighter: The Rules of Orthodontics and do a two-day course in Orlando of the same name.

Feel free to connect with Dr Burris so you can get a better understanding of who he is and what he does.

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DR. DAVID MAJERONI

Dr. David Majeroni has a private practice in Alamo CA and founder of the non-profit "It takes a Village" where he provides orthodontic treatment to children with a missing or deceased parent.



DR. MARC ACKERMAN

Dr. Marc Ackerman specializes in the orthodontic treatment

of children with dentofacial deformity, intellectual and physical disabilities and sleep disordered breathing. He received his DMD from the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental medicine in 1998 and his certificate in Orthodontics from the University of Rochester-Eastman Dental Center in 2000. Dr. Ackerman later completed his MBA in Executive Leadership at Jacksonville University Davis College of Business in 2009. Dr. Ackerman is the Director of Orthodontics at Boston Children's Hospital and teaches residents in both pediatric dentistry and orthodontics for Harvard School of Dental Medicine.

DR. LEON KLEMPNER & AMY EPSTEIN

Dr. Leon Klemptner, a board-certified orthodontist was in private practice for over 38 years. He graduated dental school from the University of Maryland and received his certification in Orthodontics from Tufts University. Dr. Klemptner has lectured nationally on the subject of social media marketing and clinical orthodontic treatment.

Amy Epstein has over 15 years of multinational marketing and branding experience. She has an MBA in marketing from Baruch College and regularly lectures at the Zicklin School of Business and Long Island University School of Business on the subject of digital marketing, entrepreneurship and social media.



DR. JENNIFER EISENHUTH

Jennifer Eisenhuth DDS, MS is a board-certified orthodontist

who began college intending to be a civil engineer. After her undergraduate studies were complete, she came to her senses, entering dental school at the University of Minnesota and upon graduation, began her orthodontic residency at the University of Minnesota, earning both a certificate of orthodontics and a Master's of Oral Biology. After a failed associateship, she borrowed \$60,000 from a friend and started her own practice, paying this friend back within a few months. Since then she has started, bought and sold several practices in the Twin Cities metro area and will continue to do so as long as the fun remains. Her orthodontic practice won the "Best workplace 2014" by Minnesota Business Monthly Magazine and she was recently acknowledged by the University of Minnesota as a top entrepreneur.



RYAN MOYNIHAN

Ryan Moynihan has a financial/analytical background beginning his career at Intel and Ernst & Young. He earned his MBA from Georgetown and has spent the past 12

years of his career in the Dental/Orthodontic industry with 3M and Ormco. Most recently he was VP of Global Marketing (2 years) and VP of NA Sales (2 1/2 years) for Ormco. He joined Gaidge in August 2017 as CEO.



DR. DAVID WALKER

Dr. David Walker completed undergraduate, dental and orthodontic degrees at UNC-Chapel Hill. He practices in his hometown of Morehead City, NC as a partner in a group practice. He is married to his college sweetheart, Leeanne, an attorney with UNC School of Medicine. They have one daughter, Madeline, age 2.





ANGELA WEBER

Angela Weber is the Chief Marketing Officer for OrthoSynetics a company which specializes in business services for the

orthodontic and dental industry. She leads a team of marketing professionals dedicated to developing and implementing cutting-edge strategies and solutions for their members.

Angela has over 15 years of experience in the advertising industry with a vast knowledge of current and past trends, philosophies and strategies for marketing within the healthcare industry. Angela has a proven track record of driving new patient volume through innovative marketing practices.

Angela holds a B.A. in Mass Communications from Louisiana State University and an M.B.A. from the University of New Orleans.

NICK DUNCAN

Nick Duncan holds degrees in accounting and finance. After starting his career as a CPA in Boston, he returned to his native Australia to form The Invisible Orthodontist (TIO) with his father Dr. Grant Duncan. Over the past 7 years, TIO has built an international network of more than 100 doctors and worked with them to significantly increase their Invisalign cases. Through his leadership at TIO, Nick has developed a diverse set of skills encompassing marketing, technology and business development.



DR. JONATHAN NICOZISIS



Dr. Nicozisis is a Faculty member of Invisalign® National Speaker's Bureau and Clinical Research Network and has given over 400 lectures on Invisalign. Dr. Nicozisis is also

the founding orthodontist and a scientific advisory

board member of BAS Medical/Corthera a development stage company founded in 2003 with a mission to develop and market a novel technology to accelerate and improve the stability of orthodontic treatments.

Dr. Nicozisis' master's research is the basis for BAS Medical innovative research. In February 2010, Corthera was acquired by Novartis. Dr. Nicozisis has been awarded membership to the Edward H. Angle Society of Orthodontists. He has co-authored a textbook chapter on Invisalign with Align's director of R+D. Since 2010, he is an SAB member of Propel Orthodontics.

DR. DANIELA LOEBL

Dr. Daniela Loebel is a second-year orthodontic resident at the University of Colorado. She received her Bachelor of Science degree at the University of Michigan in 2012 and completed her formal dental training at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry in 2016. She is originally from Miami, Florida and enjoys going to the beach, traveling to new countries with her husband Steven, hiking, and skiing.



DR. KEITH DRESSLER



Dr. Keith Dressler is an avid entrepreneur who has over 30 years' experience as a practicing orthodontist. In 2000, Dr. Dressler co-founded OrthoBanc, LLC a cloud-based automated accounts receivable platform, that is currently serving over 4000 healthcare providers. Dr. Dressler also co-founded Elite Physician Services, a national healthcare patient finance company, which grew to over 200 million in sales before it became the Citi Health Card in 2003.

BRIDGET BURRIS



Bridget Burris is no stranger to orthodontics. For over 11 years she and her husband have grown and run one of the largest groups of practices in the country. Having extensive experience in every position in an orthodontic office except chair side assisting, Bridget knows how to train employees to maximize their efficacy and how to teach the customer service delivery that is so essential in the modern practice. Bridget also knows how to grow an orthodontic practice from small to massive in a logical, stepwise manner because she's DONE IT! Multiple times.

Bridget's knowledge and acumen is only surpassed by her incredible ability to communicate and get others to do the same. Her unique skill set allows her to enter an office, identify the problems, prioritize issues and form a logical implementation plan; but, most importantly, she is then able to communicate the plan to the owner and employees to get consensus and even enthusiasm for how all parties can get where they want to be! No one else in the industry has the experience, wisdom or pragmatic, solution based approach that Bridget brings to your practice. Her results speak for themselves.

DR. COURTNEY DUNN

Dr. Courtney Dunn graduated from the University of Michigan Dental and Orthodontic programs in 2001 and 2004. She received the Milo Hellman award for her research and has presented at many local and national meetings. She is a diplomate of the American Board of Orthodontics, holds leadership positions in the Arizona Dental Association and is past president of the Arizona State Orthodontic Association. Dr. Dunn is in private practice with her husband, Matt, in Phoenix, AZ. She spends most of her free time being a proud swim mom.



DISCOVER THE DIRTY LITTLE SECRET TO ORTHODONTIC PATIENT EVENTS...



And Find Out How You Can Schedule 27 New Patients in Only TWO Hours

After Learning The Secrets of Event-Based Marketing, **We Successfully Scheduled 27 New Patients In Just 2 Hours At Our Patient Event**

Before you spend another penny hosting a patient event, you need to visit www.OrthoEventBlueprint.com for a special report from Ortho Marketing DFY, **The Ultimate Blueprint to a Successful Patient Appreciation Event**. Learn what you're doing wrong, where you're wasting your marketing dollars, and how to fix it. The vast majority of orthodontists are doing some form of patient events. Most spend thousands of dollars just to entertain their patients for a few hours. At the end of your event, ask yourself, **"What did we actually accomplish? Are there any measurable results?"**

In Ortho Marketing DFY's report, you'll discover:

- The Blueprint to Running an Event That Will Actually Make You Money
- Methods for Using Event-Based Marketing to Grow Your Practice
- How to Persuade Your Existing Patients to Refer More Friends & Family Through Your Events
- How Dustin & Tyler Coles Have Scheduled 27 New Patients at a 2 Hour Event
- How Patient Events Can Be the Best Investment You Can Make to Grow Your Practice



Do You Want to Schedule More New Patients? Are You Sick and Tired of Wasting Money On Patient Events That Don't Generate Revenue?

Ortho Marketing DFY (Done-For-You) was built to help orthodontists grow their practices using trusted and proven marketing strategies. Dr. Dustin & Tyler Coles, owners of one of the largest and fastest growing orthodontic practices in Arizona, have tested and implemented these marketing strategies not only in their own practice, but in the practices of 50+ orthodontic clients in the US and Canada. The Ortho Marketing DFY team, a group of professionals led by orthodontists, can help you implement marketing, management and conversion strategies that have helped generate over \$300 million in orthodontic revenue.



If you own an orthodontic practice or know someone who does, we urge you to download a copy of this report. Discover the secrets to event-based marketing and how it can be the most cost-effective form of marketing in your practice.

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This free report could change your life and the life of your practice forever.

Dr. Dustin and Tyler Coles

Dr. Dustin & Tyler Coles



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Go High or Go Low

Just Don't Get Stuck in the Middle

By Dr. Leon Klempner and Amy Epstein

"Break from the pack with a marketing program that differentiates your practice and attracts more qualified patients."

As the orthodontic business model becomes increasingly competitive, prospective patients have many lower fee options. Traditional private fee for service practices are finding themselves squeezed in the middle, steadily losing market share. Large, corporate, Dental Service Organizations (DSOs) and insurance companies are pushing down fees while overhead costs keep going up. Computer generated tooth straightening applications in the form of so-called do-it-yourself orthodontics are commoditizing services into a point-and-click shopping experience. Adding to the burden is a surplus of competition and mounting debt

that orthodontists need to carry in order to remain technologically competitive. Orthodontists are definitely feeling the pressure from every side.

Unless you are almost at retirement age, it's become clear that staying put is not a realistic option. This is the reality of the modern orthodontic industry landscape. You can either remain on the sidelines and hope for a return to the good old days, or you can do something about it. Today there are two ways to remain profitable as an orthodontist: go the high volume/low fee option or differentiate your practice enough to show prospective patients/parents that you are worth paying the difference. There are many ways to stand out from your competition: exceptional patient service, using the latest technology, expertise with multidisciplinary clinical cases or cleft palate management, being the Invisalign or "speed" practice, just to name a few. Each of us are really good at something. But that is not enough, you can't just walk the walk, you also have to talk the talk. The challenge is that to be competitive, you need to communicate all of this in a matter of minutes when potential new patients can shop around with a quick tap on a mobile screen. Luckily, there are ways to do it.

With the right mix of social media marketing, reputation management, and social advertising, a practice can rise above the rest. A strategically designed marketing program will attract patients who have self-qualified for your services and are ready to convert. Potential patients self-qualify when they've been exposed to your practice through a variety of online touchpoints, are positively



influenced by their peers (social proof), and feel that your practice stands out from the rest. At this point converting them becomes a much easier task.

A report released by Google called “Micro-moments” revealed that businesses must capture the attention of potential customers in a matter of minutes or even seconds. Mobile is changing the game in online search. The report instructed businesses to anticipate the micro-moments for users and commit to being there to help decision making when those moments occur. Successful private fee for service practices pay attention and embrace the pace of today’s busy patient/parent by being relevant to their needs and connect them to the answers they’re looking for online. Why? Because more than half of smartphone users report having discovered a new business while conducting a search on their mobile devices.

To do this you must not only communicate the core qualities of your practice but also help your current clients spread the word about their positive experiences on business review sites like Google, Yelp and Facebook. Patients who have been exposed to your marketing campaign walk in the door convinced your practice is the right one for their family’s future smiles and are willing to pay the difference.

REPUTATION MANAGEMENT: JUST A MOMENT TO CONVERT

A few friends meet at a local coffee shop. The conversation meanders before settling on the subject of orthodontists. At this point, everything stops as someone grabs a smartphone and asks Siri, Cortana, or some other type of personal assistant app to suggest local practices.

If your website is properly optimized, Google reveals your business listing among others. That’s great but what compels them to click on your link rather than your competitors? Remember, you only have a moment to convince them yours is the right choice for their family. Attention is a commodity and you need to stand out online. You need to think

like a potential new patient/parent and your marketing must help solve their problem quickly and confidently so they don’t have to stress about picking the right orthodontist. Consumers increasingly look to online communities to verify their decisions with supporting anecdotal evidence, called social proof.

“A report released by Google called “Micro-moments” revealed that businesses must capture the attention of potential customers in a matter of minutes or even seconds.”

A recent survey conducted by Softwareadvice.com, a medical software company, reported that 77 percent of respondents said they used online reviews as a first step in seeking a doctor. Your future patients are doing market research by reading what is being said about you online. Your reputation is arguably your most valuable asset, are you leveraging it effectively?

The web has empowered patients to share their experiences and opinion about your practice with friends and neighbors at the push of a button - for better or for worse. In the above scenario, five-star ratings on Google Reviews alongside your business listing with loads of positive comments from current patients praising your practice provides the tipping point for potential customers researching an orthodontist online.

The key to capturing this busy web traffic is to translate all the good things you hear around your office into authentic online reviews for everyone to find in

their searches. At the same time, it’s important to have a system in place to offer a sounding board for patients in case their experience wasn’t perfect, giving them a chance to vent before they take to the Internet to air their grievances.

Using a reputation management system like the one we offer to our clients allows us to capture patient reviews at the point of service when they have an immediate visceral reaction to their experience. This works twofold. It allows orthodontists to capitalize on a positive experience, posting the reviews to all relevant websites and social networks. It also allows a practice to vet negative reviews. A practice can review and address a patient’s concerns before the bad experience is posted publicly online, where others might read it and become influenced by it.

In case you needed even more convincing that online reviews matter, consider this: a 2016 survey by Brightlocal.com found that 91% of consumers are actively reading online business reviews, providing a huge benefit to practices who have a positive online reputation. People truly trust these reviews. The same survey reported that 84% of people give as much weight to an online review as they do to a personal recommendation. This creates a cycle: the more reviews, the more new patients joining your practice, leading to even more reviews, and higher search engine rankings.

That person in the coffee shop just clicked on another practice’s website and arranged for a consultation appointment because of the dozens of positive comments and 5-star ratings found on Google Reviews, Yelp and Facebook. With a good online reputation plan, the next time, the orthodontic office they choose will be yours.

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT: FIND NEW PATIENTS WITH SHARABLE CONTENT

The Smiths are a young family who have been loyal patients of your practice for years. Their family friends, the Greens, are looking for an orthodontist.

The Smith and Green families spend a lot of time interacting on Facebook, commenting on each other's pictures, life events and news. It's the hub of their social lives. Because they are so close, they also trust each other's social recommendations about local businesses from doctors to preschools. When the Smiths needed a dog groomer they asked about the business that the Greens used because they saw an Instagram picture of the family pet's latest styling. When the Greens needed braces for their kids they saw a contest the Smiths shared on their Facebook page held by their orthodontist. That post sparked an online chat in the comments section inspiring a recommendation.

There's no doubt that having current patients share your practice's content with their social media friends adds value. In a report published by Deloitte, the global professional services firm looked at how social media influenced decision-making by consumers. Their study found that social media was a factor in the purchasing decision of almost one in three U.S. consumers. This is especially true for younger demographics with 47 percent of millennials influenced by social media.

Just having a Facebook page for your business is not enough. Your social advertising must have that "social" element to it. Actively engaging with your patients through social media will reap benefits exponentially if done right. A Facebook page must not only have a regular stream of updates, it must be interactive, encouraging current fans to like and share your post on their own pages too. This helps reach their network of friends, increasing the number of potential new patients who are aware of your practice. The content needs to be personalized, informative, or entertaining to be good enough to share. A contest that incentivizes patients to like and repost to their own page in order to have a chance to win is just one of many great examples of interactive, shareable content.

By the time your patients get around to handing an old-fashioned business card

off to a friend who asked where their kids got their braces, it will be too late. Long before that happens, a potential customer will find out about your competitor on Facebook where mutual friends share posts from the office's page showing off their kid's satisfying smile after their braces came off.

FACEBOOK ADVERTISING: EDUCATION TO ATTRACT PATIENTS

Mom and Dad have 7-year-old twins. Though their dentist hasn't yet recommended visiting an orthodontist, while they're surfing Facebook, they're presented with an advertisement about the importance of early intervention for a healthy smile. They click and they're brought to your website to read a blog post explaining all the latest technology available in early orthodontics. Though they may not be ready to make a call just yet, you're now on their radar where you weren't before.

Facebook's powerful advertising program allows orthodontists to reach patients who are in need of services but may not yet be aware of your practice. Ad targeting can be very specific, reaching a demographic defined by a variety of categories including geography so your ads will be seen by users who live within driving distance to your practice. These ads direct back to educational content on your website. As potential patients click around looking for more information they can be presented with forms specifically designed to capture contact data delivered right to your inbox.

The blog on your website that Mom and Dad spent hours reading, sharing on their own social pages, and emailing to one another reinforces your expertise. The parents feel like they are well informed and will have already built trust your practice.

GROW BY PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

While these strategies can be used individually, they work best in conjunction to boost your practice's

production. Like three legs of a stool, reputational management, social engagement, and Facebook advertising form a solid digital marketing plan unmatched in communicating your competitive advantages in expertise and experience to deliver superior customer service.

There are many entry points to your website and ultimately to a page that directs a new client to contact you. No matter how they find your practice whether it's an online search, social media or a digital advertisement, you should be ready to capture attention. Your plan has to be quick, unique and effective at converting browsers into potential patients who clicked on your link from any source. With a thoughtful mix of marketing, you distinguish yourself from the average tooth straightener. This will help you rise above the low fee, high volume practices that are squeezing you in the middle.

Amy Epstein, MBA and Dr. Leon Klemptner, a retired orthodontist, founded People & Practice (www.pplpractice.com) in 2011.

People & Practice is a full-service digital marketing consultancy. We position your practice to grow in a new price-competitive economy by helping you compete on value, not fees. Unlike most digital marketing companies that measure their success based on just getting your phone to ring, our focus is different. Our goal is based on attracting quality, educated new patients that are much more likely to accept your treatment recommendation, and pay a little extra for a better service. We use digital social platforms to enable your current patients to advertise for you.

For more information or a free marketing analysis, you can contact them at 888.866.DOCS, or by email at hello@pplpractice.com. 📧

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DON'T PISS MOMMA OFF!

By Dr. Ben Burris

When confronted with a kid who doesn't brush or wear elastics, our first instinct as orthodontists is to say something like, "Susie, why haven't you been brushing your teeth?!?" but as soon as those words escape our lips we know what mom will do. Mom will get upset and assertively say something like, "Susie brushes her teeth ten times a day and is a perfect angel. I watch her brush and I know she is doing what she is supposed to. How dare you question that?"

We are shocked every time this happens. What is going on here? Why is mom getting upset with us for trying to help her child and avoid cavities? How dare her question my integrity?!? I can tell by looking at this child that she is not brushing properly, much less flossing! I know inflammation when I see it! Geez this is so frustrating.

Perhaps it is time to change tactics to avoid the upsets rather than stubbornly repeating the same behavior and being "shocked" when we get a negative response? What is mom really saying to you?

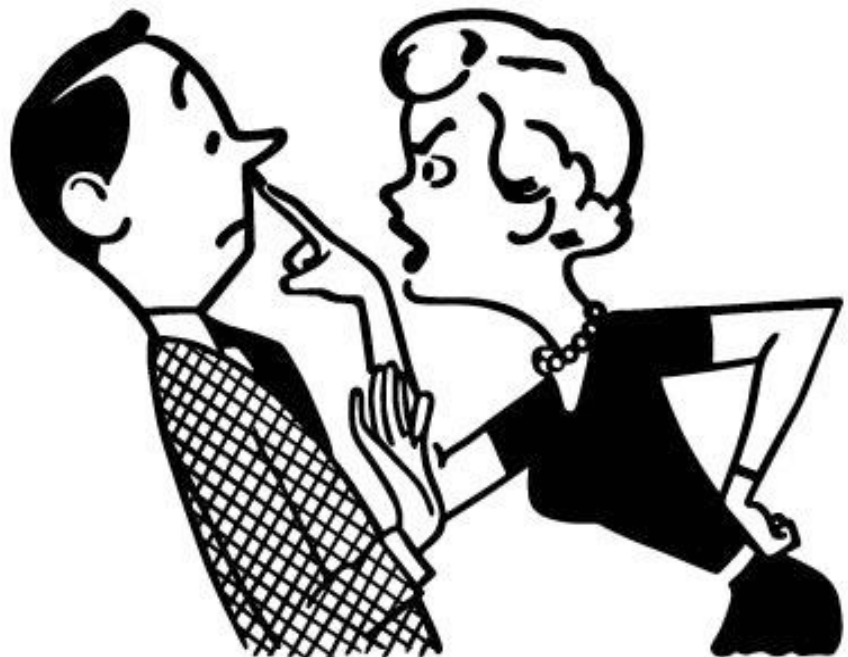
"I am a good parent and I do the best I can and you have no idea what it is like to try and handle three kids and get them where they need to be and work and do everything else. I don't need you telling me I'm not a good parent. How dare you judge me?" is what mom is actually saying when you accuse Susie of not brushing. That combined with the lioness protecting her cub creates angst and sends mom over the top almost every time. So what can we do to get the message across and not piss momma off?

My dad, Dr. Skeet Burris, taught me how to handle this situation not long after I finished residency. I've used his technique for my entire career and have shared it with thousands of orthodontists and I hope you'll find it as useful as I do. Whenever I see that Susie is not brushing properly I say, "Susie, why aren't you listening to your momma?" Mom's ears perk up, Susie looks confused and I continue, "Susie, I know your momma tells you every morning and every night to brush your teeth, why aren't you doing what she asks?" At this point mom stands up and walks over to the chair – just in time to say, "Doc, I don't know what to do, I tell that child to brush all the time... I guess I'll have to brush them for her if she doesn't straighten up." And then I say, "I know what you mean mom. I was a hard

headed kid too and it took me a long time to realize how smart my momma was and I suffered for it!" Then I stand next to mom and put my arm on her shoulder and say, "Susie, this is the winning team (pointing to mom and me) so you should go ahead and get on board or get run over." Mom smiles and agrees and then I can do whatever I want with mom's blessing. Brushing instruction, remove the wires, remove the braces, whatever... and mom will be fine with it because I'm not attacking her or her child.

Simple. Effective. I wish all of life were this easy! When in doubt just remember "Don't Piss Momma Off".

Thanks Dad! 🍷



As we have done for several issues, here again we ask leading orthodontists a few questions about what they do and what they see coming. We love Answers from the Edge because we always learn something. Enjoy!

Featuring Dr. Jeff Kozlowski and Dr. Andrew Appel

Interview with Dr. Jeff Kozlowski



Dr. Jeff Kozlowski has a unique perspective on the importance of clinical efficiency in the business of orthodontics. With a background in Economics and Finance rather than Biology and Histology, numbers and systems prevail over cytokines and osteoblasts. While his experience in orthodontics is varied – from managing a four doctor 5 location mega practice – to opening a start-up – to lecturing around the world – the one thing that has always been constant is the importance of achieving great clinical results with the least amount of effort.

PROORTHO: WHAT IS YOUR PRIMARY FOCUS FOR 2018?

KOZLOWSKI: My primary focus for 2018 is my family. I know you were probably expecting me to say something about growing my business – but 2018 is all about my family. I've spent the last 9 years building my practice and we've grown to 4 locations, 20 team members and are producing at a level I never thought possible. I did all this with the love and support of my wife and kids – and so this next year is devoted primarily to them. My wife Amy and I will celebrate our 20th anniversary on August 1st and we have two kids. Our daughter Amelia is a junior in high school and our son Jake is in 8th grade. While I've always spent lots of time with the kids – this year I'm really focused on enjoying their “young adulthood” – especially with our daughter who is heading off to college soon.

PROORTHO: TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY AND ALL THE FUN STUFF YOU GUYS DO. HOW DO YOU ACHIEVE THE GREAT WORK/LIFE BALANCE WE KNOW YOU HAVE?

KOZLOWSKI: I guess I already told you about my family! Amy and I met in dental school and she is a practicing pediatric dentist. We love to cook and eat and travel together whenever our schedules allow for it. As for hobbies with the family – well, I am the “Hobby Guy” so I'd love to share some of the things we

do as a family (or individually with the kids). Our biggest summer family hobby is wake surfing. The kids are incredible surfers. Unfortunately, Amy can't surf because of recent rotator cuff surgery so she has to be content watching the three of us. Skiing is our winter family hobby even though Jake and I are the all-day moguls and glades double black diamond skiers and Amy and Amelia are half-day green/blue good weather skiers who are content to go to lunch or the spa or shopping. Other things I do with the family include travel, hunting, fishing, spearfishing (a combination of hunting and fishing!), boating, crabbing, clamming to name a few. How do we find time to do all this? Clinical efficiency!! Amy works 110 days per year and I work 131. That means we only see patients about 1/3 of the year which leaves 2/3 of our time for everything else we do together!

PROORTHO: WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE GREATEST OPPORTUNITY AND THE GREATEST THREAT TO ORTHODONTICS?

KOZLOWSKI: While I am a very positive person, I'll start with the negative first. I know many see direct to consumer orthodontics as the greatest threat but I don't see it completely that way. The greatest threat to orthodontics is continuing to do what the profession has always done. Our profession continues to sell patients four bicuspid extractions

and headgear, expanders and lip bumpers, bands on posterior teeth, and all of this taking more than two years of treatment (the national average is 27 months of treatment). Many orthodontists continue to do what they have always done; selling patients the old and tired when there are so many new and wonderful technologies available. These traditionalists yell and scream that new technologies are not “evidence-based” and they fight against the change. It is for all these reasons that options like “short-term orthodontics” and direct to consumer aligners are growing. It may be what some patients want - but I believe our traditional way of providing orthodontics is driving patients there. Who wouldn't want to straighten their smile in 6 months or do aligners from home when the option many in our profession provide is four bicuspid extraction, expanders and headgear for 2-3 years of treatment.

“These traditionalists yell and scream that new technologies are not “evidence-based” and they fight against the change. It is for all these reasons that options like “short-term orthodontics” and direct to consumer aligners are growing.”

So this leads me to the greatest opportunity - the profession could pivot and start providing top quality care in less time with fewer extractions

and with better customer service. For those of us who are already doing this we have continued to see great growth in our practices - even in the face of encroachment from PCD's with short-term orthodontics, aligners, and DIY orthodontics.

PROORTHO: WHAT TECHNOLOGIES OR SERVICES ARE INTERESTING TO YOU LATELY?

KOZLOWSKI: There are a number of technologies that I have a great interest in. First is Passive Self-Ligation. I've been using the Damon System for over 15 years now and I believe it is the key for me to continually create great smiles in less time (averaging less than 17 months of treatment). We've also grown in our use of aligners for patients who prefer not to wear braces. Combining Invisalign with our iTero Element scanners has made the process of treating with aligners easy and streamlined. Aligner therapy is now a very relevant and important part of our practice. I'm also a huge fan of CBCT. I love my two iCAT FLX machines that provide more information for less radiation than a traditional pan/ceph. Patients and parents can immediately see their dental and skeletal issues when viewed in 3D and I believe it helps communication and ultimately conversion of patients to get the treatment they need and deserve. Finally, I'd be remiss if I didn't mention OrthoFi - a company that Jamie Reynolds and I started with our CEO, Dave Ternan, over 4 years ago. OrthoFi has been revolutionary in helping practices manage the effects of extended financing that many patients require in order to do business with our offices. We built it for ourselves with the help of some really smart orthodontists and business people from outside the orthodontic profession. I'm really happy that it's grown to help over 250 other orthodontic practices realize the growth potential

in not turning patients away from our profession's traditionally restrictive financing models. (Yes I'm an investor in OrthoFi)

PROORTHO: WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUNG ORTHODONTISTS AND RESIDENTS?

KOZLOWSKI: You can be anything you want to be in this world if you set your mind to it! Orthodontics is such a wonderful and flexible profession. I tell residents all the time - you can make your practice life and personal life be what you want it to be. Want to work one day a week? Then do it! Set up your systems to do 3-4 starts per day and do that 50 days per year and you will have an incredible quality of personal life with the financial means to enjoy it! Want to work 5 days per week and crush it, then retire at 45? Then do it! The other thing I tell young orthodontists and residents is to never stop learning. Go to meetings; listen and learn. Visit offices and see what others do - adopt what you like and make it your own and see what you don't like and don't repeat it. We can learn from every encounter we have with others in our profession. And finally, I tell people - if you are not happy with your current situation then change it. I was once a partner in a large group practice. It was a very good practice with good docs and lots of patients. But after nearly 10 years, I wasn't happy. With the support of my incredible wife - I decided to retire from the group practice and open my own office. Starting from scratch 9 years ago we've grown to 4 locations and 20 team members. I'm happier than I've ever been and making more money than I ever imagined. If I can reinvent myself - then so can you! And when I'm done with orthodontics someday - I might just become an architect or a chef - who knows? 🎲

Interview with Dr. Andrew Appel



Philadelphia orthodontist Dr. Andrew Appel was born and raised in Philly and wanted to be an orthodontist since he was 7 years old. In July 2013, he joined his father as co-owner of Appel Orthodontics, which will celebrate its 40th anniversary in 2018. He received his undergraduate degree from Pennsylvania State University, then graduated summa cum laude from Temple University Kornberg School of Dentistry, where he became a member of Omicron Kappa Upsilon, an honor society that recognizes excellence in dental school graduates. He has a certificate in orthodontics from Tufts University School of Dental Medicine in Boston. Outside of the office, he is the proud parent of a very handsome long-haired black cat named Oliver, enjoys hiking in America's national parks, and tries to always make the most of Philly's awesome live music and dining scenes.

PROORTHO: WHAT IS YOUR PRIMARY FOCUS FOR 2018?

APPEL: My primary focus in 2018 is diversification. I spent the first few years of my career "updating" Appel Orthodontics (AO): improving clinical efficiency and scrutinizing everything about the customer service experience that our patients receive. We have also managed to start and grow a new practice branded differently than our own, which has been able to help a great number of families with insurance plans not historically accepted by AO. In 2018 I want to continue focusing on building that brand and re-creating the same high quality, AO experience in this new practice. We are also partnering with another orthodontic group to open a more boutique style, aligner-only practice, and I'm sure we will commit much of our time in 2018 to getting that off the ground. There are a lot of horses in the starting gate, as my dad likes to say.

PROORTHO: TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY AND ALL THE FUN STUFF YOU GUYS DO. HOW DO YOU ACHIEVE THE GREAT WORK/LIFE BALANCE WE KNOW YOU HAVE?

APPEL: As a practice owner, I am always planning on work-related items. Most of us tend to be pretty good at that... planning for the next big marketing push; which CE events we will attend; what our scheduling templates are going to look like. I basically try to take the exact same approach when it comes to non-work related items. Travel and its associated life experiences have always been pretty important to me. My friends and I like to hike in the summer and snowboard in the winter so like anything else...we plan for it! It's nothing ground-breaking, just keep your work life and personal life intertwined enough so that you can see the whole picture and plan time for both!

My dad taught me something early in my career that I try to always keep in mind: as practice owners, it's quite easy to never really turn work "off." He always reminds me to try my best to lock the door at the end of the day, and leave the orthodontics inside for tomorrow!

PROORTHO: WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE GREATEST OPPORTUNITY AND THE GREATEST THREAT TO ORTHODONTICS?

APPEL: I think the greatest opportunity is still having the option to practice a great profession in a manner that is highly tailored to your personal desire: associate with an awesome practice or be your own boss, open from scratch or buy an existing practice, work as much as you see fit for your lifestyle, choose the clinical systems that work best for you. In orthodontics, we have a unique opportunity to choose our own path and that should never be taken for granted.

As for a threat, there are certain things putting pressure on the profession like never before: growth in corporate dentistry and direct to consumer aligners, to name a couple. That being said, I try to focus on the notion that traditional orthodontic treatment will persist in some capacity and with these changes come new opportunities. My dad has been at this for nearly 40 years and can recount stories about when he opened his practice in 1978 and all of the older docs consistently told him that "the golden days of orthodontics are over!" They couldn't have been more wrong! We just focus our energy on continuing to move forward.

PROORTHO: WHAT TECHNOLOGIES OR SERVICES ARE INTERESTING TO YOU LATELY?

APPEL: I suppose this would fall under the tech umbrella...but we spent a lot of time this year doing a complete

re-development of our website. I think it's easy to overlook the importance of the website in the overall scope of a practice's digital presence because it tends to be more static than, say, ongoing SEO or social media posts and ads. For us, we realized we have put a lot of time and energy into what's happening under our roof, but our previous site did a poor job at conveying that to prospective patients; instead, it provided the same, boring info found on most other sites. We partnered with Clear-PG for our new site, and we literally have new patients coming in saying that they saw our site and our videos. Some have even admitted they were holding back tears while watching this new content! We are finally using our website to show patients what we are all about in an effective and thoughtful way.

PROORTHO: WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUNG ORTHODONTISTS AND RESIDENTS?

APPEL: Well, I am a young orthodontist, so it feels a little funny to be asked to dish out advice. Two things that I think could be worth offering are: First, regardless of what career path you choose, write down your short and long-term goals. I have found that I'm much more effective in getting things done when I have put them down on paper. Second, try to enjoy the ride! It's so easy to get caught up in the process of starting and/or growing a practice, the cases that aren't turning out clinically like you would hope, the pressures being applied on our profession by those threats mentioned earlier. We have it so good in orthodontics...try to never lose sight of that and have fun along the way! 🎲

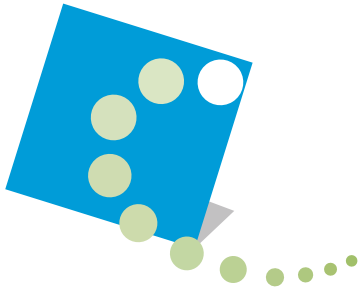


INTRODUCING TRAVEL & LEISURE

We've always been big on travel and leisure at ProOrtho but in this edition, we decided to get serious about featuring travel pieces submitted by fellow orthodontists. We hope you enjoy this section and find inspiration to kick it up a notch in your practice so you can take the family on an awesome trip. If you have a great trip you'd like to share then let us know and we will feature it in future issues.

Travel well!

Ben



PRO TRAVEL TIPS

By ProOrtho Staff

Traveling, especially with family, can be stressful. But this is an artificial construct in our minds! Relax and remind yourself that it used to take a lifetime to cross the globe or even the country. Know that if you travel much at all, delays are inevitable for any number of reasons AND airline employees are there to help you. Getting upset only raises your blood pressure and reduces the chance that you'll get great service. Reduce stress by leaving an hour earlier for the airport than you think you should. Avoiding upsets and conflict with your family is key to getting your trip off on the right foot. Once through security enjoy the show. Airports are a great place to people watch. Print out your itinerary and your tickets before you leave the house. Most of the time the app on your phone will work and it's rare that the airline will make a mistake but when either goes wrong you'll be glad you have a hard copy. Taking photos of everyone's passports and your credit cards, front and back, is a great idea. That way if they are lost or stolen you have the info you need to take action. Remember that airports and airplanes are often cooler than your home so consider adding a jacket or scarf to your carry-on is

a great idea. Hand sanitizer is also a great thing to carry with you but make sure it's a small bottle so you can get it through security. Make sure your Kindle, iPad, phones, etc. are charged and ready to go. It's a great idea to download shows for everyone – you can do so on Netflix, Amazon and on most premium cable apps like HBOGo. Do not put your medicine in your checked luggage. Birth control pills and any daily medication are especially important to keep on you in case your bag gets lost!

Check and see if your local airport has a valet service. Many do and this is a great way to start your trip off stress free. Frequent travelers who are loyal to one airline get premier status that allows them to use shorter lines for check in, check bags for free and get upgrades. Or, of course you can purchase premium/first class seats to get these perks instantly. Some credit cards also offer priority perks and even airline status and are well worth having. Which one depends on what airline you fly. The points guy is a good source of info.

If you travel much at all take the time to get Global Entry certified. The

process used to be arduous but now it's easy and you can do it on a layover in any major airport. With global entry you'll get TSA pre-check almost every time and that's nice! Be sure to add your trusted traveler number to your airline reservation or to your frequent flier account. Clear is a great service and very reasonable depending on how often you fly and where. When approaching the security checkpoint know that you'll need a boarding pass for every passenger and an ID for everyone but children if flying domestic and a passport for everyone if flying international. Have these out and ready so you don't delay your fellow passengers.

General rules for passenger screening on US domestic flights.

Normal screening - you must remove your shoes and any coats, scarves, hats. You must take your laptop and tablets out of your carryon and place each in a separate bin. Remove everything from your pockets and take off your Bluetooth headset. Don't take any liquids, gels or aerosols of more than 3 oz and put the ones you have in a ziplock bag that you remove from your luggage. You don't need your ID or boarding pass out so

put those away. Ideally while standing in line or before you'll get most of this done and be ready to remove shoes and laptops so you don't delay your fellow passengers. Wearing shoes that are easy on off, wearing socks so you don't have to go barefoot, avoiding belts with large metal buckles and generally knowing what is coming and being prepared will make your day easier.

TSA pre-check - If your boarding pass says TSA pre-check you don't have to remove your computer or toiletries from your bag. You don't have to remove your shoes. The best bet is to take any jewelry and everything from your pockets and place them in your carry-on baggage.

First class passengers and frequent fliers with top-tier status get access to airline lounges. These are quite useful and convenient and it's a good idea to search the airports you'll be traveling through to find out what lounges there are. Lounge buddy is a great app for that. If you are flying coach and don't have top airline status don't worry as many credit cards will get you into various lounges. Priority pass is very useful and comes as a perk with several American Express cards. There is a priority pass app that is useful. Also, American Express lounges are becoming more numerous and most cardholders get free admission. Finally, you can pay for a day pass and depending on how long you'll be stuck in an airport this might be worthwhile

since these lounges generally offer food and drinks included in access to the club.

Thoughts about boarding the plane and general courtesy to fellow passengers while flying:

Remember that backpacks stick out behind you so don't forget that when you try to turn in the aisle and smack people in the face. If you can't lift your carry on above your head then check it. Checking baggage is much easier and more courteous than expecting others to do your heavy lifting. The space under your seat is your fellow traveler's foot space. Sometimes passengers want to stuff their belongings below the seat they are sitting on. Don't be that passenger.

Don't use headrests as handles - whether walking down the aisle or getting in or out of your seat, remember that grabbing a headrest and using it like a handle disturbs your fellow passenger. Especially on overnight or international trips when they're trying to sleep. It's much more courteous to put your hands on your armrests to get in and out of your seat or on the overhead bins when walking down the aisle. Use of your tray table, video monitor and seat back pocket impacts the person in front of you. Every time you tap the screen, raise and lower the tray table, or utilize the seat back pocket you are moving the seat of the passenger in front of you so remember to use appropriate force and limit the number of times you perform these tasks.



Infants cry. That's what they do. Understand that the parents are likely much more upset about this fact when traveling with an infant than you are. A great way to make the situation better for everyone is to travel prepared with ear plugs, noise-canceling headphones and a white noise app on your phone AND be sure to smile at the parents or even offer to lend a hand if it's obvious they are in need of one. This is especially nice when a parent is traveling alone with one or more infants or young children.

When in coach remember that there are more arms than armrests. In a three-seat arrangement, traditionally the aisle and window passengers surrender the middle armrests for the person stuck in the middle seat. In a two-seat configuration, we must share or take turns (usually one person ends up predominating). The thing to avoid is allowing our elbow to cross over the armrest and into the ribs of our fellow passenger. This is especially common when using a laptop so remember to be courteous. If you need more room, buy a first class ticket! Parents - especially tall ones - can increase their room in coach by taking the middle seat and putting a child on either side. That way you paid for all three seats and can encroach on them as you like.

Conversation is great when it's mutual but sometimes fellow passengers have work to do or want

to get some rest. Keep this in mind and be sure to carry those noise canceling headsets! Tapping feet to the music, playing music on headsets loudly and excessive fidgeting impacts your fellow traveler.

On overnight/red-eye flights and on international flights it's a good idea to leave your window shade down. This gives your fellow passengers the best chance to sleep. Modern planes regulate light during the flight to minimize jet lag but one passenger opening a window will destroy this attempt to make your journey more pleasant. Also on these sleep intensive flights, it's a good idea to keep conversation to a minimum as voices carry a great deal when passengers aren't moving around or talking much.

Flying commercial means being in a closed space with others for an extended period so avoiding heavy cologne or perfume, foods that are highly aromatic and anything else that will negatively impact your fellow passengers is always a good idea.

When you arrive at your hotel the first thing you should do is secure your valuables and travel documents in your room safe if you aren't going to keep them on your person. Leaving these things lying around your hotel room - even for just a few hours - can have catastrophic consequences. 🗳️





From the Rear View Mirror

By Dr. Courtney Dunn

Today is my first day back at work after the 2017 MKS meeting in Dallas. The meeting was different for me this year. Partially due to the fact that I was presenting, but mostly due to the content change that wasn't intentional by the organizers. In fact, one of the cool things about MKS is that the speakers are not paid and they are not told what to speak about. Really – there is absolutely no guidance at all. But, somehow the tone of the meeting was consistent. Here is a summary of my impressions of MKS this year.

THE YEAR OF HUMILITY

MKS is generally known for being a meeting for “non-traditional” orthodontists to talk about their practices. In other words, there is a lot of “meat” on running a business. I've always enjoyed this because there is a definite lack of business training in dental school,

orthodontic residency, and the AAO annual session doesn't provide much useful information in this area. Knowing that, it shouldn't be a surprise that there are a lot of people either attending or speaking who have very large practices. But this year was a little different. Business was still a great topic and the speakers had large and thriving practices. But humility reigned. Many people put themselves out there in a very personal way. We learned that public perception may not reflect the true human being and that the seemingly infallible were, in fact, quite human after all. We also learned that many of the largest personalities came from humble roots and they were proud of their blue-collar childhoods. In addition, people were called out for bragging about their income, their number of locations and their large staff. The overall message – “Nobody cares – let's start focusing on what's important”.

“But humility reigned. Many people put themselves out there in a very personal way. We learned that public perception may not reflect the true human being and that the seemingly infallible were, in fact, quite human after all.”

THIS IS WHAT I CAME FOR

I loved the talks coming from orthodontists I wouldn't see anywhere



else. This is the heart of MKS. Dr. Kervin Mack discussed the difficult transition from residency to business owner. He was so honest about the bumps in the road, the payroll discrepancies, the outdated office and the need to rebrand. Dr. Mack even discussed his road to healthy living – while getting a leg cramp on stage from an earlier run! These authentic moments are special and unique. Another great talk was given by Dr. Kurt Kacer. He shared his experience transitioning from three doctors to one and the ramifications of incorporating general dental services into his practice. For some reason, these types of discussions aren't seen at traditional meetings and probably won't be anytime soon. I found all of the topics above to be fascinating and I appreciate their willingness to share so we could learn.

SPONSORED SPEAKERS SUCK

This year, there were several vendors given the opportunity to speak - significantly more than in the past. I was not a fan of this trend, and I can report from many grumbings in the halls, that I was not alone. In previous meetings, there might have been a couple

vendors presenting things that could actually be useful, even if we didn't use their product. This year, some speakers decided to use their time for platform selling. Now, I realize that putting on a meeting is expensive and you need to keep the sponsors happy. But, they should have been happy without a speaking slot. The exhibitor's area was always jumping and credit cards were smoking. I found that most docs were very happy with the variety of vendors and services in the exhibitor's area. We just don't want to see them on stage presenting a hard sell when we are there to see docs like Kacer and Mack.

“These connections remind us that our community is small and that we are not alone. There are great colleagues out there willing to help and support you in any way possible.”

PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

Smaller meetings like this give us time to talk. There is huge value to these personal connections and discussions. I was so grateful for all the people who took the time to make a supportive comment or ask a great question about my presentation. I loved meeting so many people I've only “met” on Facebook and I sincerely hope that you know that any and all suggestions I give to you come from a place of support (sometimes I feel like I offend people with my honesty). These connections remind us that our community is small and that we are not alone. There are great colleagues out there willing to help and support you in any way possible.

In summary, I would consider this meeting a success. There was great attendance, people were sincere, the content was good and there were lots of unexpected moments. The biggest negative for me – I was soooooo cold!! Maybe bring a winter coat next year. ❄️





TRAVELING TO THE GREEK ISLANDS

By Dr. Daniela Loeb

If you're looking for a vacation with countless beaches, cultural immersion, spectacular food, and some ATViNG on the side, look no further than the Greek Islands. My husband and I honeymooned there last summer, and are counting down until we can return.

I very much like to plan my own itinerary when I travel, but we did use a travel company called Key Tours to take care of things like hotel reservations, ferry tickets, and transport to and from the ports. In my opinion, it made these parts of the trip (nearly) flawless and took a lot of stress away from having to book separate ferry tickets and rides and fumbling with a foreign alphabet. In terms of places to stay, there are many

luxury hotel and villa options in Greece, especially on the islands, but having recently graduated from dental school forced us to stay on a slightly tighter budget.

ATHENS

Before heading to the islands, be sure to enjoy Athens for at least a day. There is so much history to see and appreciate. We stayed at the Fresh Hotel, which had a small rooftop pool and amazing view of the Acropolis at night! Be sure to walk around the neighborhood of Plaka at night for great restaurants, bars, and shopping. The next morning it was time to catch a ferry to stop #2: Mykonos.

*“Places of interest: Acropolis, Parthenon, Temple of Zeus, Dionysus Theater, Filopappos Hill (for a great view), Plaka neighborhood
Restaurants: Dionysus, Ama Laxeï, Electra Palace, Seychelles, Eat at Milton’s.”*



MYKONOS

What a stunning island. We were fortunate enough to spend 3 days in Mykonos and it was perfect. Upon arriving to our hotel (Hotel Lady Anna in Platys Gialos), we worked with reception to rent an ATV for 24 hours. I highly recommend renting either an ATV or scooter (for couples) or a car (for families) to see the entirety of the island. Scooters are harder to rent if your license doesn't specify you are licensed to operate motorcycles, so we opted for an ATV. We went ATVing to the town of Mykonos which is on the west side of the island, admired the sunset from a bar in Little Venice, and had dinner at a tiny traditional restaurant called To Mairero- highly recommend!

Day 2 was adventure day- we went ATVing all over the island and ended up finding beautiful and remote beaches. First was Lia beach (a scuba diver's paradise) and then Panormos beach, which is well known for its beautiful ocean colors. From there, we headed to Kiki's Taverna for lunch, where we expected to wait in a pretty long line. The restaurant is open from 12-7 and is always full- expect a wait- but is extremely worth it. We stuffed ourselves with the freshest octopus, grilled feta, fresh catch of the day, and Greek salad. Not to mention the location and view are spectacular as well.

On Day 3, we decided to stay local and enjoy Platys Gialos beach. At that beach there is a boating company that offers boat tours to Dragonisi Island, an uninhabited island with coves and caves you can swim in. They also take you to a beach on the east side of Mykonos and offer masks so you can appreciate the clear waters, coral, and curious fish and sea creatures.

The next day, we enjoyed a quiet morning at the hotel and caught a ferry mid-day to stop #3: Paros.



INTIMATE KIKI'S TAVERNA WITH AN AMAZING VIEW

*"Places of interest: Dragonisi Island, the windmills, Little Venice for sunset drinks, Lia Beach, Panormos Beach, Paraportiani, Paradise Beach and Scorpios (if you like to party)
Restaurants: M eating, Kiki's Taverna (lunch), To Mairero, Remezzo, Nikola's Tavern, Funky Kitchen."*



THE COVES OF DRAGONISI ISLAND

PAROS

Another stunning island. Definitely less busy than Mykonos or Santorini but its popularity is growing fast. We only had 2 days in Paros but wished for more. Upon arriving, we checked in to the beautiful Paros Agnanti Hotel on the west side of the island, close to the main town of Parikia. We spent the first day enjoying the town and getting lost in the winding, shaded streets. We stopped by the Church of 100 Doors (Panagia Ekatontapiliani) and the Frankish Castle, which was built in the 1200s and definitely stands out among the Cyclades architecture of white walls and blue doors. After watching the sunset off Parikia's main road, we headed to Levantis for dinner and enjoyed delicious fresh seafood.

On the second day, we rented an ATV to explore the rest of the island. Our first stop was the mountain town of Lefkes. On the way, we stopped by the ancient marble quarries in Marathi; it is believed that the marble of the Venus de Milo marble was extracted from here. Lefkes itself is a quaint and quiet town—we felt like we had it to ourselves. Be sure to take in the amazing mountainous views, including views of the neighboring island, Naxos. From Lefkes we headed to Kalogeros beach, known for its abundance of natural spa-like clay. Let the clay dry on your skin and head into the ocean for a quick dip, and emerge feeling extra smooth.

Our next stop was Naoussa port, an authentic and traditional village on the northern part of the island. Although seemingly quieter than Parikia, Naoussa boasts a nightlife scene and is dotted with taverns and clubs. We strolled by the myriad fishing boats toward the still-standing Venetian fortress, constructed in the 15th century. Then we enjoyed a nice lunch right on the water at Taverna Glafkos before heading to one of my favorite beaches: Kolymbithres beach. This beach is definitely unique: various rock formations lead directly to the crystal clear waters. It's a fun place to enjoy the water and watch the various boats go by.

*"Places of interest: Parikia town, Kolymbithres beach, Kalogeros Beach, Naoussa Port, Lefkes Village, Panagia Ekatontapiliani, Lefkes, Marble Quarries
Restaurants: Levantis, Taverna Glafkos, Aromas, Happy Cows"*



ATYPICAL QUIET STREET IN PAROS



VIEW FROM KOLYMBITHRES BEACH

SANTORINI

When people think of Greece, they usually imagine the picturesque blue domes of Santorini. Despite being the most popular (and crowded) island destination, we decided to make Santorini our last stop. Santorini has a unique story, as it was formed by volcanic activity centuries ago, which resulted in a flooded caldera formation surrounded by a ring of islands. One of my biggest regrets is not staying in a villa overlooking the caldera. Still, our hotel was very nice (El Greco Hotel), but a little isolated and you couldn't appreciate the views. After checking in, we walked to Fira, Santorini's main town, and enjoyed the incredible caldera views. We hiked out to Skaros Rock, an ominous-looking rock formation that protrudes out into the Aegean Sea, from the neighboring town of Imerovigli. It was a beautiful trek and offered even better views. After that, we set out to find a prime spot in Fira to enjoy the famed Santorini sunset, and later enjoyed a nice meal at Argo.

"Places of interest: Red beach, Black beach (Perissa), Cliff jumping at Ammoudi, Skaros Rock



THE SUN SETTING ON THE CALDERA

On the second day, we (once again) rented an ATV to get around the island. The beaches of Santorini aren't as typical or popular compared to the other islands due to its lack of white sand—the sand is actually mostly red or black due to the volcanic origin of the island. Our first stop was the Red Beach, which was a little underwhelming, followed by the Black Beach in the town of Perissa. Then we saddled up for a long ATV drive and headed to Oia, Santorini's other famed village. We headed straight down to Ammoudi Bay and enjoyed fresh octopus at Ammoudi Fish Tavern. After a short digestion period, we walked along the bay to a well-known swimming and cliff jumping spot and got some good GoPro footage in. Afterwards, we went back up to Oia and wandered the narrow streets until it was time for a final sunset dinner at Pelekanos. Restaurants with rooftops tend to fill up in the high season, so reservations are strongly recommended!



Restaurants: Argo, Ammoudi Fish Tavern, Pelekanos, 1800, Ginger, Da Vinci, Ambrosia "



SKAROS ROCK OFFERS STUNNING VIEWS OF THE CALDERA



VIEW FROM KOLYMBITHRES BEACH



Made to Measure:

The Dubious Relationship Between Eugenics and Orthodontics

By Dr. Marc Ackerman



"A NEWSPAPER ARTICLE ANNOUNCING THE BRUSH FOUNDATION DONATION OF \$500,000."

Orthodontists by and large have a fascination with measuring things and developing normative data for comparison of individuals. In orthodontics, mensuration of just about anything is often mistaken as science when in fact it is pseudo-science at best. When the father of modern orthodontics Edward H. Angle developed the theoretical basis for and the operational practice of orthodontics, he was heavily influenced by the beliefs of the privileged class during the Victorian age. Man was

to achieve nature's intended ideal.

As the nineteenth century turned, Sir Francis Galton's eugenics movement in Britain was promoting the concept of marriages between eminent families of good stock in order to improve the human race. Galton coined the phrase, "nature versus nurture". Galton and Karl Pearson's biometric approach to evolution sparked the interest of a Harvard trained zoologist, Charles Davenport, who is considered the father of the American eugenics movement. Davenport became involved

with the American Breeder's Association joining its Eugenics Committee. The Eugenics Creed that Davenport later developed read:

"I believe in striving to raise the human race to the highest plane of social organization, of cooperative work and of effective endeavor."

"I believe that I am a trustee of the germ plasm that I carry; that this has been passed on to me through thousands of generations before me; and that I betray the trust if (that germ plasm being good) I so act as to jeopardize it, with its excellent possibilities, or from motives of personal convenience, to unduly limit offspring."

"I believe that, having made our choice in marriage carefully, we, the married pair, should seek to have 4 to 6 children in order that our carefully selected germ plasm shall be reproduced in adequate degree and that this preferred stock shall not be swamped by that less carefully selected."

"I believe in such a selection of immigrants as shall not tend to adulterate our national germ plasm with socially unfit traits."

"I believe in repressing my instincts when to follow them would injure the next generation."

The American eugenics movement was criticized for its racist, classist views and their desire to prove that many groups in the population were unfit for breeding. They used the term "feeble-minded" for many of these individuals and many States adopted sterilization laws based on eugenic research. Davenport was a founder of the International Federation

of Eugenics Organizations in 1925 with a Commission on Bastardization and Miscegenation (interbreeding). Much of Davenport's work was the inspiration for the Nazi race laws. He maintained alliances with Nazi organizations both before and during World War II. Davenport held editorial positions for two German journals and in 1939 he wrote a contribution to the Festschrift for Otto Reche, an important figure in the Nazi plan to "remove" inferior populations. In 1935 an investigative committee reviewed Davenport's work and found that his data collection was unusable and unjustified. As a result, his office was closed in 1939. Davenport's ideas were widely condemned by scholars and social scientists at that time. He languished in disgrace and died in 1944.

The first mention of eugenics in the orthodontic literature was an Editorial by Martin Dewey, the Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Orthodontia (the American Journal of Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics today) in July 1918. In the essay titled, "Education and Eugenics", Dewey argues that the lengthy educational process required to become an orthodontist was taking men of good stock away from producing healthy children in their most fertile years of age 21 to 28. He wrote:

"We therefore contend for the benefit of the human race there should be a physiologic side to the question of education, and the human family both men and women should not be so highly educated as to entirely obliterate the possibility of being useful in the production of the human race or in the improvement of the human race. It is indeed a lamentable fact that the people who seem to be the most fitted to rear children as they should be reared are those who have the fewer children and small families."

This was an interesting take on the role that orthodontists should play in the better breeding movement.

Orthodontics became more formally linked with eugenics in the late 1920's.

T. Wingate Todd, a physician and physical anthropologist at Western Reserve University in Cleveland, accepted a young orthodontist fresh out of the Angle School in California to work as a research fellow in the Department of Anatomy. That orthodontist was none other than B. Holly Broadbent, Sr. Broadbent Sr. became Todd's protégé and in 1924 Broadbent added a metric scale to Todd's Western Reserve craniometer to more precisely measure dry skulls which is still used today. Todd and Broadbent spent the next several years studying the characteristics of healthy well-developed children in the greater Cleveland area. These early studies were funded by the Cleveland Health Council and Cleveland Welfare Federation. However, money began to dry up as the country plunged into the great depression. Todd had run out of funds and was desperate to keep his studies going.

Charles Frances Brush, a wealthy businessman and strong proponent of eugenics created the Brush Foundation and established a fund for research of \$500,000 in 1928. Seeing the possibility

of obtaining funding from the Brush Foundation, Todd proposed to study:

"The modes of inception, the types of progress and the final stabilization of adult patterns during the second decade, for the explicit purpose of understanding and fostering those traits which determine a proper attitude of family-building ambition in contrast to careless production of children. The physical and mental patterns of infancy and early childhood in the light of heredity and nurture. To demonstrate the fundamentally scientific purpose of eugenic education and the indispensability of the eugenic method in all efforts designed for population welfare."

The Brush Foundation accepted Todd's proposal and in 1929 passed a motion to fund the project. It read:

"Motion that the Brush Foundation undertake an investigation and interpretation of child development with reference to those adult traits and patterns which are of importance for race betterment..."



"THE HEAD OF A YOUNG POLISH GIRL IS MEASURED USING A CALIPER DURING HER RACIAL EXAMINATION BY GERMAN AUTHORITIES. (PHOTO COURTESY OF UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM PHOTO ARCHIVES)

In a letter to a colleague from the Rockefeller Foundation in New York, Todd gives us a sense of how he was willing to make a deal with the devil:

“It was a rather hard job to sell the ideas although I must say that when the Foundation did come across it did handsomely. It was necessary for me to slur over distinctions between the adolescent and the infant programs. I had also to color the presentation with eugenics. You will find various other sops but none which give away anything important.”



The initial funding and study sample for Broadbent’s facial growth study came from the Brush Inquiry. In 1930, Todd convinced Frances Payne Bolton the widow of Chester Castle Bolton and her Son Charles Bingham Bolton to set up a fund specifically for the study of the development of the face of the growing child. Broadbent Sr. and later Broadbent Jr. became the stewards of the Bolton-Brush Inquiry collection. It is interesting to note that Chester and Frances Bolton were actively involved in the American Breeder’s Association at the time of Davenport. The Boltons raised pure-bred Guernsey cattle on their estate and

for 10 years (1922-32) Chester was the President of the Ohio Guernsey Breeder’s Association. Ultimately all finances related to the Bolton-Brush Inquiry were centralized into the Developmental Health Inquiry of the Associated Foundations (Bolton, Brush, Rockefeller, etc.) in 1932, with Todd as the Director.

“Now that we know that this historic data set has little relevance today, why do we promote it as orthodontics’ great legacy? It is also hard to invoke the doctrine of double effect since there’s no evidence to support proportionately more good was achieved than unintended bad.”

Todd’s study sample eventually included 5,000 Cleveland children who had been x-rayed repeatedly and a subset of 1,000 children who were exposed every three months during infancy. In total, the study exposed 250,000 x-rays over its lifetime. Although there has been great debate as to whether or not there was an increase in cancer in the Brush Inquiry population relative to the normal population, one Cleveland physician speculated that less than one-half of one percent more cancer cases among Todd’s subjects. So, performing simple math, $0.005 \times 5,000$ equals 25 cases more than the general public. There are other Cleveland physicians who claim that there have been more cancers amongst

former participants of the Bolton-Brush Inquiry, in particular brain tumors and skin cancer. Some of these treating doctors wrote to archivists in the 1980’s for copies of the x-rays taken years before. They were provided by Broadbent Jr. who stated that, “There is no direct evidence linking these cancers to the tests.” In ethics, we call this the doctrine of double effect. If doing something morally good has a morally bad side effect, it’s ethically permissible to do it, provided the bad side-effect wasn’t intended. However, there has to be due proportion between the good effect the proposed act would achieve and its foreseen unintended consequences. The good that is to be achieved must sufficiently outweigh the unintended bad.

The Bolton study was terminated in 1959. It’s two self-proclaimed major contributions to orthodontics were Broadbent Sr.’s introduction of radiographic cephalometry in 1930 and the Bolton Standards of dentofacial developmental growth in 1975. The American Association of Orthodontists Foundation provided a sizeable grant in the early 2000’s to Broadbent Jr. and colleagues at Case Western Reserve for a project titled, “Digital storage and internet distribution of the records of the Bolton-Brush growth study center.” Approximately 20,000 radiographs were digitized. This sample was included in the AAOF Craniofacial growth legacy collection along with 8 other study collections.

A 2015 study published in the European Journal of Orthodontics by Antoun et al. examined the effect of secular trends on craniofacial growth in a series of longitudinal birth cohorts that are frequently used in orthodontic research, including data from the Bolton-Brush Inquiry. They pointed out that many of the studies which examined the efficacy of growth modification used these historical controls rather than randomized contemporaneous controls. The validity of these investigations has been called into question. The study concluded:

“Our findings suggest that secular trends are likely to result in modern craniofacial traits that are generally larger in size and exhibit different growth rate patterns than those of historical subjects, thus misrepresenting a treatment effect that would otherwise not be present if secular trends were taken into account.”



Hundreds of thousands of dollars were spent on the Bolton-Brush Inquiry since its inception. In the past two decades, a significant amount of money and work hours have been spent on the digitization of the Bolton-Brush records. Now that we know that this historic data set has little relevance today, why do we promote it as orthodontics’ great legacy? It is also hard to invoke the doctrine of double effect since there’s no evidence to support proportionately more good was achieved than unintended bad.

The last formal association of orthodontists and eugenics occurred in 1943. A disgraced Davenport was invited to speak to the New York Society of Orthodontists. He gave a paper titled “The development of the head” which was published in the International Journal of Orthodontia and Dentistry for Children (AJODO) approximately 6 months

before his death in 1944. In that essay, Davenport’s assessment that facial growth is largely dependent on heredity is not too far off from what we know today. In fact, Davenport was prescient when he made the assertion:

“Possibly in some cases, the orthopedist has taken more credit for his technique and given too little to nature when the results of his technique have been especially successful.”

“There is no such thing as normal or for that matter ideal. The institution of philanthropic eugenics that orthodontics embraced was a double-edged sword.”

What are we to have learned from orthodontics’ relationship with eugenics? No matter how many humans are measured by orthodontists in a search of what’s “normal”, the answer to this kind of question will remain as elusive as the Loch Ness monster. There is no such thing as normal or for that matter ideal. The institution of philanthropic eugenics that orthodontics embraced was a double-edged sword. On one hand, it fostered scientific discovery in the hope of alleviating man’s suffering. On the other hand, it aided and abetted a dubious philosophy that was far less beneficial to mankind. I would recommend that we approach the legacy of orthodontic childhood growth research with regret and reflection. Orthodontics today has limitless potential for doing good, I just hope somebody out there doesn’t slow progress by trying to measure it along the way. 📏



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Utilize Group Interviews To Maximize Hiring Success

By Bridget Burris

The stress of hiring a new employee can be somewhat overwhelming. Not only is there an incredible amount of work in the hiring process but the stress of choosing the “right” person is tough. Over the years we have used the group interview process to increase efficiency and alleviate stress and this technique has proven invaluable. Let me explain how to do a group interview:

- We run our ads on www.indeed.com with a VERY detailed description. We always use the free service with them, no need to pay for this.
- Choose the applicants you wish to speak with from the resumes received and email them an invite for their interview. We always use email as it cuts down on

time phoning and leaving messages. We live in the technology age so use it. Also you only have to write the invite once and then cut and paste accordingly. We never let candidates know they will be attending a group interview, just that they need to show up at 5pm at our office location (include address) and to expect to be there for two hours.

- You will need the help of several team members for this process. In all honesty, most team members love being part of this process and tend to be a greater help for the new team member when they help choose their co-workers.
- Have a team member greet the applicants upon arrival. We always note their arrival time and ask candidates to

complete an application once they arrive. Obviously anyone that arrives late is probably not going to get the job! Since we do back ground checks and drug screening we require their signature and consent.

- Once all applications are complete I would normally stand up and introduce the team helping with the process. I also explain the group interview as most applicants are surprised to see several individuals there for an interview at the same time. Collectively introducing everyone and giving them a welcome intro is a real time saver as I normally give the full run down on what the company is all about, what the job requirements are and what benefits are included – but this way I only have to do it once.



"This test is not confining but it is a good exercise to ensure that all four personality types are present in your office to ensure a well-rounded team culture and to help get the right people in the right seats on the bus. An office with only peaceful personality types would be very boring and a bunch of powerful personalities would kill each other!"

- Next we split everyone up into groups of 3-5 candidates with a team member to lead them. The team member will oversee the candidates completing the following:

- Aptitude test: We ordinarily use the Wonderlic test. It is incredibly accurate and a wonderful tool. After using it for several years I believe it really tests the speed at which an individual can learn. LOVE it! Clinical assistants need to score a minimum of 16 and for administration positions candidates need to score at least a 19. I have tested these numbers time and time again only to realize that someone that scores 15 is going to take 6 months to get up to speed, even if they are the sweetest, kindest person!

- Memory test: We ordinarily place instruments on a tray, give the applicants 1 minute to memorize it and they ask them to duplicate the tray setup. They are given a second chance to improve. Remember these tests are

important to gauge team interaction vs competitiveness; ability to interact with each other, whether they have a desire to improve and general stick-to-it-ness.

- Dexterity test: We show the applicants a paperclip and then give them a wire and ask them to bend it into a functional paperclip within 1 minute. Once again this is more about how they react than how awesome the end product is. I have seen people throw the wire down and quit and have seen people giggle when it is actually functional. Truly some great insight. They are given a second chance to improve on this too.

- Personality test: This is not normally a timed exercise. We use the Colorcode personality test. Basically, you are not going to place a social, high energy, personality type as your financial coordinator as they are more likely to succeed in a TC role. This test is not confining but it is a good exercise to ensure that all four personality types are present in your office to ensure a well-rounded team culture and to help get the right people in the right seats on the bus. An office with only peaceful personality types would be very boring and a bunch of powerful personalities would kill each other!

- In addition to these tests we ordinarily do a 3-minute interview with each individual in private. Basically, we are asking if they have any questions and what they would like to see themselves paid in this situation. Asking what they expect to be paid is a very important question as it tells us what their expectations are. During the interviews we ordinarily serve snacks and beverages and have our team chatting to the applicants. This is a great time for observations as everyone is normally having fun and they tend to be relaxed. Yes, this is when we have heard that individuals are in the middle of a divorce

and may be moving closer to their parents in the next state, we have heard that they were fired under suspicious circumstances from their last job, we have heard how they used all their vacation and then quit their last job. Amazing revelations that we can't ask about but love to know before hiring!

- Once the applicants are done with their interview we let each individual know that we will contact them via email in the next 2-3 days and thank them for their time.

- As a wrap up to the process, we get with our team, ask their opinions and eliminate obvious non-candidates. The potential teammates are asked to come in for a working interview (they are paid an hourly rate) and based on their interaction and performance, we finalize our choice.

- We are sure to contact each individual via email within the given time to let them know if they did or did not get the job. Also, we ordinarily also send them a hand-written card thanking them for their time. We use this as a marketing opportunity! We have had so many applicants bring their children to us for treatment over the years because of their awesome experience during the group interview and we take this as a compliment to our hiring process.

I encourage you to give the group interview process a try. It is great way to get your team involved and, by doing so, somehow the dynamic of the interview process changes drastically with the applicants – allowing you to learn much more about each candidate than you can in a traditional, individual interview. I believe you get a greater sense of who the applicants really are. Yes, it takes a bunch of time and effort to do a group interview, but getting the right fit for your team is worth it! 🎲



NEW GAIDGE CEO

Interview with Ryan Moynihan

Gaidge has partnered with orthodontic practices across the US, Canada, the Caribbean, and Australia to automatically gather and deliver key performance indicators that assist doctors, managers and team leaders in assessing needs, setting goals, and driving practice performance. Gaidge has the most accurate and robust database of information in the orthodontic industry. In addition, it includes the opportunity for clients to compare key practice performance indicators across practices much like their own to benchmark and keep pace with the market.

Since 2010, the company and its analytics, has been a leader in reporting practice performance as well as industry trends. In 2016, Gaidge compiled and reported the activity of client orthodontists in over 1,250 locations with a combined annual Net Production of \$1.4B and Net Collection following at \$1.3B. This activity included 400,000 exams in which 287,000 were adolescents and 113,000 were adults. From these exams, 280,000 combined Comprehensive, Phase I, Phase II and Clear Aligner treatment starts were tracked in Gaidge. Indeed, Gaidge has become a meaningful product to its user and to the industry as a whole.

Gaidge recently hired Ryan Moynihan as new CEO and below is an interview with Ryan about his vision for Gaidge and the role it can play for orthodontists going forward.

BENTSON: PLEASE TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND AND WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO BECOME THE CEO OF GAIDGE.

MOYNIHAN: It is ironic how a career can have a way of coming full circle. I have always had a passion for analytics and numbers and it led me to

the beginning of my career in finance working for Intel and then Ernst & Young. I earned my MBA at Georgetown, which was a great opportunity to leverage my analytical background and build a strategic marketing skillset. Post-MBA, I worked for 3M in their dental business (now 3M Oral Care) as a Marketing Manager (3 1/2 years) and then as a Regional Sales Director (2 1/2 years) for the west coast in northern California. I was recruited to join Ormco as their Vice President of North American Sales (2 1/2 years) and then was promoted to be the Vice President of Global Marketing (2 years) prior to coming to Gaidge.

I met Mary Beth Kirkpatrick, Gaidge Managing Partner, during my tenure at Ormco through a strategic practice growth initiative. Over time the conversation grew and the Gaidge opportunity was born. I am very interested in the solutions Gaidge provides its clients and passionate about helping our clients simplify and grow their orthodontic businesses.

BENTSON: FOR THE DOCTORS UNFAMILIAR WITH GAIDGE, CAN YOU GIVE US THE COMPANY HISTORY AND THE VALUE PROPOSITION FOR DOCTORS THAT MIGHT CONSIDER GAIDGE AS A TOOL FOR THEIR PRACTICE?

MOYNIHAN: Gaidge is a tool that helps orthodontists simplify how they run their business. Gaidge was released in 2011 and since then Gaidge has built a robust database currently reporting annually over \$1.4B in production, \$1.3B in collections, 400,000 exams and 270,000 case starts. Gaidge was developed by the Impact 360 Consulting firm in collaboration with the OrthoBanc software engineers. Gaidge provides accurate and timely

metrics and key practice indicators through a software interface that delivers information automatically from the practice management system to cloud-based Gaidge. Orthodontists and team leaders have an immediately accessible resource to monitor and address practice performance, set short-term goals, long-term strategies, and develop a higher level of accountability. Gaidge also enables a method to collaborate with consultants, advisors, accountants, and business strategists to further enhance information sharing that benefits the practice. Through the creative development process, Gaidge has industry standard benchmarks for determining practice health, as well as an opportunity for practices to compare themselves with other similar practices. Gaidge continues its development process with a commitment to provide key analytics to the orthodontic industry.

BENTSON: CAN YOU GIVE US AN OVERVIEW OF THE CHALLENGES FACING THE SOLO AND SMALL GROUP PRACTICE OWNER(S) FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

MOYNIHAN: Increased competition from many different angles with more general dentists doing orthodontics, increased pressures from corporate groups, consolidation, and a relatively new competitor in the direct-to-consumer or do-it-yourself category of Smile Direct Club. There are internal business challenges: controlling overhead as margins tighten, maintaining profitability, and case acceptance with patients who are shopping price and seeking payment flexibility. Maintaining market share with innovative ways to market their practice will also be a challenge. I'm convinced that staying on top of practice metrics is imperative for the solo and small group practices.

BENTSON: HOW DOES THE GAIDGE TOOL ARM THE SOLO AND SMALL GROUP PRACTICE OWNER TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF OWNING AND LEADING A PRACTICE?

MOYNIHAN: Solo and small group practice owners need a simple mechanism to quickly analyze their practice performance and know what critical indicators are doing to ensure they are proactively addressing areas of concern. Gaidge is a tool that automatically provides the doctor the ability to track and monitor critical practice data daily, set and track performance to goals, and compare performance to other like practices. It is also a great tool to leverage as part of the daily team huddle, to engage and motivate the staff to achieve the practice goals.

BENTSON: WHAT CHANGES DO YOU HAVE IN MIND FOR GAIDGE AS YOU TAKE ON THE ROLE OF CEO OF THE COMPANY?

MOYNIHAN: Our clients come first and we want to continually use client feedback to create a better Gaidge! With that said, we are focused on enhancing the user experience, reporting more data, and evaluating ways to get Gaidge implemented deeper into practices for everyday use because our data shows that the practices who use Gaidge tend to grow at a faster rate than the market. Going forward, we have many exciting projects in the pipeline and will be communicating the details of these new innovations closer to their commercialization launches.

BENTSON: FOR CURRENT GAIDGE USERS, IS THERE ANY GUIDANCE ON HOW THEY CAN BEST USE THE TOOL DAY-TO-DAY?

MOYNIHAN: We recommend each user start with bite-size pieces, as they get accustomed to using Gaidge. It is critical to establish a rhythm with Gaidge. The best way for doctors and managers to start engaging with the tool is to begin with the Dashboard and the two Summary views. The Dashboard view provides a

visual overview of key practice statistics such as starts, production/collection, case acceptance, and accounts receivable, along with other daily operations info. The Summary views display a monthly or multi-year trending summary of the practice. Within the Summary views, focus on the production/collection and performance sections. Once you become a more advanced user, you can set goals in the Leaderboard feature to track your progress toward achievement. Make sure to use Gaidge as part of your daily team huddles to help drive improved communication, goal sharing, and engagement across the entire office. Possibly the best tip for guidance is to encourage our practices to participate in coaching sessions from our customer care and support staff.

BENTSON: GAIDGE HAS THE ABILITY TO PROVIDE THE USER WITH COMPARATIVE DATA AGAINST OTHER GROUPS OF GAIDGE USERS; CAN YOU DESCRIBE THIS CAPABILITY IN MORE DETAIL AND GIVE US AN EXAMPLE OF HOW THIS ASPECT CAN BE USEFUL?

MOYNIHAN: This is an insightful and impactful feature within Gaidge. Each client is able to compare their specific practice data to like practices within the Gaidge database. The comparison is an average and can be compared at the total United States or AAO regional levels and even by practice type (single practice, single practice with associate, or multiple owners). For example, if you are a single doctor practice in Atlanta, you can side by side compare how your practice measures up (compares all Gaidge metrics such as average case fee, total starts, and aligner usage to name a few) to the average single doctor practice in the SAO region or even versus the total USA.

BENTSON: FOR DOCTORS THAT WANT TO IMPLEMENT GAIDGE, CAN YOU PLEASE DESCRIBE THE PROCESS AND WHICH PRACTICE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS YOU INTEGRATE WITH?

MOYNIHAN: Implementation can be accomplished in a couple of weeks with great collaboration from the practice. Implementation consists of five steps: Practice Assessment & Review with doctor/manager, Data Gathering, Financial Review and Data Mapping, followed by the Gaidge Navigational tour. Through this process, our team will walk the client through all of the necessary steps to get Gaidge up and running in your practice. In addition, we offer three coaching sessions included during the first year to help you continue to understand Gaidge on a deeper level.

Gaidge is integrated with Dolphin, Cloud9Ortho, OrthoTrac, Ortho2 Edge and ViewPoint. Additionally, we are in the process of integrating with TopsOrtho and Oasys (Crossfire).

BENTSON: AS YOU LOOK TOWARD THE FUTURE, WHERE DO YOU SEE GAIDGE GOING? WILL YOU ENTER INTO OTHER MARKETS OR WORK WITH DSOS? ARE THERE ANY NEW FEATURES THAT ARE BEING CONSIDERED?

MOYNIHAN: We have a robust pipeline of active projects and many other ideas on where to take the company. It is a very exciting time to be at Gaidge and we look forward to partnering with each of you to help accelerate your growth!

BENTSON: ANY FINAL REMARKS YOU'D LIKE TO LEAVE WITH OUR READERS?

MOYNIHAN: Gaidge is committed to our clients and we invite ideas, suggestions, and requests that continue to deepen our partnership. We look forward to collaborating with our clients to solve their business challenges and provide a more effective Gaidge, to enable practices to maintain market share, accelerate growth, and manage day-to-day operations. 📱



TRAVELING TO PERU

By Dr. David Walker

A short flight from the Peruvian capital of Lima, and a mere 12 miles from the ancient Incan capital of Cusco, lies the Sacred Valley of the Incas. Formed by the Urubamba River flowing through the Andes, the Sacred Valley is most famous for including the ruins of the Incan city of Machu Picchu but also contains an array of sites and activities that make it an eco-tourists dream destination. From hiking through the backcountry,

interacting with llamas and native Quechua speakers, riding ATVs through the Andes, and sleeping in clear pods suspended atop a 1200 foot cliff, a visit to the Sacred Valley is sure to keep you entertained!

Two accommodations in the Sacred Valley deserve particular mention. The first, Explora Valle Sagrado, is a Chilean hotel “chain,” specializing in challenging what it means to be

an all-inclusive. Explora focuses on providing what they term “the luxury of the essential,” and they promote themselves as a place to disconnect from your day-to-day life and connect with your natural surroundings.

Gourmet meals and an open bar satisfy the traditional expectation of an all-inclusive, but the true value of Explora Valle Sagrado is found in the daily explorations you design in



MIDWAY THROUGH AN 8 HOUR HIKE TO THE REMAINS OF THE HUCHUY QOSCO PALACES; LED BY OUR EXPLORA VALLE SAGRADO GUIDE, THIS TREK REACHES OVER 14,000 FEET OF ELEVATION.



ACCOMMODATIONS AT SKYLIDGE ADVENTURE SUITES, SUSPENDED FROM THE SIDE OF A 1200FT MOUNTAIN WITH A 300 DEGREE VIEW OF THE BEAUTIFUL VALLEY BELOW

conjunction with their knowledgeable guides. These explorations include such things as a guided visit to Machu Picchu, mountain bike treks, and high altitude hiking. All activities are catered to fit the experience and desires of the guest. A truly amazing hotel and one of the best examples of customer service you will find.

The Sacred Valley is also home to the soon-to-be-famous Skylodge Adventure Suites. The Skylodge consists of three clear sleeping pods and one relatively large dining pod suspended from the side of a cliff face overlooking the valley below. To reach the skylodge guests must first ascend a 400 meter via ferrata, or cable assisted rock climb. The climb itself takes around 90 minutes to two hours depending on the number in

the group (limited by there only being three sleeping pods) and how often you stop to admire the amazing views of the Urubamba river below. Dinner is prepared and a bottle of wine provided for each group when you reach the top. The pods are relatively spacious and beds comfortable; the views are unbeatable! The following morning breakfast is provided before beginning the descent, via a series of zip lines!

The Sacred Valley is unique in that it is remote, but not distant and the major Peruvian cultural hub of Cusco is only a short car ride away and makes for a great addition to a visit to the valley. For those interested in outdoor adventure and cultural immersion this is definitely a trip worth taking. 🏔️



PRIVATE ATV TOUR THROUGH REMOTE ANDEAN VILLAGES TO VISIT INCAN RUINS



ASCENDING TO THE SKYLodge REQUIRES GUESTS TO TRAVERSE A 400M VIA FERRATA, A CABLE ASSISTED ROCK CLIMB

DISRUPTED:

“When the world changes the rules change.” - Seth Godin

Now, more than ever, change is upon us. And who's at the wheel? The modern consumer. And it's all based on what they want and need.

Business, new technology, and customer preferences are changing faster than ever. And with each invention, and each new platform of communication, reaching consumers in a meaningful way gets more complicated. So, the question that comes to mind is: are we using this new technology and knowledge of modern consumers to our best advantage or are we in denial?

This is a pivotal moment. A moment where you get to decide what's next for your practice. Do you stay in the driver's seat of change or do you fear it and step on the brakes?

To feel empowered by change and take hold of the opportunities that present themselves takes guts. And because of this desire to succeed and change with the times, more and more industries have reinvented themselves to meet the demands of their consumers. Thanks to multiple apps on smartphones and laptops, it's easier than ever to get things delivered right to your door with just the click of a button.

Today, you don't have to leave your house at all. You can buy clothes, books, beds, TV's and even cars right from the comfort of your couch. Even groceries can be delivered to your home at a designated time without you even setting foot in the store or waiting in line at the checkout.

Yet, despite this push towards a hassle-free lifestyle, healthcare has made little progress toward meeting modern consumers' demands. There are a lot of great reasons why healthcare hasn't caught up yet, but that doesn't mean one should ignore progress. The want and need still exists. And that leaves the market primed for you to make your move and make your practice a trailblazer.

Let's face it, putting our heads in the sand, or complaining that we wish competition would go away and everything would stay the same aren't options. However, preparing to meet our new challenges head-on to create a strong and vibrant practice is the opportunity.

4 BOLD IDEAS TO DRIVE ADDITIONAL REVENUE THROUGH DISRUPTION:

1) HYBRID PRACTICE MODELS

Aside from your traditional practice approach, thinking about an alternative idea that could provide a service to your customers that they would pay for is key. For example, Smile Direct Club (SDC) provides a hassle free, cheaper alternative to the traditional orthodontic model. These are the patients that would have most likely never stepped foot into an orthodontic practice. SDC makes it

easier to get orthodontic treatment so it's expanding the market. But, it would be better if orthodontists in the brick-and-mortar practices explored the tools and technology available and adopted some of the hassle-free conveniences and lowered the barrier for patients. For instance, using video conferencing, text messaging and secure email to communicate with patients in your practice builds a relationship with them and fosters trust. After all, trust and familiarity between you and your patients is invaluable and can lead to happier patients and more referrals.

Be creative. Come up with interesting ideas and offerings that other practices in your area aren't offering, then provide it. Do a customer survey asking them what they wish your office provided. Also, look at other successful practices around the country to see what unique ways they've tackled increasing their revenue stream.

Currently, the average patient draw is typically a 26-minute drive time around the practice. Why? Well, because patients will choose what's convenient to them. But with advancements in technology, we can work to expand that market draw. Maybe if patients had fewer in-person appointments, they wouldn't care about the distance so much. Maybe consultation appointments can be handled via online questionnaire or video chat. Or, perhaps a second location doesn't mean a fully-staffed office with expensive overhead, but a much cheaper mall kiosk. These are just a few market expansion opportunities we see orthodontist exploring around the country.

New Rules for a New Type of Customer

By Angela Weber, CMO OrthoSynetics

2) APPEAL TO THE DIGITAL GENERATION

In 2013, there were 7 billion devices worldwide connected to the Internet; that number is expected reach 75 billion by 2022—more than 100 times in fewer than ten years. This rapid growth in the number of people online, means more consumers are using the Internet as a resource for everything. This creates an opportunity to expand your typical reach to your website and social media platforms by becoming more active on platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. Case in point, the influx of consumer communication via Facebook messenger is astounding. And every practice should be taking advantage of this quick and easy form of communication.

Consumers crave ease and order. Why? Just look at their lives. Demanding jobs, families – life is pulling them this way and that. So, make it easy on them. Start with your online experience and simplify everything. Make it easy for them by making everything they need: contact information, pricing, location, testimonials, results –just a single click away. If it takes 3 or 4 clicks for your visitors to get the information they need, you run the risk of losing them.

3) CREATE VALUE FOR PATIENTS

Consumers have always been opinionated, but now they have social media channels at their fingertips just waiting for them to express every positive experience and every aggravation. So, keep

them happy. Because if the practices in your area aren't meeting their consumers' needs, you can bet another innovative practice will swoop in to give it to them. We think that innovative practice should be your practice.

You can meet the needs of these tech-savvy consumers on many levels: convenience, quality, fun, attractiveness, connection through social media, improving their health by looking out for them in a personal way, and self-actualization. It's not realistic to compete on all levels, so choose wisely. Think about how will you own your market, and then do it.

4) MARKET DIRECT TO CONSUMER

It's time to stop dabbling in marketing and really go for it. Just think, there are so many more opportunities for orthodontists to use when trying to reach prospects these days. 15 years ago, there were only a handful of marketing channels available to us. And if none of them worked well for your market, then you were out of luck. Also, the marketing menu was limited to channels like TV, radio, and newspaper, which can become costly. Today, there are many channels, and it has become extremely cost effective to reach millions of people in a more personal and organic way. This means orthodontists have more opportunities to go directly to consumers allowing them to control their own destinies. And who doesn't want that?

Think about this: how would you solve

problems if you didn't have the constraints of your past experiences? We bet you'd venture out of your comfort zone and traditional ways of doing things a lot faster. Yet we know that change can be a little intimidating, but there is so much opportunity (and potential profits) for those willing to think "untraditionally."

If you haven't read the book *Blue Ocean Strategies*, I highly recommend it. The book focuses on lasting success that comes from creating "Blue Oceans" which are untapped market spaces prime for growth. Companies which focus primarily on beating the competition are not seizing new growth opportunities. Instead, they're stuck bobbing and weaving, making only incremental improvements. The "Blue Ocean" concept is based on opening up new market spaces and seizing new growth by paying little attention to what the competition is doing. The focus is more on offering buyers a leap in value that makes the competition irrelevant.

The traditional orthodontic practice won't be obsolete, but evolution is coming. And we want you to be ahead of it instead of trying to catch up. Do you have an idea, but in need of a sounding board to work out the details? OrthoSynetics can help. No matter what changes you're thinking of making, thoughtful planning is important. This ensures the next move you make is the right one. 🎲



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High Frequency Vibration Can Reduce or Eliminate Pain During Aligner Treatment

By Dr. Jonathan L. Nicozisis

The orthodontic specialist has many considerations when treatment planning orthodontic care such as aesthetics, treatment options, and appliance design. Additionally, patient comfort, compliance and how long the planned treatment might take must also be considered. Thankfully, technologies help individualize treatment plans to the specific needs of both patients and orthodontists. It is in our interest to incorporate ways to add value to our patients' experience. Applications that make the process a faster and more pleasant experience while addressing cosmetic concerns help towards this endeavor. One patient concern associated with orthodontic treatment is fear of pain. A study by De Souza, et al., noted that 58.3% of the subjects cited orthodontic pain as their primary complaint.¹ Fear of pain was followed by length of treatment time. I find that two technologies address these issues — Propel micro-osteoperforations (MOPs) to accelerate tooth movement, and the VPro5 high-frequency vibration (HFV) aligner seating device to alleviate pain. While the HFV device is primarily an aligner seater, it has more recently also demonstrated its capability to reduce pain during orthodontic therapy. This is an additional advantage of using this device in the orthodontic treatment process.

Invisalign® technology addresses many patients' cosmetic concerns about orthodontic treatment, as patients are able to correct their malocclusion without visible braces. The HFV allows aligners to perform better. When the patient uses this device 5 minutes per day, the aligners fit

and adapt better onto the clinical crowns. As a result of the better fit, the aligners function and perform better, moving teeth more effectively and efficiently, and even, in some cases, reducing the likelihood of refinements. In most patients that I have treated, adding VPro5™ HFV has eliminated the need to do additional MOPs procedures for an average case.

“It is in our interest to incorporate ways to add value to our patients' experience. Applications that make the process a faster and more pleasant experience while addressing cosmetic concerns help towards this endeavor.”

Because patients also began reporting a marked decrease (or even elimination) of pain when switching aligners, I, along with colleagues who were receiving similar patient feedback, decided to begin recording our patients feedback to monitor this phenomenon. Later this data would become part of a clinical trial.

Dr. Thomas Shipley, Dr. Gary Brigham, Dr. John Sparaga, and I performed a retrospective, multi-centered, observational

study entitled, “Reduction in Pain to Orthodontic Forces Using a High-Frequency Pulse Vibration Device: A Clinical Trial” to evaluate the effect of a high-frequency vibration (HFV) device on orthodontic pain. The study investigated pain reports of 75 subjects at 4 study centers. Ratings of the treatment were separately measured both in-office and at-home for immediate and extended effect measures. The results showed that “use of HFV in conjunction with aligner treatment demonstrated a significant reduction in recorded pain scores versus control within 5 minutes of exchanging new aligners (p=0.006). Use of HFV demonstrated a significant reduction in recorded pain scores versus control over a 7-day period following aligner exchange (p=0.018).²

Managing pain associated with orthodontic treatment with a method other than pain relief medications would be beneficial on many levels. It has been shown that taking pain relievers can have an adverse effect on tooth movement. Studies have shown that using NSAIDs to manage pain may negatively impact tooth movement through decreased prostaglandin synthesis, downregulated osteoclastic activity and a decrease in the inflammatory bone resorption process.^{3,4} A study by Krukemeyer, et al., reported that patients agreed, or agreed strongly, with the statement “I have pain for days after an appointment.” With HFV for 5 minutes per day, this clinical trial suggests reduced pain is possible.⁵ Therefore, an alternate way of relieving pain, that also has a positive effect on treatment,

PATIENT NO.1: DIAGNOSIS: CLASS 1 WITH CROWDING. EXPECTED TREATMENT TIME: 18 MONTHS. ACTUAL TIME: 5 MONTHS TO REFINEMENT. USED HFV PROACTIVELY.



would be a welcome discovery. Previous articles have demonstrated that high-frequency vibration was effective at reducing pain originating from teeth.^{6,7} This study provides evidence that HFV can significantly reduce orthodontic pain and discomfort without supplemental pharmacological analgesia.

The reasons why HFV can effectively reduce or eliminate pain stems from several possible theories. The “gate control” theory suggests that pain can be reduced by simultaneous action of nerve fibers that conduct non-noxious stimuli.⁸ It is also possible that vibration may help relieve compression of the periodontal ligament, promoting normalized circulation.⁹

For this article, two patients from my practice illustrate effective pain management from VPro5 HFV. The first patient (Figures 1 - 2) wanted clear aligner therapy, however, was worried about discomfort. Her husband is an oral surgeon. Both the patient and her husband were happily surprised by the outcome achieved in just 5 months, changing aligners every 7 days and using VPro5 for 5 minutes each night starting at the beginning of treatment (Stage 1). The patient described the pain-relieving effect as “way beyond [her] expectation.”

Patient No. 2 is an adult male, who was dissatisfied with his smile. (Figures 3 - 5) The treatment plan was to resolve lower crowding and intrude upper anterior teeth to allow cosmetic restoration including four composite veneers. Adding to the complexity of this case was the desire for shorter treatment

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PATIENT NO. 2: DIAGNOSIS: CLASS 1 WITH CROWDING. EXPECTED TREATMENT TIME: 14 MONTHS. ACTUAL TIME: 7.5 MONTHS TO REFINEMENT. ONE MOP APPLICATION TO UPPER AND LOWER 2-2 AND LOWER LEFT QUADRANT AT 2 MONTHS (ALIGNER 4) FOLLOWED BY HFV

time as he was getting married in ten months. Despite movements flagged as challenging, particularly the intrusion of the significantly worn upper anterior teeth in a 67 y.o., MOPs was initiated at aligner Number 4 (2 months into treatment) to provide greater predictability and control of tooth movement. VPro5 was given to the patient at the same time to maximize efficiency by ensuring complete dual arch aligner seating and extend the effects of the single MOP treatment. Spontaneous patient feedback was that there was much less discomfort associated with changing aligners after VPro5 as compared to the first two months of treatment without VPro5. Treatment progressed predictably at a significantly accelerated pace. Within 7.5 months all required movements were complete. The patient was very excited to be just one appointment away from a complete cosmetic smile restoration.

The study underscored what patients had already been telling me about their use of HFV each night during aligner treatment. In the study, “HFV subjects demonstrated a rapid reduction in pain within 3 minutes, and a continuous decline in pain scores to levels approaching no detectable pain... 30% of HFV patients reported zero detectable discomfort within 5 minutes of use.” It was also interesting to note that 99.6% of patients were compliant with the 5 minutes each day of wearing the HFV device. The clinically meaningful immediate and extended reduction in orthodontic pain associated with HFV has the potential for many beneficial results to the orthodontic practice. Patients who are in less pain are more compliant with treatment regimen and appointments. In addition, happy patients are likely to refer family and friends to the practice, thus perpetuating a positive feedback loop of new patient referrals.

The old saying, “No pain, no gain,” can now be edited to “No Pain? No Problem.” with VPro5! 🎲





TRAVELING TO SPAIN

By Dr. David Majeroni

My wife and I are lucky to be around so many great lovers of life. The inspiration for this specific trip started from one of my patients. He's constantly doing these baller trips like going to Saint-Tropez, France or sailing the Aegean Sea. So I asked him, "Hey, we're going to Spain, where should we go?" He said, "Without a doubt, go to the Costa Brava."

Costa Brava is north of Barcelona up to the France border, and it's on the Mediterranean. We flew into Barcelona and rented a car (Sixt). Be sure to come prepared with an international drivers license, you can get one from AAA.



Me and My daughter in front of our Spanish home (600 years old).

When we landed, we drove an hour north to a 300-acre winery called Mas Pages that also acts as a Bed and Breakfast. There's even a pool on site. Mas Pages is run by a Belgium couple. The husband was a CEO of a big company and when they both retired, they wanted a new project so they started a winery. Once they realized how long the winery business cycle was they decided they

needed some additional income, so they turned their 600 year-old landowner home into a bed and breakfast. We stayed there for 8 nights and used it as our base camp for day trips and it was amazing.

They had an incredible breakfast with fresh-squeezed orange juice and garden fresh tomatoes that were insanely good. They would also have chefs come in and cook a gourmet dinner in the evening. Dinner in Spain starts between 8:00 and 10:00 at night and it's a two-to-three hour event. It's amazing, totally different than the dinners here in the states. The first night was filled with laughter and fun meeting the other couples that were staying. Most places in Spain that are high-end do not allow children but this place allowed us to bring our daughter. She ended up being the little star of the house.



Fresh fruits and tomatoes picked from their garden every morning.

Day two we headed off to a beach 10 minutes away called La Fosca. La Fosca is a white sand beach with Spanish families everywhere. There's a two-mile walk along the water that is really cliffy and mountainous. As you follow the trail it goes by some Roman ruins and we were the only one out there. There were these

hidden beaches along the path and you could walk down these beaches and have it all to yourself. It was unbelievable.



The trail along the water from La Fosca. On the upper right and to the left are Roman ruins you can climb on.

We also went to the Town of Begur, it is a very small town 20 minutes away. It's on a hill that overlooks the ocean, and there's a lookout point with a castle tower that's 2,000 years old. The streets in Begur are really small and really narrow. It's a medieval town.

In Begur, there are a couple beaches. There's one called Sa Tuna. You drive down this canyon for 20 minutes and you arrive at this opening in the canyon with the most incredible beach. You can park on the side, pay 3 dollars and go down the canyon to the beach and snorkel and jump off the cliffs. The water is just perfectly warm. Going to Spain at the end of August is the best time.



Sa Tuna beach - down a canyon, one of the coolest beaches I've ever been to. It's about 40 yards wide with large flat round rocks.



View from castle looking out over the town of Begur



Narrow street in Begur

Day four, we went to the medieval town of Pals. In Pals, the whole town is medieval and nothing has really changed. There are other surrounding villages within this entire area another one we enjoyed was Siurana, Alt Empordà. The uniqueness of this area, in contrast to other more well-known areas, is that there are so few people. You have these villages almost to yourself. You can just arrive in the town and find things to do, it doesn't have to be overly planned. Each town with its history takes an afternoon to explore fully. We would typically get up around 10 am, have breakfast, go out and explore,

come back around 3 pm for our daughters hour nap, then go back out around 5 pm, typically to a local beach. There are so many beaches. Here are some of our favorites: Sa Tuna, Cala Aiguablava, Tamariu, Platja d'es Codolar, Playa Les Muscleres (which is in front of an ancient Roman city). These beaches almost never have lifeguards and little rules unlike in America. People are super clean and respectful in Spain so the beach culture is outstanding. There is almost always cliff jumping, snorkeling and ice cream at the beach bar. Then we would go to the town centers around 9 pm, eat and walk around and return home around 11 pm or 12 pm. Kids are out everywhere at these hours as this is the culture.



Walking at night in Palafrugell - life begins around 8 pm and doesn't really get going until 10 pm or 11 pm.



Castle at Tossa De Mar - This town is remote and propped up on the side of the mountain.

We then went further north to a city called Empuriabrava. Empuriabrava is the Venice of Spain, it's one of the

largest cities on water. It wasn't nearly as romantic as Venice, but it was nice to see how they do boat life in Spain.

The entire Costa Brava is geographically divided. There are massive steep mountains everywhere that divide villages and beaches. Over the furthest North Mountain Range is a charming coastal village called Cadaques.

Cadaques is a beautiful fishing village that is isolated. Long ago pirates would attack and plunder the village so the town never grew to more than a dozen people or so. As the government became stronger, the pirates no longer attacked and over the last 200 years its grown into a beautiful quaint fishing village with amazing beaches.

We'd walk the streets at night and families are everywhere with kids running around. Little kids are selling things on the streets because families are on vacation and in the evening around 10 pm we'd buy little bracelets or whatever from these kids. The people of that area are just wonderful and are so nice. We really got into drinking coffee, overlooking the water, and having great conversations.



The local kids make and sell their crafts. This is their lemonade stands!!!

We spent three nights right next to Salvador Dali's epic house. Salvador Dali was a crazy, ahead-of-his-time artist that put large eggs on his roof. He was into things that portrayed fertility so his pool was designed in the shape of, well, I'll let

your imagination go there. He's just crazy, tripped out. He lived in this town called Portlligat and was practically the only one there for a hundred years. We stayed at the same hotel that the friends of Salvador Dali would stay at. It's literally a hundred feet from Salvador Dali's house.



At the pool of Salvador Dali. He was extremely eccentric.



Taking us into caves. The fisherman's boat we chartered knew the coast well.

We chartered a private boat out to the furthest point into the Mediterranean called Cross de Cruz. The boat had no life preservers. The guy was a fisherman, smoking and missing half of his teeth, and he took us out on his paddling boat. You go out there and you see the coast and the water's just emerald.

You can have him drop you off at a private or hidden beach you see along the way, but good luck on getting back. Since our daughter wasn't even two, we would make her these little play pools from the rocks or sand.



We found a great beach. The beaches in Spain come in two varieties, rock and sand. This was a rock one, we built a "hot tub" for our daughter to play in because the water can get deep. While we were there a boat came up serving fresh mojitos. He would crush the mint. We talked to him and he was a guy that converted a boat into a concession stand and he would travel up and down the coast going into these coves and serving the people. What a nice life!

We went to a town called Pubol, where Salvador Dali's wife had a castle. The castle, the history of the castle, and what happened there is fascinating. She wanted an Italian castle. Instead, he bought her this castle, and when he bought it, she said, "The only way you can buy me this castle instead of an Italian castle, is if every time you want to visit me you have to ask for permission." It was a really interesting relationship.



Instead of normal fish for the fountain he thought it would be funny if they were piranhas. Salvador Dali was unique...



This is a fountain of an elephant with mosquito legs. This guy was a genius.

There's a museum in Figueres that he designed to be one of the craziest places that you've ever walked into, almost like a Disneyland or Willy Wonka palace. He was so ahead of his time. He was into 3D art and virtual reality. The guy was just a genius. There's even a room he made of Mae West. When you're up close it looks like furniture, but when you step 50 yards back you can see how the pieces make a picture of Mae West. This museum is also where he was buried.

Then we drove down to Barcelona where we remained for the rest of the trip. We stayed at a hotel called La Praktika Bakery Hotel, so it's a bakery on the first floor and up above is the hotel. When you're sleeping, you can smell the bakery and the breakfast was phenomenal.

The best thing to do in Barcelona is to take a private tour. It's well worth the money to have a tour guide drive you around, drop you off in front of all the sites to see then pick you up once the sightseeing was over. We spent a couple days on the beach in Barceloneta, which is a new post-Olympic town.



One of Dali's masterpieces. This was built at the turn of the century. He could foresee that the cars being made in America would eventually need a place to park so he built a parking garage in this building. Way ahead of his time. This was early 1900's. Look at the curvature to the building. He was incredible.



Our return flight got canceled so they rebooked us from first class to coach because I had to get back for patients. It was a long 13 hours, we almost lost our minds!!!



La SagradaFamilia is a masterpiece designed by Antoni Gaudí. He designed the glass to represent nature. You literally feel like you are in a forest when you are in this building. It is an engineering and artistic masterpiece of the world. They have been building this for over 100 years.

Park Guell is another Gaudí masterpiece. He was one of the first to use recycled building materials. Every one of those pieces was collected at night from broken plates, the garbage in the city, and more. This was also one of the worlds first out-of-city developments overlooking the city.



Walking the Gothic part of the city. Eily was mezmorized by it all.



Our tour guide for the city. He was incredible.

Overall we were in Spain for 22 days. I asked a friend to cover for me in case of any patient emergencies and I have a great team to take care of the practice and patients.

Getting away from the practice for longer periods of time is centering. We currently take 16 weeks off a year. We have reversed engineered our life and practice. We start with what we want and then work backwards. My mentor Rael Bernstein taught me to be obsessive about seeing patients, do whatever you can while you are seeing them, same day starts, same day appliance removal, the works. I was lucky enough to do it from day one of opening my practice. I've met many along the way that say they can't do this or that for one reason or another. If you keep telling yourself that then you are right. In my mind, one can do whatever they want.

Also, thanks to Ben for constantly questioning everything we are all doing and for inspiring all of us to really take control of our practices and our lives. 🎲





WHAT WOULD YOU DO

If an Aligner Store opened down the street?

By Dr. Jennifer Eisenhuth

Do you remember the good old days, when your competition was the orthodontist on the other side of town? When you would see the doctor at lunch during the local meeting and be friendly while inwardly rolling your eyes at his style? You quickly forgot him when the pediatric dentists entered the orthodontic arena and grabbed up your market share, putting braces on their own pedo patients like they were shooting fish in a barrel. Corporate dentistry has been an annoyance for many of us, as their patients are funneled into specialists on site. Color us flabbergasted when the primary care dentists jumped in as orthodontic suppliers holding weekend courses crammed in the tooth-movement basics while hawking their brackets. And now? An aligner technology that orthodontists welcomed and helped evolve barreled into our arena with blazing guns, exploding traditional referral patterns while far too many of us stood by watching with our mouths hanging open. And now this new technology/delivery

channel wants more and they want it fast. Direct consumer marketing has been phenomenally successful for them, notwithstanding the limitations of those fickle doctors who do the prescribing. It only stands to reason that this technology would open their own brick-and-mortar stores, doling out patients to doctors of their choosing, and nearly eliminating the need for doctors altogether. Of course, we did this to ourselves. We had to realize that encouraging technology that reduces the need for direct doctor services would turn our talents into more of a commodity than a service, and eventually make orthodontists nearly irrelevant. This aligner company is the beast that we created and it is hungry.

As we all know, in November, it was announced that an aligner-manufacturing company has opened a store in San Francisco. Is there a doctor in this store? No, no of course not. That doctor nonsense can be handled off-site or even remotely, eventually by the lowest bidder. Patients? Oh, you bet there are and this

is just the beginning. As a small business owner, it feels a bit like David against Goliath, although our javelins and spears are no match for this plastic beast. It's the ultimate love-hate relationship and orthodontists need to find a place to survive in this arena because this game-changer isn't leaving anytime soon.

Social media has buzzed with the opening of this store, and the predicted effect on the small business orthodontist are varied, although they all seem to agree on one particular thing: it isn't good. Many expect a reduction in their production, plus a reduction in profitability as fees tend to reduce with increased competition for the consumer. For some, it will be an annoyance. For others, it will be devastating. Perhaps a few can turn it into a time of growth? Regardless, plastic aligners have already changed how many of us practice today and with the opening of an aligner brand retail store, it is clear that more change is on the way. So how do we compete?



ALIGNERS ARE NOT FOR EVERYBODY (GASP!)

Not all parents like their kids chewing on plastic. Not all patients are compliant. Not all parents trust their kids, in the long run, to keep track of their aligners. We all have patients that would struggle with removable appliances, and luckily there are excellent alternatives that we've been using for decades. Aligners are tools, just like braces, functional appliances, retainers, headgears, etc. We have a toolbox and the ability to select the best one for each individual case.

"The dilemma that all health practitioners have at one time or another is managing patients who have their own ideas on the type of treatment they insist we use."

GET YOUR HEAD OUT OF THE SAND

If you prefer fixed appliances, that's ok. But if you aren't offering an aligner option in the first place, you're automatically sending patients out your door to your competitor who does. Why lose market share? If you believe that the aligner options are not ideal for the patient, tell them the pros and cons just like any other treatment option. The dilemma that all health practitioners have at one time or another is managing patients who have their own ideas on the type of treatment they insist we use. I can and will improve a malocclusion with tools that are not my first choice after educating patients on my limitations using that system. I'm not saying you need to use aligners on everyone or even anyone, but you should have them available as a treatment option for those who desire them.

INCREASE YOUR INTERNET PRESENCE IN THE COMMUNITY

The patients who visit an aligner store are on the internet. If you don't have a great SEO guy or a pay-per-click manager, it's time to find one. Google algorithms don't care which orthodontist comes up on the first page. Google wants the best SEO or the highest pay-per-click address... they have no bias regarding specialty, as we are all on an equal playing field on the internet.

INVEST IN YOUR NEW EXAM EXPERIENCE

If you believe fixed appliances are better, be sure you educate patients on your reasoning. Do you have before and after photos that support your work? Real cases are better at building customer confidence over manufacturer's photos. Is your TC trained well? You don't have much time to build rapport, educate, handle objections and close so you better be good at it when you get the chance – a great TC is essential to do so. Your job is to evaluate the patient for treatment and make the best recommendations. A great TC will support your treatment. Improve your conversion ratio for those that come to your door and you're automatically increasing your production.

TECHNOLOGY IS A DOUBLE EDGED SWORD

Yes, we can thank advancements in technology for this increased threat of aligner stores which may increase our competition. A tool has been created for non-specialists to move teeth and we even have manufacturers servicing the public directly. However, this explosive technology has given us more options to choose from and can offer better control of both production and cost. 3-D printers are only getting better and costs a fraction of typical lab fees of corporate manufactured aligners. This allows us an in-house solution to compete for the more price-sensitive consumer.

"I can't see into the future any more than the next orthodontist. However, I acknowledge that the tide is rapidly changing. We need to stay on top of our game and evolve to keep pace with technology along with the new demands of our customers."

KEEP THE FAITH

Have faith in the average consumer. How many of us have been online searching for a service provider, landing on a broker site where they recommend a certain business based on our location? I tap that back-arrow immediately when it happens. Most of us don't need a company rep telling us where to go. Word of mouth, Google reviews, and social media have a hand on who we do business with. Keep your brand strong. We are not commodities, although these big box aligner manufacturers will sell more product if consumers think we are. Both aligners and fixed appliances are tools and should be understood as such.

I can't see into the future any more than the next orthodontist. However, I acknowledge that the tide is rapidly changing. We need to stay on top of our game and evolve to keep pace with technology along with the new demands of our customers. This evolution is necessary for the continued success of your practice and those who resist will find themselves behind the pack. Play to win, rather than planning to lose.

In the words of Thomas Edison, "There is a way to do it better. Find it." 🎲



TRAVELING TO EUROPE

By Dr. Ben Burris and Bridget Burris

In late September and early October, we took the family for a week in Florence and the surrounding area. We flew Norwegian Air from Orlando to London Gatwick and can't say enough good things about the flight. The first-class cabin is much like an upgraded domestic first class cabin and for the price, we were blown away by the value. We plan on using Norwegian often in the future when going to Europe. We had a fantastic time and highly recommend a European trip for travelers of all ages. Here are the highlights:

FLORENCE HIGHLIGHTS

We stayed at the Palazzo Vecchietti Suites and the location was perfect. The Piazza della Repubblica is less than a block from the hotel offered a convenient place for the kids to run around at any time day or night - they loved the carousel and the street performers. Everything we wanted to do in Florence was a short walk from the hotel and our trip was built around that fact. We used Italy Luxury Tours to plan our activities, transport us and provide local guides.

PISA - We did a day trip to Pisa on our first day in Florence. The hour and a half car ride gave an opportunity for napping since we were all jet lagged so that was nice but we had no problem staying awake once we arrived. Unlike many famous places we have visited the tower lives up to expectations and we had a blast taking the kids up to the top. Be sure to reserve your time ahead and show up at your appointed time as they are serious about who gets to go up.

COOKING CLASS - This was a big hit with everyone. The kids especially enjoyed "getting to do stuff" instead of just watching. There were 6 of us so we did a private course

but they have group classes as well. The chef was incredibly good at engaging the family, teaching as well as being an excellent cook. We learned a great deal that we use at home and we made a family memory that will last a lifetime. In Tavola Cooking courses is who we worked with.

SAN GIMIGNANO - This little town was one of our favorite parts of the entire European trip. Picturesque, clean, not overrun with people and tons to see and do. We spent a half day here but we should have spent the day or even spent the night. There are some great little hotels there and next time we go we will SFSU one night in San Gimignano. This little city is fantastic and embodies the image we had in our heads of a quaint Italian town set among vineyards. There is a good deal to do and next time we travel to Florence I bet we spend one night in San Gimignano. The kids had a blast walking around town. There is a world-famous gelato shop, some great local artists selling original watercolors and oil and some excellent photo opportunities.

From San Gimignano, we went to a winery where we learned about wine and vinegar making in the region. This was not our favorite part of the trip and we wouldn't do it again but the food was good and the experience pleasant.

WINE - Local wines are plentiful, cheap and fantastic (except at the winery tour).

VINEGAR - the vinegar is an experience in itself and worth investigating. There are a myriad of options. Try them all.

SIENA - Worth the trip for sure to see the site of the horse racing in the central square as well as walking the streets. We enjoyed our half day there.

FOOD TOUR - We has a guide for a food tour of Florence and it was another

highlight. Truffles, pastries, coffee, wine, cheese and a wide array of pastas along with some insight into local history made for a great half day. The Mercato Centrale was fanatic and the kids had a blast exploring. We gave them a handful of euros and sent them off to buy chocolate. They had to figure it out or do without chocolate so guess what happened? Great life lessons...

LEATHER GOODS - next to the Mercato Centrale is a labyrinth of vendors selling leather goods among other things. Beware the famous “double-sided leather” which is how local vendors embellish unlined leather goods. Of course everyone has their own taste but the best leather goods we found by far (and we looked at every stall and store) was Adriano Firenze. We bought bags for ourselves and our friends and ordered our Christmas gifts from Adriano as well.

Letting the kids range and engage was a big part of having them in Europe. They are 8 and 9 and though our tendency is to limit them, every time we give them latitude we are shocked by how capable they are. Mark Twain once said “Never let school get in the way of a good education” and we couldn’t agree more. The experience and confidence they gained is invaluable and will serve them well.

“The richness of the history and culture in Florence are incredible and reminds us of how young a country the US is.”

We picked up several original pieces of art in Florence and love having these little reminders of our trip displayed in our home. There are styles to fit all tastes and budgets.

The richness of the history and culture in Florence are incredible and reminds us of how young a country the US is. Whatever your interest you can find what you’re looking for. We particularly enjoyed learning about the Medici in their hometown.

The cathedrals are fantastic and numerous but honestly after you’ve seen a few hundred you’ve seen them all... We hit the major ones but left the others alone. We try hard not to do the obligatory just because everyone else does – especially with the kids along.

Not far from our hotel is the famous Il Porcellino. Be sure to stop by and touch the snout for luck and put a coin in the pig’s mouth to see how it falls. The kids loved it.

Ponte Vecchio is the world-famous bridge in Florence lined with jewelry stores and surrounded by all other forms of shops. The views are great, the people watching entertaining and we even picked up a few things we couldn’t live without.

Pay attention to the traffic signs in Florence and you’re in for a treat. There’s a Banksy style graffiti artist who defaces signs in interesting ways.

DAVID - No trip to Florence is complete without seeing David. It’s as impressive as you can imagine and mind-blowing to think that one man carved this masterpiece without modern tools or much planning. It was interesting to see the statue in person, note the strangeness of proportions and wonder if it was intentional (and why). Another memory the kids won’t soon forget.

UFFIZI MUSEUM - A must and you can spend a great deal of time here if art is your thing. Know that David is in a different museum and you’ll want to see both. Having our 8 and 9-year-olds with us was challenging but we solved this by taking them to see Botticelli’s works and then I took them out for gelato and carousel rides while Bridget and her mom explored the museum more thoroughly. The kids were impressed seeing the Birth of Venus and they were delighted to inform me that



Venus came from Uranus... They thought this part of mythology was particularly fun to tell me and I don't care as long as they are taking an interest!

At the end of the week, we sent Bridget's parents and our kids home and boarded the high-speed train from Florence to Venice.

VENICE HIGHLIGHTS

TRAIN TO VENICE - We enjoyed the train ride and thought the extra cost for business class well worth it though we hear coach is more than acceptable.

The grand canal was bigger, more impressive and much busier than we imagined. We got a solid eyeful on the water taxi ride from the train station to our hotel. We stayed at the Baglioni Luna Hotel and were very happy with the accommodations but the location was the best part of this hotel. The entrance to St Mark's Square was a few paces away and we spent a good deal of time there. It wasn't what we expected exactly but the square and all its flourishes exceeded expectations. The cathedral was interesting in the way that all of them are. Probably our favorite time on St Mark's

square was when we sat at an outside table with a view of the Grand Canal, listened to the bands playing on the square and watched the people go by. We particularly enjoyed watching one of the many rose salesman ply his trade by "giving" a flower to a lady passing by and then demanding payment from her companion. We watched for a couple hours and never got tired of it.

Venice's commerce area is Mercati de Rialto and like just about everything else, it is in easy walking distance of the hotel. We enjoyed just walking around and people watching. The fish market was particularly enjoyable but know that it's not open on Sunday or Monday so plan accordingly (and eat steak instead of seafood on Monday!)

While walking the narrow streets of Venice it's easy to follow the crowd and take the same routes over and over but we'd encourage you to intentionally explore the less traveled streets. You never know what you'll find.

GONDOLAS AND WATER TAXIS - We did a gondola ride because that's what you do but honestly we enjoyed the water taxis

much more. Both are heavily regulated, protected and very expensive. A short water taxi or gondola ride cost us more than the flight from Venice to Paris but when in Rome... or in this case Venice, both are worth doing.

“Three days is plenty of time to stay in Venice in our opinion as long as you stay in the heart of the city so you can explore by waking.”

MURANO - This little island is a must see. We did a day of island hopping via water taxi and started with the glassmaker's shops on Murano. The island is beautiful, the shops lining the canal picturesque and Bridget found a few things that she just couldn't live without. It's fun having some



glass pieces to remind us of our time in Italy.

BURANO - We'd never heard of this island until we visited but we really enjoyed our time there. Burano is known for cookies and lace and we tried a bit of both. Great photo opportunities so come prepared.

RESTAURANTS – We tried several and they were all great. It's hard to go wrong but you'll want to make reservations ahead of time.

We took a day trip to see Padua and Treviso and we wouldn't visit either town again or recommend that others take the time to do so.

Three days is plenty of time to stay in Venice in our opinion as long as you stay in the heart of the city so you can explore by wading. It's worth the cost to stay in a great location as transportation costs will kill you otherwise. We took a water taxi to the airport and caught an EasyJet flight to Paris. We were surprised by how easy and inexpensive our trip was. In Paris, we used Uber to get to the hotel and around in general. We love Uber because there is no language barrier, the transaction happens automatically and it's highly unlikely that your driver will take you the long way to pad his fare. Taxis in Paris not so much...

PARIS HIGHLIGHTS

We stayed in the Shangri-La hotel just across the Seine from the Eiffel Tower. We've stayed in Shangri-La hotels all over the world and they never disappoint. Having a view of the Tower from our room made the two days we spent in Paris seem like much more.

Montmartre, the hill upon which Sacre Coeur sits, is a must and we spent a morning there mostly looking at all the original art by local artists. As is our custom we took a bit of Paris home with us!

Arc de Triomphe is another icon of the city or lights and a walk down Champs Elysees is never disappointing with all the people watching and chic shops.

No trip to Paris is complete without visiting the Eiffel Tower and, in addition,

there are two restaurants to choose from if you plan ahead. This time we chose Victor Hugo's - a Michelin starred eatery with great service and an unmatched view.

Notre Dame and Sainte-Chapelle are not too far from the Eiffel Tower and we'd recommend both despite my lack of affinity cathedrals.

We decided to take a bicycle rickshaw at one point during our trip and learned a valuable lesson - be sure to read the fine print on the price list (prices are for one passenger) and agree upon a total fee before sitting down. Small stuff but annoying. Oh well, education is expensive.

The Louvre and Il Jaconde (Mona Lisa) are something we never tire of and worth the trip downtown. You could spend weeks in The Louvre so pick your strategy of what to see and plan on coming back again.

We took the high-speed train from Paris to London and again it was a very pleasant experience. The accommodations and food in business class were worth every dime and we plan on utilizing the train system much more on our next European excursion. Uber in London was as expected and we spent the next couple days at The Luton Hoo with our friends from The Invisible Orthodontist. Bridget and I talked to a fantastic group of orthodontist and team members about how to improve our customer service and patient experience in an ever-changing world. Can't say enough good things about our British colleagues.

As you may have guessed this entire European trip was created around the speaking engagement in the U.K. Honestly we had no intention of going to Iceland but while searching for return flight from London we discovered that Iceland Air's first class cabin (again it's like a domestic first class, not a lie flat) was very reasonably priced and they allow up to a ten day stopover in Iceland for no additional charge. This made visiting Iceland a no-brainer! We hired Nine Worlds to plan our Iceland adventure and were well satisfied with the results.

ICELAND HIGHLIGHTS

Upon landing at KEF airport, we were met by a driver and taken to the Blue Lagoon hot spring spas. It was an interesting experience and worth the trip but a few hours is plenty of time there. After hitting the springs (and running into an orthodontist and his family) we had dinner at the onsite restaurant which was very good. It's hard to go wrong with seafood or lamb in Iceland!

From the Blue Lagoon, our driver took us 2.5 hours along the coast to Skalakot Country Lodge. This hotel is a working sheep and horse farm and the owner/operator is a true craftsman. He built the hotel and you can see the work of a master in every stick of wood and every tile. The food and service are first class and they have a nice selection of wines.

We were amazed at the number of sheep in Iceland and how much sheep influence the people and the economy. Again the lamb is fantastic. The next day we went for a horseback ride to a local waterfall and did some hiking. The views are fantastic and the landscape was unlike anything we'd seen before.





Waterfalls are a dime a dozen in Iceland and each more beautiful than the next.

The following day a local guide picked us up in a massive customized 4WD vehicle and took us to hike a glacier. This was a new experience, to say the least and it was interesting to learn how the glaciers are receding a good deal in the last couple decades. The glaciers grow and shrink as they have for millennia but they are definitely getting smaller of late so you might want to go sooner than later to check them out!

From the glacier, we took the short drive to the black sand beach. The beach is black and more pebbles than sand because Iceland is a relatively young piece of real estate and there has not been time yet for water and waves to do their work on the land. The rock formations of the beach are stunning and represent all the different crystalline patterns basalt takes on due to varying rates of cooling. If geology is not your thing I'd recommend reading up or watching a few YouTube videos on how volcanic eruptions form land, the Mid Atlantic Rift and basic types of rock because you'll get way more out of your trip if you have some basic knowledge.

The next day we drove I overland in the guide's vehicle to visit Thor's Garden - a favorite camping and hiking spot among locals. You need a serious vehicle to get here and it takes some time to cross all the rugged terrain and rivers but we highly recommend the effort. After a great day in the wild, our guide drove us back to Reykjavik where we stayed at the Canopy by Hilton hotel in the heart of downtown. We wouldn't recommend staying there unless you plan to party into the wee hours and not get much sleep because it's LOUD. We are prepared travelers and we had our white noise app and foam earplugs but it's still incredibly loud. The service and the room and the food and the wine selection at the hotel were excellent though. The noise wasn't the end of the world but I'd have done it differently if I'd known better. Honestly, there's not much to downtown

Reykjavik anyway.

The next day we drove to the airport and took a 4 hour, private helicopter tour. It was certainly expensive but we could have cut our Iceland trip to 3 days total if we'd known what we are doing and how good the helicopter tour was going to be. As an aside, we are taking the kids to Iceland this summer on the way to Europe and have an awesome itinerary planned now that we have some context. The helicopter covered a tremendous amount of ground and landed three times for us to get out and have a look. The landscape was literally unbelievable - photos and even video don't come close to doing it justice. It would take weeks if not months to do what we did in 4 hours if you tried to do it via car and hiking. I cannot recommend the helicopter tour strongly enough - hotels and food and everything else in Iceland is very expensive so cut down on your days then spend that money on a helicopter tour.

“The landscape was literally unbelievable - photos and even video don't come close to doing it justice. It would take weeks if not months to do what we did in 4 hours if you tried to do it via car and hiking. I cannot recommend the helicopter tour strongly enough ”

We did the Inside the Volcano tour and it was interesting. The wind was blowing 30 knots, it was cold and raining and the

“45-minute walk” was more like an hour and a half hike each way but it was worth the effort to go into a volcano. I wouldn't recommend this for young kids or older folks as it is not an easy excursion.

Greenhouses are plentiful in Iceland - flowers, tomatoes, and other vegetables do very well because of the cheap, renewable electricity and abundance of fresh water. Most greenhouses utilize geothermal heat - another big advantage. We did lunch at a tomato greenhouse and it was awesome to see the details of planting, the use of bumblebee colonies, upkeep of the vines and all that. A massive undertaking run like a Swiss watch and well worth the time it takes to see.

GENERAL COMMENTS

TRIPADVISOR - If you don't use it, start. This app has “things to do” in every city and is a great source of items for your itinerary.

POWER CONVERTERS - It's vital to make sure you have them - many converters have multiple plugs that will work in just about any country. We take them with

us from the US but we are in the habit of buying a multi-port USB charger in the country we are visiting for our phones, iPads, and kindles.

CONNECTIVITY - Italy, France, and the U.K. have high-speed internet and WiFi just about everywhere. Iceland not so much outside of Reykjavik.

PHOTO APPS - We use a couple different apps to get our photos from our phones to our walls at home. We like both of these. If you have better ones please educate us. Mixtiles and Keepsake are the apps we use.

CURRENCY - Before leaving home get your local bank to exchange money for you if you want some cash (and you will). While in country, use your ATM card or credit card to draw the local currency at any of the plentiful ATMs. You'll get the best exchange rate this way - much better than currency exchange places. If this is not possible then in Italy the local post office is your best bet for currency exchange.

The weather at the end of September in Florence and Venice was not overly warm in the evening and a couple days when it

rained we were glad we had our gear for Iceland with us. Same goes for the U.K. I thought it was very pleasant but Bridget needed a jacket most of the time. Something to keep in mind when taking advantage of the colder season to visit when things aren't so crowded.

Google translate is a great app to use and you can download a language for use offline. Cell phone coverage was great everywhere we went and it was 10 dollars a day extra (for days we used our phones) on AT&T to access our normal data plan in any of these countries.

Booking tickets for major attractions in Europe like The Louvre and the Eiffel Tower are best done ahead of time and easy to do on sites like Viator. As mentioned TripAdvisor is indispensable for things to do and ratings. Download the app and do your homework before going. Photos posted by visitors are much more telling than the official photos.

Get out there and have fun! 🎲





5 Keys to Capturing the Fastest Growing Referral Source

By Nick Duncan

The orthodontic community understands the value of referral streams. Whether these referrals come by word of mouth from your patients or through a successful advertising strategy, knowing who arrived at your practice and how they got there is the foundation to an expanding patient base.

Digital marketing is one of the ways a practice can capture online referrals and make the most of its marketing budget. Additionally, understanding referral sources and conversion rates can allow you to differentiate your practice to attract more patients who understand the value you provide.

Below we have outlined common questions we ask our partners and the 5 key elements of maximizing your website to be a conversion tool.

QUESTION 1: WHAT IS YOUR TREATMENT COORDINATOR'S CONVERSION RATE?

Most orthodontists know this answer and keep a watchful eye on the metrics of new patients that come in the door. In fact, you probably invest a lot in keeping your TCs well-paid, well-trained and ensuring they have the tools they need to be successful in new patient conversions.

QUESTION 2: WHAT IS YOUR WEBSITE'S CONVERSION RATE?

Few orthodontists know the answer to this question, and with eCommerce growing by 23% annually, orthodontists can no longer ignore the importance of their digital footprint – the secret to success is forming a calculated and targeted effort online.¹ Your website's conversion rate is the number of visitors who request an appointment (or complete another call-to-action determined by your marketing objectives).

"It is just as important to track your website conversion rate as it is to track the conversion rate of your Treatment Coordinator."

Many websites are designed to look pretty, but do we hold them responsible for producing results the same way we do a TC? Imagine measuring your TC

the same way you currently look at your website.

To put it in perspective, let's say you have a conversion rate of one percent; more specifically, one out of every 100 visitors to your site requests an appointment. This is actually higher than the average number we tend to see before The Invisible Orthodontist reworks a website. You could throw hundreds or thousands of dollars into advertising to get more people to your site to develop more leads. However, a more cost-effective way to achieve practice growth is through converting more of your existing visitors. Let's say that conversion rate is increased to 3% - **THAT'S A 300% INCREASE IN THE PERFORMANCE OF YOUR WEBSITE**, and all future advertising campaigns will benefit from greater returns.

QUESTION 3: HOW ARE QUALITY LEADS CAPTURED?

How exactly can you as an evolving practice owner create a high performing digital strategy that delivers measurable results? At The Invisible Orthodontist, our process starts by building a website with the goal of maximizing the conversion rate; we do this in the following ways:



CONVERSION RATE OPTIMIZATION

USER EXPERIENCE (UX)

PRINCIPLES: these principles focus on the utility, ease of use and efficiency of a website

CONVERSION METRICS: a wealth of data behind us that provides insight into how users behave at different stages of the new patient journey, enabling us to tailor the site to get more appointment requests.

However, ongoing assessments are crucial to the success of a website. On a regular basis, we monitor and optimize the website through tools such as web analytics, heatmapping, and A/B tests to improve the conversion rate. A website is never a finished product - it should constantly evolve and adapt to the needs of your users; if it's just passed to you by your web design company and left as is, it will never increase the conversion rate. Would you hire a TC and never expect them to improve their closing rates? This process of on-going optimization is known as conversion rate optimization (CRO).

An efficient and high converting website is a crucial step to growing your practice. It's also important to look at how prospective patients can find you, and what you do with their data once you have it. Below, we've included five elements that create a simple formula to generate and nurture quality new patient leads. We define a quality new patient lead as a new patient requesting an appointment through your website with the intention of starting orthodontic treatment.

5 CORE ELEMENTS OF WEBSITE CONVERSION

1. ATTRACTING CONSUMERS WITH BUYING INTENT

Many orthodontists focus on how many visitors they have had to their website, or how many times they appear in the search engine results pages (SERPs). The reality is, that this information alone is not going to grow your business. You need to ensure

that you are catering for people visiting your site at any stage of the buying cycle, and once they know about you, not letting them go. Two ways to achieve this are outlined below.

LOCAL SEO: ensuring that someone who is searching locally or on the go is provided with your practice's information based on geographical data

ONLINE REVIEWS: developing a review strategy that enhances your reputation in search engines, review sites, etc.

"It's not the customer's job to know what they want. – Steve Jobs "

2. TRACKING DATA

The beauty of digital marketing is that user data is readily available and can come in many forms, ranging from web analytics to heatmaps. Reviewing and analyzing this data is the first step to optimizing your website. Then, tailoring your website to quickly provide the user with what they are looking for while

driving them to complete your call to action is critical.

People looking to straighten their teeth may not even know what an orthodontist is or how to search for the right information. They look for guidance from experts and knowing where and what phrases to use to capture their attention ensures a successful marketing strategy.

Web analytics software such as Google Analytics will allow you to see how users navigate and click through your website. You may ask:

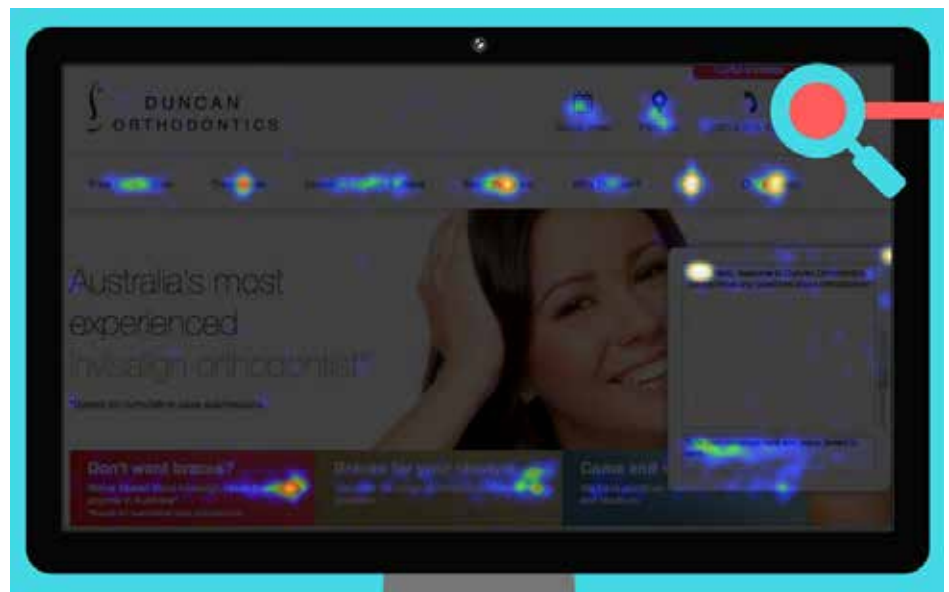
Where did users who convert come from?

Which pages on my site did they visit?

Do returning visitors convert at a higher rate than first-time visitors?

You should be using such data to plan marketing campaigns and tailor your products. For example, if you find that people who visit your site for a third time are much more likely to convert, then why not run retargeting ad campaigns to people who have visited your site twice but not converted?

Heatmap software (such as CrazyEgg) will allow you to analyze user's behavior on the page and show you which elements and content they interact with.



Data analysis will allow you to see how your digital investment converts website visitors into active orthodontic patients.



3. SUPERIOR USER EXPERIENCE

The user experience (UX) of your website is a digital reflection of your business – people are less likely to seek out your services if the user experience is poor. Building a professional and functional website is necessary here – invest in a company who specializes in orthodontics and CRO. We work with users to understand how they use and read orthodontic websites and utilize these findings to translate this to your

site. We use our industry insights and run split test campaigns, where two concurrent versions of a page are run – each to 50% of your audience – and assess which performs best. These insights and techniques will ensure your website enhances the growth of your practice.

4. OPTIMIZED CONTENT

If a website is conceived as a ‘sales pitch’, it has a much lower chance of conversion. You should have a ‘tone of voice’ which starts to build your relationship with the user the first time they interact with your site.

43% of online consumers reject “blatantly self-promotional” content.² Websites that balance production of original content that is entertaining, educational and persuasive have a higher probability of converting visitors.

Your content should also be written semantically for the search engines, as well as to drive conversions. Without all these components to your content strategy, you won’t be found and your users won’t convert.



TIODOWNLOADS.COM

5. CALL-TO-ACTION

The last step is to clearly indicate how visitors can react to the information they have gathered from your website – providing a clear, effective call-to-action (CTA). Understanding what patients need and using language that resonates with them most in CTAs is a significant element to consider in this instance.

Providing guidance for taking the next step allows visitors to convert to leads.

"If a website is conceived as a ‘sales pitch’, it has a much lower chance of conversion. You should have a ‘tone of voice’ which starts to build your relationship with the user the first time they interact with your site."

TURNING NEW PATIENT LEADS INTO TREATMENT STARTS

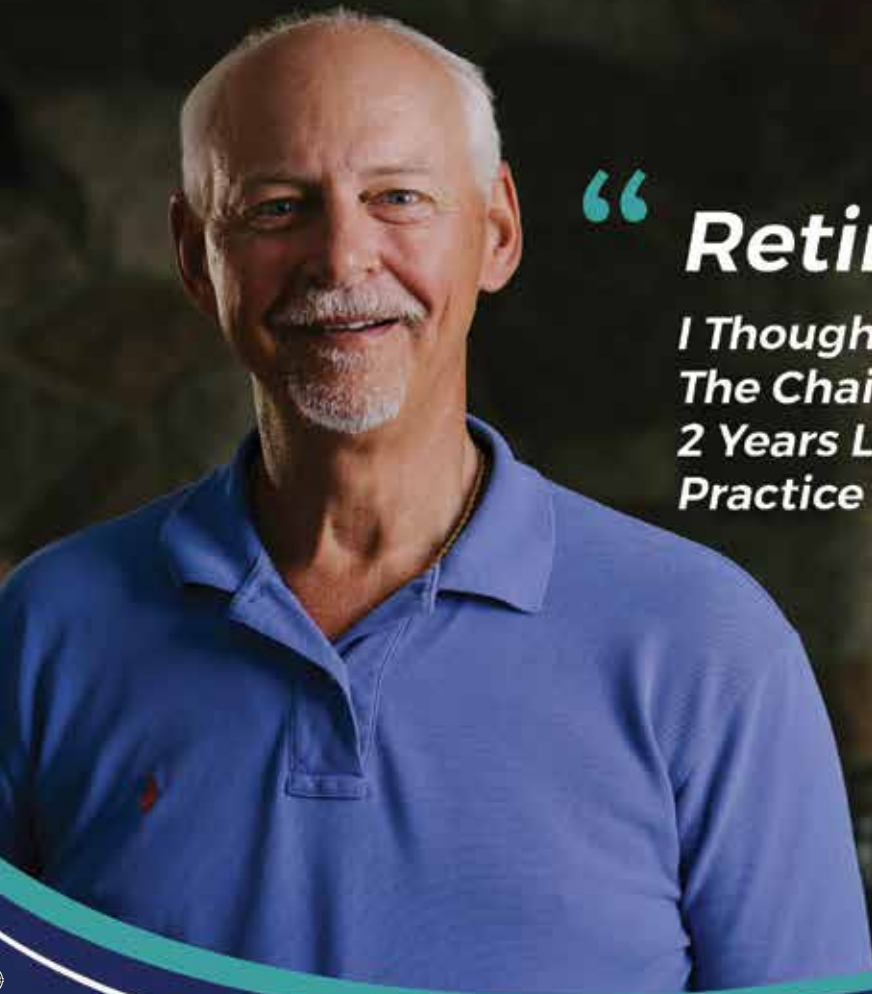
The challenge that orthodontists and their staffs face is managing the leads that are converted from online traffic, and understanding what the protocols are to treat a website lead versus a general dentist referral or internal patient referral.

At The Invisible Orthodontist, we provide our members with a continuing, 360 degree digital growth strategy that not only generates new patient leads, but also converts those leads into active patients.

For more information about The Invisible Orthodontist, visit www.theinvisibleorthodontist.com

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“ **Retirement?**

*I Thought I'd Be Stuck Behind
The Chair Into My 70s... But Just
2 Years Later... I've Sold My
Practice And I'm Free!* ”

- Dr. John Harasin D.D.S.
Saginaw, Michigan

DO YOU KNOW YOUR RETIREMENT NUMBER?

(MOST Orthos Don't...)

**CALCULATE YOUR NUMBER FOR FREE AT
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YOU MIGHT BE CLOSER THAN YOU THINK.



Beyond Reminders: Tapping the Potential of Texting

By Dr. Keith Dressler

Have you ever wished you could perform a cursory exam while the patient is at work, home, or on vacation? Thanks to a new, cutting-edge app, that's not just possible—it's easy.

Sending texts to patients is nothing new. Automatic appointment reminders have been around for years and are widely used in orthodontics. Dr. Keith Dressler, an orthodontist of 32 years and founder of Orthobanc and Rhinogram, once used traditional automatic reminders in his practice. He quickly saw they failed to capitalize on the untapped potential of texting with, not at patients.

Dr. Dressler did what forward thinkers and industry disruptors

always do; he started asking questions. What if patients could initiate real text conversations with their orthodontist? What if the same number patients call was also textable? What if they could text selfies of their teeth, leading to remote cursory exams? What if care teams could field those messages from anywhere, on any device? And what if all that was fully confidential and HIPAA-compliant?

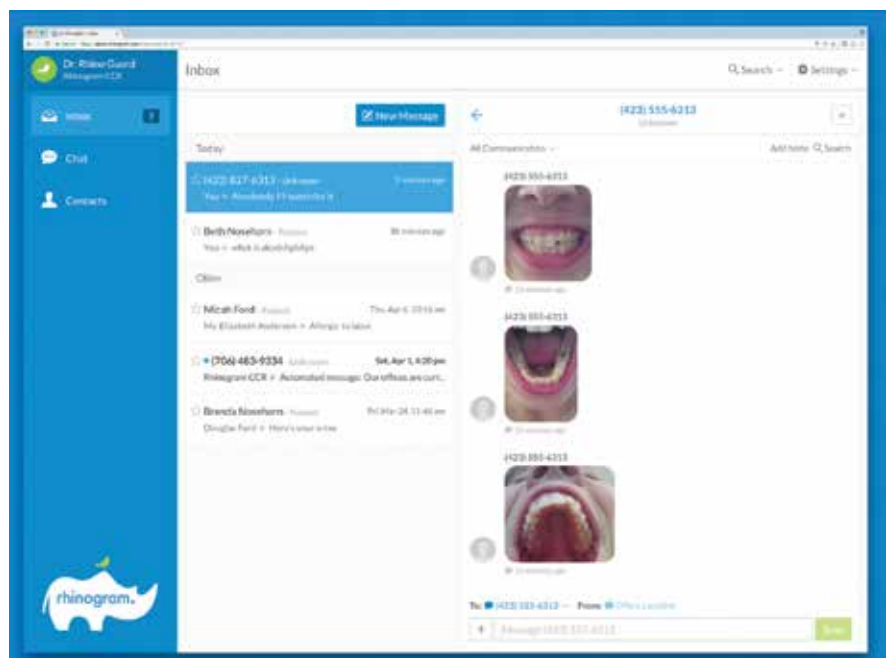
A product making all that possible did not exist, so Dr. Dressler assembled a team to create it. The result is Rhinogram, a HIPAA-compliant texting and messaging app that specializes in patient-initiated texting. While the product now has clients across the US and multiple

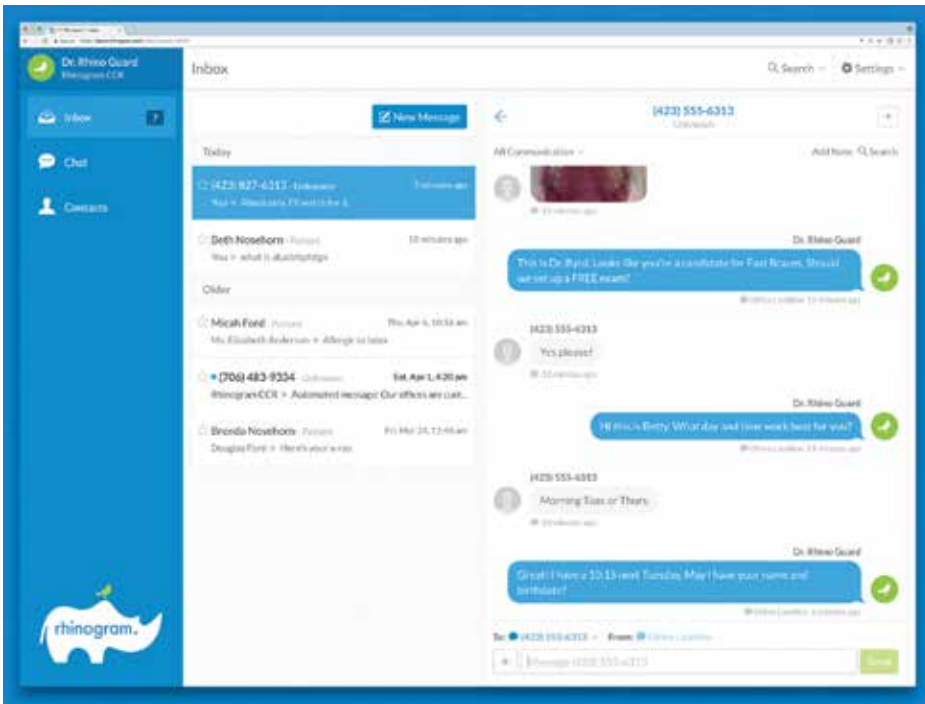
verticals, Dr. Dressler was the first to bring it into his office.

The results have been remarkable. In addition to reducing call volume by more than 30% and generating an influx of positive patient feedback, Dr. Dressler has seen his new patient starts incrementally increase by an average of 20 new patients a month since allowing patients the ability to text three selfies of their teeth along with any questions into his practice.

Dr. Dressler categorizes the vast majority of these starts as very easy Class I cases that can be treated in 12 months or less, priced between \$3500-\$4500 per case. His only marketing effort is a \$200-per-week Facebook spend. \$80,000 from \$800.

"What if patients could initiate real text conversations with their orthodontist? What if the same number patients call was also textable? What if they could text selfies of their teeth, leading to remote cursory exams?"





Not a bad ROI.

As much as he believed in Rhinogram from the beginning, Dr. Dressler has been surprised by the volume of new incoming patient-initiated texts and the estimated 15-20% expansion of the potential patient base by capturing people who would have never sought treatment because of the sheer inconvenience of traditional phone communication. Recent examples include a school teacher who wasn't allowed to make calls during class but could easily text while her students were working and an assembly line worker who only had five-minute breaks every two hours. Both had wanted straight teeth for years but never pursued it because of the inconvenience of phone tag.

Dr. Dressler says Rhinogram has made his office the most efficient it has been in his 32 years of practice, largely because it allows him to perform

many retainer and clear aligner checks through Rhinogram, without those checks taking up space in his team's schedule.

"No more spending exam time only to find out the patient can't afford it, doesn't really want it, or is going for three other opinions."

"Rhinogram clients across the country in numerous healthcare verticals say they can't imagine practicing without being able to use Rhinogram," says Dr. Dressler. "No more spending exam time only to find out the patient can't afford it, doesn't really want it, is going for three other opinions, or whatever excuse you

want to think of. These new text-initiated patients keep appointments, have more "same day starts" and are easier to monitor because all of their questions have been answered before they ever walk in the door."

Dr. Dressler also notes that the vast majority of patients' perceived emergencies can be resolved with a patient taking a "selfie" of the problem and a quick resolution text, not an appointment.

While patient-initiated texting is the feature that's changing the industry, Rhinogram has also brought automatic messages forward into the 21st century. Traditional appointment reminders appear to come from strange, five-digit numbers. The patient can't call that number, and the only response they can send is canceling or confirming their appointment. If they have a question, a concern, or just need directions, they have to find the actual phone number and call. Simple reminder systems can reduce call volume, but does nothing to create lasting patient connections.

With Rhinogram, clients can still send automatic messages, from reminders and reactivations to post-procedure followups and birthday messages. The key difference is these messages can be easily personalized, and they come from the office's own business number. With just a tap, patients can call or text back with any questions.

"I wanted a solution that grew my practice while also making life better for my patients and my team," said Dr. Dressler. It seems he has that, now. 📱

150,000+ CASES STARTED

“The slider definitely **makes treatment affordable**, but that is a small piece of the value of the system. OrthoFi **frees up our team to step up to the next level**, and to focus on what matters most — giving patients the best care and service. **We’re no longer burdened by insurance and collections.** OrthoFi takes all of that off our plate.”

DR. BILL DISCHINGER (OR)



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The Economy Is Booming Why Isn't Your Practice?

By Dr. Ben Burris

The biggest problem facing orthodontic practices in the United States is a lack of new patients. Though there are outliers who have more work than they can handle and despite other concerns, orthodontists are obsessed with how they can get more new patients and more case starts. And they should be. Orthodontists who own a practice are running a business that will cease to function without a regular influx of new customers starting treatment.

SO HERE'S THE RUB.

The US economy is on fire, the stock market has never been higher and unemployment is effectively zero BUT STILL the biggest problem facing orthodontists is a lack of new customers. The implications are obvious and beg a few questions:

- What will happen when the next downturn in the economy comes along?
- Why aren't more people buying orthodontic treatment from orthodontists now when things are good and consumer confidence is high?
- What's the biggest impediment to customers seeking and purchasing orthodontic treatment?
- What will happen when the already small number of available customers becomes significantly smaller?

The answers to these questions are obvious, or they should be, but we orthodontists refuse to even consider changing "the way we have always done it".

Let me take this one step further. I'll go on the record right now and say that in the next 5 years one (or probably all) of these things will happen in the US:

1.) There will be a significant downturn in the economy/stock market with all the associated sequelae.

2.) Doctor directed, remote treatment with clear aligners via teledentistry will become mainstream.

3.) There will be serious, like really serious, downward price pressure on in person orthodontic treatment.

So what is one to do? What's the solution? Simple. Figure out how to deliver the services consumers want within the price and time constraints they have and do so before any of these three things happen. The easiest ways to accomplish this are to modulate service/ lower price and incorporate teledentistry into the modern orthodontic practice. Of course whenever I suggest such things there are howls of disagreement and declarations like:

- I have too much overhead already, I can't lower my fees.
- I have too much student debt, I can't lower my fees.
- Low fees mean low quality, I won't lower my fees.
- My time is valuable and I'm a professional, I won't lower my fees.
- My patients pay for the best, I have no need to lower my fees.

And if you believe these are good reasons to keep doing what you've always done even though you lack new patients in one of the hottest economic periods ever, then that's up to you. Let me know how that works out for you. If you have plenty of new patients and are happy with how your business is doing then keep doing what you've always done!

I'm talking to people who are dissatisfied with their results but refuse to change.

"One of the semi-legitimate reasons orthodontists give for not changing from the traditional delivery model to a more relevant one is that they own or are vested in their physical plant (aka office building or buildout/ leased space)."

Having an established physical plant that is antiquated in time, space, location and function certainly is a millstone to drag around and limits flexibility but even this can be overcome. The smart doctor should consider selling their practice while the market is hot. The prices being paid for orthodontic practices are unprecedented, the buyers plentiful and the terms favorable. Even if you're relatively young I'd still urge you to consider this path. I have several friends who have sold recently and they are ecstatic about the results – they cashed out at the top of the market, put away big bucks, agreed to work 2-5 years running the practice they sold, are paid well for doing so, enjoy the practice of orthodontics without the hassle of running a business AND if they decide to do so in the future they can relocate and construct an ideal office in an ideal location to deliver orthodontics in the

manner patients want instead of the way we have always done it. These doctors get to keep all their knowledge, shed all their baggage and get paid well for doing so. If you decide to have a look at your options feel free to contact me and I'll connect you directly with several buyers – no need to get some broker between you and the buyer to cut into your nest egg! You can get several offers and choose from among them. When practice buyers compete, you win!*

*"For what it's worth,
 I'm not convinced that
 the prices that are being
 paid for practices are
 sustainable."*

Still think it's crazy to sell at your age? Well consider one more thing. For what it's worth, I'm not convinced that the prices that are being paid for practices are sustainable. If the purchase price of practices keeps going up and the price of orthodontic treatment keeps going down, at some point those lines must intersect and that will be the end of the sweet deals that are currently available. For that matter if any of the three things above I'm predicting actually happen, that will be the end of high practice purchase prices as well. Something to think about.

The choice is yours. You have options. You can open your mind, adjust to the new reality, provide great service, grow your practice, have a great attitude, enjoy your success and keep rolling along in solo practice. OR you can cash out, put away a bunch of money, be "just a doctor" and enjoy being part of a bigger

group. OR you can do any combination of these things in any order you choose! Of course most of us will choose to do nothing and hope "it won't happen to me" as we orthodontists have collectively done for decades. If our past is any predictor of what will actually happen, those orthodontists who are currently doing well will continue to do so and those who are not will bemoan all the external forces they blame for their lack of success but never realize that if they refuse to change their mindset they will never change their circumstances.

**I have helped facilitate several of these deals and I have always refused to take a finder's fee or any other kind of remuneration for doing so. I don't want or need a cut of your money! 🎲*



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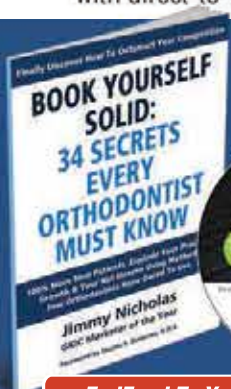
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-Dr. Wilson of Wilson Orthodontics in NC ★★★★★



"We have seen at least a 20% increase in new patient phone calls within our first three months of working with Jimmy Marketing."

-Dr. Barnett of Barnett Orthodontics in TX ★★★★★



"We have been live now with Jimmy Marketing for about six months, and our internet referrals have just about doubled to what they were before compared to the same time frame last year."

-Dr. Torello of Torello Orthodontics in MO ★★★★★



"We saw 7 new patients today from Google alone, with our same day starts!"

-Dr. Gales of Frontier Orthodontics in AZ ★★★★★

For more information about Jimmy Marketing visit www.JimmyMarketing.com or call 860.442.9999.

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Brush
up on
your
reading

Straighter: The Rules of Orthodontics



Drs Marc Ackerman and Ben Burris are announcing the publication of their book...

Straighter: The Rules of Orthodontics. It is a radical departure from the traditional approach to clinical decision-making and practice management. Drs. Ackerman and Burris reject the warmly held idea that these two areas are mutually exclusive. The book rests on the premise that orthodontics is in large part elective and falls under the category of enhancement healthcare. With that in mind, the authors suggest that orthodontists treat consumers rather than patients and these consumers are seeking an orthodontic intervention that is effective, efficient, fair priced, and easily accessible. Readers will gain insight into the current market trends in orthodontics and learn how to modify their mindset and office systems to align with the needs of the consumer.

Drs. Marc Ackerman and Ben Burris will be giving a 2 day intensive, interactive course for implementing the Straighter philosophy into your new or existing practice. Topics such as office systems, market positioning, realistic outcome planning and mechanics, managing consumer expectations, and marketing will be discussed. Bridget Burris and Amy Bradshaw will be giving a concurrent operations team course that is appropriate for office managers, TC's, financial coordinators, front desk personnel and even chairside assistants.

For more information about the book and seminar, check out orthopundit.com