

## Dentistry has a Heart

BY LAURA JAMISON

It is the little red dress logo that catches my eye every year. It signifies *Go Red for Women*, a day honoring the women who die from heart disease, the Number One killer of your female patients. February happens to be American Heart Health Month. In dentistry, February traditionally has been celebrated as Children's Dental Health Month. If your practice is predominantly adult, I propose hosting **Dentistry has a Heart Month** instead.

The Surgeon General's report on oral health states, "Oral health is integral to overall health." It is no longer a surprise to the general population that there is a link between inflammation in the oral cavity and cardiac health. In a study published in 2002 by Buhlin, Gustafsson, Hakansson, and Klinge of Sweden entitled *Oral Health and Cardiovascular Disease*, the conclusion confirms that oral health, and especially gingival inflammation, is associated with cardiovascular disease. We as dental professionals can help keep our patients' hearts healthy. This is an unbelievable opportunity to help our profession be regarded as committed to our patients' overall health and wellbeing.

An effective marketing plan must address the consciousness of the prospective patient on three levels: internal marketing, external activity, and advertising. Internal referrals come as a result of patient feedback. External referrals appoint as a result of awareness of the practice in the community. Advertising is self-explanatory. As a marketing consultant, I know the target market for dentistry is female. The women in the world accept more cosmetic dentistry, schedule their husbands and children for dental appointments, and are more health conscious. The challenge is to find methods of promoting the practice to them.

**This year, join me in celebrating *Dentistry has a Heart Month*. These are suggested activities to go with the concept of promoting the cause:**

1. The thoroughness of your dental examinations will be realized by recording blood pressure readings and taking a resting heart rate, then recording the numbers on your hygienist's business card. Many patients see a dentist more often than they see a physician for a physical examination. This alone can be a lifesaver.
2. Educate patients with periodontal symptoms about the effect of the bacteria in the oral cavity directly linked to cardiac health. Hygienists can be committed to explaining the information in the context of your heart health promotion.



3. The American Heart Association predicts by the year 2025, there will be a shortage in cardiothoracic surgeons. Cardiologists are more interested than ever in preventing heart problems. Send letters to cardiologists in your local community to engage them in your practice activities. Ask for printed materials to support your campaign. Offer to conduct free periodontal screenings to their teams and to their patients.
4. Send Valentines or blank note cards with the *Dentistry has a Heart* logo to patients after treatment.
5. Send a letter to patients offering to donate \$1 to the local chapter of the American Heart Association if they do.
6. Decorate the office in hearts and the logo. I had clients line the walls with donations made to the American Heart Association written on the hearts.
7. Enroll in a heart health walk. Engage your patients in your commitment. Make it a fundraiser.

Have fun while doing something helpful. So this promotion is as easy as possible for you to implement, check out [www.dentistryhasaheart.com](http://www.dentistryhasaheart.com). You will find free items to launch this campaign—items such as flyers, letters, and informational links to the most current research on the subject of the Oral Body Inflammatory Connection.

The American population is paying attention to Heart Health Month. A growing number of dental teams are participating in *Dentistry has a Heart Month* in February. Yours can too.

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Do you know what your patients are saying about your dental practice online? How about ex-employees or your competitors? Who is singing your praises or who is dragging your name through the mud? Either way, you want to be aware of it.

## Why Online Reputation Management Matters

Good reputations are not built overnight. It takes time and money to establish a dental practice's good name and community goodwill. The frightening reality is it's comparatively simple for someone to destroy your reputation online. Just one comment or bad review on a blog, Yelp, or other ratings website by a disgruntled former employee, ex-patient, or competitor can make people suspicious. We recommend nominating someone on your team to manage your online reputation.

## What is Online Reputation Management (ORM)

Monitoring the status of your brand (or name), evaluating the online conversation about your brand, taking deliberate steps to lessen damage to your brand, and promoting patient satisfaction make up ORM. You can think of ORM as a three-step process:

- 1. Monitor**—Maintain an ongoing system for researching and keeping track of public perception.
- 2. Analyze**—Consider individual feedback, as well as the source, outlet, reach, and timing, to come to a decision about the risk of the comments.
- 3. Influence**—Comment, rebut, or simply ignore what has been said, based on your online reputation manager's evaluation.

## Tips for Effective Online Reputation Management

- 1. Assume Everything Will Find its Way Online.** Don't assume anything you say or do will be kept private. Simply assume it will be published somewhere online and potentially available to billions of people.
- 2. Set up Automatic Alerts.** Set up automatic alerts to notify you when your practice is mentioned on a review site, social network, blog, etc. Google Alerts is my favorite FREE tool for this purpose. Google Alerts will e-mail you (at a frequency determined by you) anytime your practice is mentioned online.
- 3. Maximize Positive References to Your Practice Online.** The more positive references to your practice online, the more insignificant the negative reviews will become. It is the average ratings concept. A few examples of how you might increase your positive references online include: encouraging online testimonials or reviews of the patient experience (for those who have Demand Force, Lighthouse PLZ or the like, this is easily done for you); engaging with patients and potential patients on social networks; submitting press releases; running contests; working with charities; being involved in your community; and posting on your Facebook page, your

blog, or tweeting. Doing any of these things will naturally create new positive references to you online.

- 4. Respond to Positive and Negative Feedback.** When it makes sense, respond to both negative and positive feedback online. The goal is to show your commitment to patient satisfaction. However, be particularly careful when responding to negative feedback. Do evaluate the situation before responding, but be prompt when the situation warrants. Remain calm, be honest, and always take the high ground in all interactions with someone who has a poor opinion of the service they received. This should help diffuse the situation before it gets out of hand. Check out Yelp for Business Owners. (You can list yourself as a business on Yelp, unlock your business account so you can respond to online feedback on Yelp, and find excellent information and advice on responding to positive and negative feedback online.)

Marketing is changing. Recently, a marketing guru said, "Marketing is moving from distraction-based to engagement-based." A social networking or community engagement plan is an important component to your marketing plan, and managing your online reputation goes hand in hand with having an online presence. Facebook is the largest of the social networks at this time. We recommend practices have a Facebook fan page. (See page 4.) There are many important reasons to have a fan page for your practice. Significantly, Facebook fan pages are listed so search engines can find your Facebook page, anyone can be a fan of your practice, and all of their friends can see your News Feed. This increases your reach tremendously and humanizes your brand (practice) for the larger community. If you have a personal Facebook profile, it is private, will not be indexed, and you have to accept people as your "friends" for them to review information about you. If you have a personal profile on a social networking site, do not mix your business relationships with your personal relationships.

All of us use the Internet to find out about people, products, services, specials, and pricing. This method of finding information is not going away. It is a new way of marketing, it is free, and it increases your practice's visibility!! We encourage you to participate and be prudent and knowledgeable. Assign someone on your team to be your online reputation manager and accountable for checking what is being said about you and your practice. Most importantly, get out there, engage with the larger community, and let people know about you and your practice!



Jody Catalanello is co-founder of MOSAIC Management Group, a dental management coaching and consulting firm dedicated to creating fulfilling, less stressful, and profitable practices. FMI: [www.mosaicmanagementgroup.com](http://www.mosaicmanagementgroup.com)

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# DO PEOPLE LIKE YOU?

BY JANICE HURLEY-TRAILOR

Part of your overall image is your likability factor. Studies show there are four different elements that contribute to likability. They contribute to your social style and therefore affect how well people think of you. The four universal social gifts are: Appreciation, Connection, Elevation, and Enlightenment. Your likability score goes way up when your conversations have just the right balance from each of these categories and not too much of any one.

## APPRECIATION

We know EVERYONE likes to feel appreciated and affirmed. You show people you appreciate them when you tell them you understand and respect them for their positive qualities. Mention qualities like thoughtfulness, intelligence, humor, and caring. To have your appreciation register, you must be specific and sincere. Comments about external elements such as a person's hair or car are not acknowledgement of character or value as a human being and can sometimes come off as contrived or insincere.

## CONNECTION

Connection is about finding out what you have in common with the other person. It can be a mutual friend, a common hobby, having attended the same school, or having children of the same age. It can be as simple as pointing out shared similar attitudes. It can be as easy as saying "I feel the same way" or "I noticed the same thing." This would be considered a safe connection because it is your response to their information, not your forcing the subject.

Don't be confused. This is very different than your talking about your personal life at work to the captive audience in your chair. This is about your genuine response to a subject your patient or co-worker brought up first. By the same token, a negative reaction that is contrary to their belief or experience will create a disconnect between the two of you.

## ELEVATION

Be in a good mood. We're all drawn towards people who are in good spirits, who look on the bright side of things, and who can appreciate or tell a good joke. It doesn't mean you have to be a comedian; it just means people like to be around those who have a smile on their face and one in their heart.

As a dental consultant, I deal with team morale on a regular basis. One of the most common problems is the lack of respect staff members have for a doctor who comes to work in a bad mood. It is not unusual at all for the doctor to have NO idea they are seen as moody.

## ENLIGHTENMENT

We all like to learn new things—current events, interesting facts, ideas, even trivia. "Did you know 44% of Americans no longer have a home phone; they just use their cellular phone?" That's trivia.

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BY PHYLLIS WAITE

# TO GIVE IS TO GAIN



## Annual Planning - A Team Experience *If you can see it...you can be it...!*

A written plan is essential to growth and securing motivation. Planning is a **GIFT** to everyone and team building at its best. The objective is to be prepared and reach agreement to shape consequences by your own planning and actions. A quality of leading edge team members is they see clearly what they must do and how they must **BE** to contribute to the **PLAN**. They understand the purpose and desire to be part of a team with like minds.

**GIVE** to your team by planning a team meeting to emerge with a shared vision of five critical questions: Where are we today? What did each person contribute to getting here? Where are we going? What do we want to give? How are we going to get there? - Leaving anyone out of the process **TAKES** from the plan, as your meeting will not include shared goals for professional growth or skills development.

### Specific Purpose of Plan:

- Create clarity and focus. (Where are we? 2009 statistics, challenges we overcame, existing challenges, and, most important, accomplishments! What do we want for our patients? What do each of us want for ourselves?)
- Provide a framework leading to agreements.
- Invigorate staff as they **GIVE** what they agree to contribute to the plan.
- Motivate staff to be accountable for the outcome of their performance.
- Ensure the team is confident the plan is realistic.
- Identify projects, elect project managers, and set timelines.
- Provide management the ability to measure success and give win/win feedback to the team.

Planning during these challenging times is essential, and although a plan will not guarantee success, a lack of planning will almost certainly ensure staff are working without clear intention. **GIVE** to the team by reserving time to plan. To begin a fresh new year without providing this shared experience is **TAKING** from everyone's success!! I encourage you to invite a trusted facilitator to enhance the process.

*Phyllis Waite is a Management/Leadership Coach committed to building successful dental practices. FMI about on-site and tele-coaching: 714-563-0603 or [www.phylliswaite.com](http://www.phylliswaite.com).*



# SERVICE SAVVY

It's the time of year when many employers are renewing their insurance. Some employers may elect to stay with the same carrier while others may switch to an entirely different carrier. Employers may also elect to keep the same benefit package or they may change the benefits to lower premiums.

To help Trojan expedite the research process of your patient's plan, please provide us with the following information when submitting a benefit request:

## Employer

Name

Address

Phone Number

## Carrier

Name

Address

Phone Number

Policy Number

## Subscriber/Patient

Name

Social Security Number/ID Number

Date of Birth

Trojan may be able to obtain your patient's benefits without all the information listed above. However, the subscriber's name, social security number/ID number, and employer or carrier phone number are required.

Please remember, the more information you provide us, the faster and more efficiently we can process your request!

If you have any questions, or comments, please call us at 800.633-3060 or email: [serviceleaders@trojanonline.com](mailto:serviceleaders@trojanonline.com)

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## Social Networking & Online Reputation Management

### Creating a Facebook Fan Page

To create a Facebook fan page, go to: [www.facebook.com/pages/create.php](http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php).

From there, click on "brand, product, or organization." Then select "professional service" from the drop down menu. We highly recommend the owner of the practice set up the Facebook fan page. Whoever creates the fan page is FOREVER attached to it and FOREVER has access to the page. When a fan page is created by an employee, there could be a problem when the employee leaves your practice.

To create a business listing on Yelp, review their online guide at [www.yelp.com/business](http://www.yelp.com/business). Follow the steps to set up your practice, and following a short wait on approval for your listing, unlock your listing so you can participate and comment on reviews regarding your practice.

## DO PEOPLE LIKE YOU?

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You want your conversations with others to include a good balance of information. When you get a healthy balance of all four social gifts, it's charismatic. Charisma or likability in the workplace is a wonderful tool for success.



*Janice Hurley-Trailor, BS is known as Dentistry's Image Expert on personal presence. She has more than 20 years as a dental consultant helping professionals use the tools they have to gain a higher treatment acceptance.*

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## MEETING PLACE

### Chicago Midwinter Meeting

February 25-27, 2010

McCormick Place West

Chicago, IL

Booth # 2215



## TROJAN CLOSINGS

February 15

Presidents' Day

## TROJAN TODAY

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