

TROJAN TODAY

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A NEWSLETTER FOR CLIENTS OF TROJAN PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, INC.

What Makes You Special? Spread the Word!

by Linda Steeves

Your patients have a choice of multiple dental practices. Influencing their decisions as to where to go are various factors – from family/friend referrals, to proximity to home/work, to choosing from a practice that is in-network for their insurance. While some factors are out of your control, it makes it easier for potential patients to choose you if you set yourself apart from the competition.

Contagious, by Jonah Berger, is a fascinating book that describes what sets a business apart from its competitors and what makes a business contagious. While contagious is usually not a term we like to use in a dental practice, a contagious practice creates loyalty among current patients and drives word of mouth referrals.

Berger states, “Customers referred by their friends spend more, shop more, shop faster, and are more profitable overall.” This is because word of mouth is naturally directed toward an interested audience who is more likely to be open to your message. The challenge in any business, including a dental practice, is to get people talking about your practice to others.

So how do you make your business contagious?

According to Berger, there are six key steps, or ingredients, to cause things to be talked about:

- 1 Social Currency.** What we talk about influences how people see us, as do the clothes we wear, the house we live in, and the car we drive. People want to share things that reflect well on them. As dental professionals, we need to find our unique features and make patients feel like insiders so they will share their experience with others.
- 2 Triggers.** Stimuli remind people to talk about our ideas or services, or keep them top of mind. Triggers boost word of mouth.



- 3 Emotions.** When we care, we share. Emotions drive people to action. Rather than quoting statistics or providing information, we need to focus on how we are making our dental patients feel.
- 4 Public.** We need to design our services to advertise themselves, so people can see others using our products or services. “If something is built to show, it is built to grow = public visibility.”
- 5 Practical Value.** People will spread the word if we demonstrate how we will save them time, improve their health, or save them money.
- 6 Stories.** People don’t just share information, they tell stories. They will tell stories about their experiences and value of your practice and team.

Berger cites as an example a bar/eatery that opened in New York City on a block with many other restaurants and bars. Their specialty was different types of martinis, which was not unique from any other establishment in the neighborhood. The owner decided to make three special types of ice to go with the martinis. In so doing, people started talking and flocking to his bar to experience the three types of ice. Lines formed down the street. Such a simple differentiator made a huge impact on his business.



When you try to create word of mouth about your dental practice, you need to focus on what people say about your practice and not just the content. The talking (word of mouth) will be most valuable when the dental practice brand is part

of the story and fully embedded into the story. Your patients will be telling others about your practice and their personal experience there.

Practices often will tell me they don't offer anything different than the other dental practice down the street. That is a dangerous place to be, i.e. the same as everyone else. Chances are they do have something that sets them apart, but if they don't know what that is, how do they expect their patients (or potential patients) to know?

My question is: What are the three types of ice that set your dental practice apart from the others?

I strongly encourage you and your dental team to find answers and to emphasize those daily. The result will give you a surprisingly positive impact. Do something unexpected for your patients. Be consistent. Get your patients talking!



Linda Steeves, RDH, BS, has over 35 years of experience, knowledge, and expertise as a dental hygienist, facilitator, dental hygiene consultant, published author, and Drake P3 communication profile trainer.

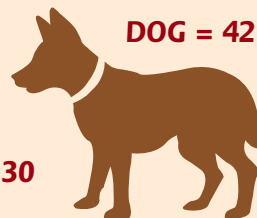
FMI: linda@dentalhygieneconsultants.com

FUN! Fact

ARMADILLO = 104



CAT = 30

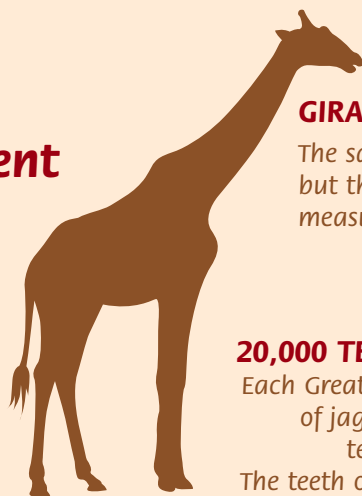


DOG = 42



PIG = 44

Different animals have different number of teeth.



GIRAFFE = 32

The same as humans, but their teeth can measure **17 INCHES LONG.**



Insects' teeth are called fangs or mandibles. Some insects also have teeth in their gizzard to help grind up food.

MOSQUITO = 47

SHARKS may grow **20,000 TEETH IN A LIFETIME.** Each Great White has several rows of jagged, triangular-shaped teeth—up to 3,000 teeth. The teeth of the Great White shark measure **3 INCHES LONG.**

