

SUDDEN IMPACT SOLUTIONS

NEW PATIENT PROCESS

# HOW TO ATTRACT THE “RIGHT” NEW PATIENTS TO YOUR PRACTICE

By Amy Morgan, CEO, Pride Institute



In any and all levels of economic success or failure, two dominant concerns arise in most orthodontic offices, almost all of the time:

- 1) How can I attract enough new patients to my practice, and
- 2) How do I attract the right type of new patient to my practice?

Those who look for the silver bullet solution often get trapped by number one. This can create the frustrating experience of driving in 50, 60, or 70 new patient bodies into your practice on any given month, that may not match your vision and values, or do not have the type of orthodontic wants and needs that you prefer to treat. I have seen lots of marketing dollars get spent in attracting the body, forgetting that there is a mind and spirit that goes with that body. The truth is attracting the right patient to your practice, who is willing to commit to your proposed care, is the key to your practice's

success. When you find the right people and then do the right things, exponential growth is a given. So, there may be no silver bullets when it comes to strong marketing strategies, but there are “silver secrets” that are essential in attracting and retaining the right patients, for your practice.

**Silver secret #1:** Know what you want. I am sorry to say that an orthodontist who is experiencing any kind of scarcity may respond to this first secret by saying “Are they breathing? Do they have at least one credit card?” Every one of us in our least stressful moments have looked up at the stars and said: “I would like to do this kind of orthodontics on this kind of patient for these types of benefits and rewards.” That's who you want! When you don't clearly define the attributes of a target profile patient, then any marketing plan that you implement can only be what I call “spray and pray.” Meaning: “Let me try a whole bunch of different benefits or marketing points and let's see who takes a nibble.”

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Age, sex, socioeconomic factors, values, goals, and dental needs are all part of creating the profile that best meets your goals. Here's a little exercise to help you discover what your target profile is:

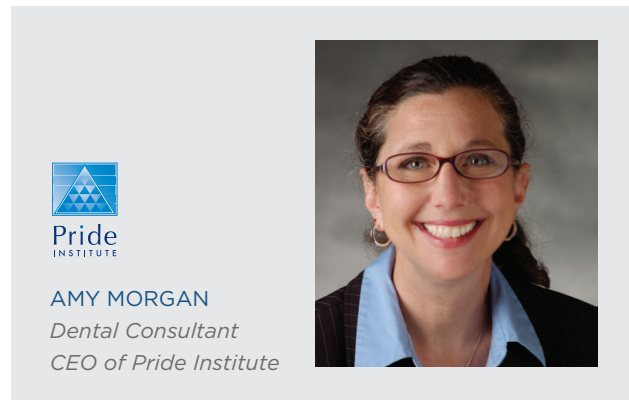
- 1) Review with your team your top five favorite patient experiences in the last three months.
- 2) Analyze who these patients were, (adult, child, etc.) and where they live, work and play and you will have a more clear understanding of your target profile.

**Silver secret #2:** Once you know what you want; find out where these patients are. This may seem relatively simple but just as fishermen are quite comfortable with the understanding that if they want trout for dinner they cannot fish for catfish; because it requires different bait and fishing style, you need to approach marketing the same way. Internet ads with banner headlines that say "We cater to cowards," direct mail campaigns that highlight every orthodontic procedure that you provide or random asking for referrals to patients or GPs that don't personify your profile will create a hit and miss result, at best, with you winding up with a less satisfying dinner of catfish. As opposed to directing your team to ask for referrals from anyone who has had a mildly OK experience in your practice, ask only eagles - the best of the best, because we all know that eagles refer eagles.

**Silver secret #3:** Don't compromise with your vision. It is very easy in economic troubling times, after having a bad day or month, to panic and pursue solutions that in the long run will hurt instead of help. The way you attract the right patients is by creating raving fans and Raving General practices that are magnetized by your vision, your service and your results. That doesn't happen overnight, it requires that the doctor and team are ready to exceed expectations and wow their patients and GPs at every single opportunity. Those practices that have the biggest successes are those that invest in serving their external customers: their patients. That investment includes: a well-trained, motivated team who excel in customer service, the latest in technology and clinical innovations, and a warm,

caring environment that goes above and beyond the expected norms. If you put in the hard work, for every patient that says "no" to you, there will be five more patients emphatically saying, "yes".

If you read these silver secrets and your heart sank a bit, I understand! There is nothing silver bullet-like in rolling up your sleeves, figuring out what you want, pursuing that ideal and creating a business that supports that profile. The reassuring news is if you are willing to do what it takes you can have huge success, in any economic climate.



*Amy Morgan is a top dental consultant and CEO of Pride Institute, a nationally acclaimed, results-oriented practice management consulting company. Amy has revitalized thousands of dental and specialty practices using time-proven management systems, so they become more secure, efficient and profitable. Pride Institute is the premier consulting organization for dentists/specialists and their teams who want to acquire the skills necessary for running a successful practice. Pride Institute offers a nationally acclaimed, results-oriented management program, accredited continuing education management and marketing workshops, on-site training and telephone consultation support.*

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