

IMPLANT PRACTICE SUCCESS REPORT

from Thommen Medical and Levin Group



Welcome to Issue #17 of ***The Implant Practice Success Report***, a monthly newsletter on implant practice success. Levin Group and Thommen Medical are very pleased to provide business education to you and your team. Each month, ***The Implant Practice Success Report*** will feature leading edge education for managing, marketing, and maintaining a robust and successful implant practice.

In this issue we focus on increasing practice revenue with systems and simple referral marketing ideas that yield powerful results.

Will Your Systems Make or Break Your Practice?

By Roger P. Levin, DDS

You can increase revenue 30%-50% in about 3 years.

How? Well, sometimes you just need to get back to the basics. John Wooden, the famous UCLA basketball coach, who won 10 national championships—7 in a row which has never been repeated—always started his new season and new players off with a focus on fundamentals. If the team was not performing well at any part of the season, he would again talk about getting back to basics.

The same is true for specialty practices. We are going through an uncertain and unprecedented time. The pandemic, staffing crisis, changes in insurance reimbursements, possible new government regulation regarding funding of dental care, infection control and advances in technology have changed the dental industry forever. It can be confusing, overwhelming, and daunting.

Yet, all you must do to build a highly successful practice is get back to the fundamentals. When you do, most of this will become unimportant and your practice may access the potential to grow by 30%-50% in the next three years. How does this miraculous situation emerge? Why will implant revenue increase? By implementing documented, proven, step-by-step systems with excellent scripting. Believe it or not, it is that straightforward. Documented, proven, step-by-step systems are the essence of getting back to basics.

Documented Systems

Having documented systems means that you have analyzed the best way to operate your practice to maximize efficiency. Efficiency is the goal of all practice management activity. Do you want to be able to comfortably see as many patients as you can, produce and collect the highest revenue that you can and, provide excellent clinical care for patients? These all go together beautifully, and no specialist or team should feel regular stress from chaotic systems each day that can lead to fatigue and burnout. One way to retain your current team is to create a positive, fun, and enjoyable environment. The way to do this is to have excellent systems that are highly efficient and thereby lower stress.

Documented Systems

Documentation achieves two major objectives. First, if you must hire new team members, you can train them 100% faster. Second, current team members will always have that documentation for them to access and study, versus always having to ask the doctor or office manager.

Proven systems

You don't have time to waste in your practice today. Dentistry has become like other businesses where the speed of change is rapid, competition is growing, and new non-traditional forms of delivery are being created. If you want a highly successful practice, you can have it, but not by simply showing up every day. If you spend 4-5 years in trial-and-error of your systems, discovering six months later that the system isn't really working, you're simply wasting time that you can no longer afford to waste.

That is why you want proven systems. When systems are being used successfully by other practices, you will know they will work for you if they are followed. Prior to the pandemic of 2020, most practices were operating well below their potential, but it was acceptable because most practices performed well enough to support the lifestyle and retirement savings of doctors. Now we are seeing a shift where practices may have to deal with a lower volume of patients, higher overhead, higher staff compensation, and other issues. Having proven systems creates maximum efficiency, allowing the doctor and team to focus on what is important rather than the newest crisis of the day or week.

Step-by-step systems

Step-by-step means that the systems are designed like an instruction manual. When systems are designed step-by-step, the team knows what to do. They don't skip steps and they don't make mistakes. Step-by-step systems are a powerful way to train new team members when you have very little time for training. You may find it interesting that corporations in the United States spend far more money every year on employee education than all the universities and colleges combined. They now accept that this is part of their responsibility to continually train workers or they will fall behind.

Dentistry, which is moving at light speed in terms of clinical treatment, technology, etc. is no different. All the technology in the world will not compensate for having inefficient systems. In fact, it may make it worse and just raise overhead. Having step-by-step systems gives you the greatest chance for team members to rise to the next level of performance.

Summary

Getting back to basics is one of the smartest strategies to improve the performance of a world-class elite sports team or a dental practice. Documented, proven and step-by-step systems will help any office get back to the fundamentals and build a successful practice.

A Few Very Simple (but powerful) Marketing Ideas

By Roger P. Levin, DDS

Normally we talk about referral marketing because it is a huge source of implant referrals. We see many surgical practices that have over 97% of their referrals from referring doctors. Occasionally, it's important to think about other marketing ideas that can also have a dramatic and positive affect. Here are a few to consider:

- 1. Call every implant patient the night of surgery and have the staff call three days later.** This level of attention creates great appreciation in patients. They tell other people who then become interested. We even suspect it has helped to resolve conflicts from patients who might have been unhappy clinically but appreciated that the practice cared enough to work cooperatively to resolve a situation or complaint.
- 2. About a month after each implant surgery, send a special letter and gift certificate to the implant patient.** The letter should thank them for being a patient, tell them how much you have enjoyed treating them and include a gift certificate for a free implant consultation for a friend or family member. You'll be incredibly surprised at how many patients give the gift certificate to someone they know. Here's the important thing: if you don't include a gift certificate and merely mention it in the letter, then you'll get fewer friends and family referrals. The reason is that the gift certificate feels like they have something of value that they can physically give to someone who might call the practice and schedule an initial consult.
- 3. If you want to skyrocket your reviews, do what one of our clients did: use scripting.** She's a general dentist, but it is still applicable. When we met her, she had only six reviews and they were all positive. Two years later she had 340. How did this happen? Not by spending a fortune, not by hiring a company that promised to do it all for her, but simply by using a script. As you may know from previous articles, scripting is a critical aspect of management systems and management systems are one of the single most important factors in surgical practice success and maintaining that success. The simple script that was given to the front desk staff to use after every patient appointment or postop follow-up stated the following: "Mrs. Jones, would you do me a favor? Would you be nice enough to write a review about our practice so that other people might benefit from implant dentistry as well?" Then hand the patient a little card that tells them how to leave a review. The best place for reviews is Google and it's a simple four-step process. After two years of using this strategy, our client got an additional 332 reviews.

- 4. Have your implant treatment coordinator learn to use the phrase, "I will personally take care of you."** The Ritz Carlton hotel found that the number one thing guests wanted, and these are affluent and worldly people, was for the Ritz Carlton to treat them as if it were their mother. I know, it sounds funny, but it's also a customer service strategy that is being used by the finest customer service organization on the planet that has extremely high profit and profit margins. Telling a patient that you will personally take care of them makes them feel as if their mother will be with them through the entire process. Think of it this way: when you were younger and sick, to whom did you go? Your mother. If a patient is going to have surgery, they would like to have their mother with them.
- 5. Always compliment the referring doctor and state that he or she is an excellent dentist.** Word gets back. Patients repeat this to their referring doctors, and it has a huge positive impact regarding how the referring doctor feels about your practice. I believe that if they hear compliments two or three times, you will have already enhanced the referring relationship and their desire to refer to you.

These are the simple and often overlooked marketing techniques that were added to a powerful, comprehensive referral marketing program to make the results even better. They may be simple, but it can be enormously powerful and create great results.

ROGER P. LEVIN, DDS

Roger P. Levin, DDS is the CEO and Founder of Levin Group, a leading practice management consulting firm that has worked with over 30,000 practices to increase production. A recognized expert on dental practice management and marketing, he has written 67 books and over 4,000 articles and regularly presents seminars in the U.S. and around the world.

To contact Dr. Levin or to join the 40,000 dental professionals who receive his Practice Production Tip of the Day, visit www.levingroup.com or email rlevin@levingroup.com.