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Message From the President & CEO

Since our inception, MicroDental Laboratories has been proud to embrace a number of aesthetic philosophies and partnerships, all in support of providing the best in service and restorations for our doctors. We take pride in our terrific partnerships that allow us to offer you the very best in experience and advice. Therefore, we proudly sponsor LVI, Aesthetic Advantage, The New York Dental Forum, Misch International Implant Institute, AACD, IACA, Crown Council and Pikos. So was born our long-standing relationship with the Las Vegas Institute, whom we're proud to feature in this edition of The Edge. LVI is known for its progressive dentistry and patient-focused care, and MicroDental is privileged to further these ambitions with our service-oriented and individualized approach to the doctor-laboratory collaboration. We look forward to featuring each of our sponsors as our year progresses.

Working with an experienced lab can transform a practice and we're excited to introduce you to some of our success stories. In these pages, you'll meet Hadassah, a runner-up in our MACVENEERS by MicroDental Model Search, whom we're happy to report is a MicroDental Dublin patient. We're also featuring "The Three Step Process" – a step-by-step approach to accomplishing your goals in 2010 – as well as insight into thriving in a difficult financial environment, the core of which is creating value for your patients. Finally, we're thrilled to launch our new MAC web site! Visit us at macveneers.com to learn more about MAC by MicroDental Laboratories and to be inspired by our empowering smile make-overs. If you wish to contact us directly, please email: theedge@microdental.com. Best Wishes for a successful 2010!

Kimberly Bradshaw, President and CEO

IPS e.max and Your Esthetic Imagination

By Lee Culp, CDT



Dentists can request that their laboratories use any number of materials for fabricating their patients' restorations. However, there's only one indirect restorative system available today that truly gives dentists and their laboratory ceramists the options they need to really exercise their esthetic imagination. To me, that's IPS e.max.

ESTHETIC OPTIONS

As a ceramist, the reason I use IPS e.max is because it provides the esthetic dental team with beauty, versatility and fit. Let's consider esthetics first. With IPS e.max, there are four different ingot opacities: High Opacity [HO], Medium Opacity [MO], Lower Translucency [LT], and Higher Translucency [HT]. Ceramists choose the appropriate ingot based on the desired outcome for the case and the need to mask underlying tooth structure.

The laboratory also has the option of choosing the processing alternative that's right for selected restoration. IPS e.max includes press and CAD/CAM options, since the lithium disilicate material can be pressed from ingot form or milled from a block form. If the CAD/CAM option is used, I computer design the framework as opposed to doing a full wax-up or invest and press.

PREPARATION OPTIONS

IPS e.max also allows dentists the option of using either traditional or more creative preparation designs. For example, if the use of the more opaque materials—such as the HO (high opacity) or the MO (medium opacity) ingots—is required, dentists can use a traditional preparation of 1.0 mm to 1.5 mm reduction (such as a full crown preparation). The margins will be either equigingival or slightly subgingival, since the resulting restoration will have a slight opacity to it. The material will be fully layered to create the framework.

If the LT (lower translucency) or HT (high translucency) ingots will be used, then dentists can exercise some creativity with their preparations, due to the translucency of the margins. Such is the case with partial preparations (eg, inlays, onlays, veneers) where the margins can be placed anywhere that the dentist wants. This is because the esthetics of the IPS e.max material—basically its translucency—creates an effect that enables dentists and ceramists to place the margins virtually anywhere on the restoration and create a seamless, invisible blend with the natural dentition.



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Occlusion Confusion

Prabu Raman, DDS, LVIM



I believe that all dentists want to do their best for their patients. We chose dentistry as our profession to be helpers and healers.

Yet, there are various, often contradictory, occlusal philosophies practiced by these well meaning dentists. Why is that the case? Dental training and education should equip us to come to our own conclusions on the validity of these occlusal philosophies which are reviewed here. In my opinion, choosing an occlusal methodology should be entirely based on what we would use for our own families when financial considerations are not a factor. This is our profound obligation to our patients. Therefore, it matters not who, and with what credentials or titles, makes pronouncements about occlusion.

"TMJ" has produced more confusion among dentists than any other area of Dentistry. Of course, I am not referring to the actual joint itself, but rather the syndrome of symptoms that has been variously labeled as "Temporo Mandibular Joint Disorder (TMJD)," "Temporo Mandibular Dysfunction (TMD)", "Cranio Mandibular Dysfunction (CMD)" etc. No wonder it is confusing! We can't even agree on a label, let alone the cause(s) and treatment. For simplicity, I will use "TMD" here.

Another area of confusion is TMD symptoms themselves. Familiar 'dental' symptoms of TMD include temporomandibular joint pain, crepitus, internal derangement of the articular disc, limited opening, open locks, unexplained tooth pain and unexplained temperature sensitivity of teeth. However, TMD can also cause many 'medical' symptoms such as headaches, migraine, facial pain, neck pain, limited cervical range of motion, ear pain, tinnitus, vertigo, trigeminal neuralgia, fibromyalgia and paresthesia of fingers. Therefore TMD has earned the nickname...*(see below)*

To obtain the rest of the article, please contact us at: theedgearticles@microdental.com

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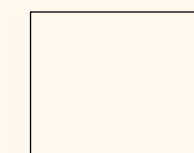
Orthodontics

CREATORS OF

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THE EDGE

by MICRODENTAL

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2010: From Vision to Success

By Becky Vasquez, DTI Laboratory Founder



Once again, the holidays have flown by, giving us many memories to cherish and some we may want to forget. Emotions run high and money flows freely during this time of the year – and then it's all over once again and time to “get back to work.” The disciplined minority have already set goals and written them down to review daily. But what about the rest of us? We may have given some thought about those New Year's Resolutions, often the same ones that come and go each year, but do we really know what we want and how to get there?

By following *The Three Step Process*, in the order described below, each of us can achieve whatever we desire in our business and personal lives. Way back in 1937 Napoleon Hill said, “Whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe it can achieve.” More recently, around 1975, Bill Gates set a huge goal, “to have a PC in every home.” *What do you want in 2010?* Continue reading to see if these steps give you inspiration, clarity, and help you create your road map to success.

STEP ONE //

Create Your Vision. Vision for your business is a very personal topic and one only you, the leader, can create. This is the most challenging of the three steps and requires you to really think about what you want. Vision is what you see in your mind's eye as if you have already achieved the success you desire.

Take some time away from the hustle and bustle of life – go fishing, take a hike, walk on the beach, go to your favorite “thinking place” and let your mind dream and your pencil take notes. Think about why you chose the profession of dentistry, how your business journey has progressed from those challenging days of dental school, and what your ideal business looks like. What types of treatment do you do? How are your patients treated during their visits? What kind of team do you work with? What does your facility look like?

How much money do you make? How much time do you work? What's your reputation in the community? By answering these questions and others like them it's amazing how clear the vision of what you want becomes. Once clear and organized in your mind the next step is to share this crystal clear vision with your team to see if they believe in it too. **At our lab we call it the “Bus Story.”**

Our vision describes the journey that the bus is traveling and as we share it with our team we ask the question, “Do you want to be on our bus?” Over the years this has provided us with a language to use when certain employees aren't “on the bus.” We need their commitment to our vision and if it's not there, we must help them find a different “bus” to ride.



STEP TWO //

Write a Business Plan. We often think a business plan is only a necessity when we need to go to the bank for financing. Although important for that process as well, a clearly thought out and written business plan becomes a living document to use throughout the year, much like a map is used when planning how to reach your travel destination.

The time and effort spent on this step, which can be completed with your team, are well worth it since at the end of the exercise your goals will jump right off the pages for you. You will discover “what's working” and “what's not working” and be ready for the final of the three steps.

AS YOU INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING TOPICS IN YOUR PLAN, YOUR JOURNEY FOR 2010 WILL EMERGE:

Vision and Core Values (Step One)

Sales History Graph (Since the inception of your practice)

2009 Sales and Profitability Performance (Income statement analysis)

Performance Analysis of Personnel, Products, Pricing and Promotions (Cost versus return on investment)

SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

Customer Analysis (Number of patients seen at least once in the last 18 months)

Objectives (GOALS – next step)

Support Requirements (What we need to achieve our goals – financial, training, technology, etc.)

STEP THREE //

Goal Setting. Now you are ready to determine the specific and detailed actions and time frames needed to get what you want. Here are some “musts” for the process of goal setting. As you work through the plan certain goals you set may seem overwhelming. If so, remember how to “eat an elephant” – just take one bite at a time! You can do it!

GOALS MUST

- Be written and in the present tense (if not written they are just dreams)
- Be visible daily (post or carry with you)
- Be specific and measurable (attach numbers and completion dates)
- Be optimistic and inspirational (they make you feel good)
- Be realistic (they cause you to stretch, but be attainable)

IMPORTANT GOALS FOR DENTAL PRACTICES INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING

- Production (% of growth desired, broken into a daily goal)
- Collection (% of A/R to be collected, considering write offs, discounts, and free dentistry)
- Business Overhead (evaluate to determine fees, wages, and expenses)
- New Patients (number and type needed to grow the business)
- Sales Acceptance (let's you know if your presentation skills are effective)
- Hygiene Rate of Return (should be at least 85%)
- Elective Dentistry (how many Smile Makeovers do you want?)
- Insurance Participation (are there plans you want to eliminate?)



continued from page 1

IPS e.max and Your Esthetic Imagination

CEMENTATION OPTION

IPS e.max also provides dentists with options for cementation, since the lithium disilicate material can be either fully light-cure bonded, or cemented with a self-etching primer bonding system. For seating of the restorations, Multilink (a conventional, self-etching primer cement ideal for crowns) and Variolink (a bonding system ideal for veneer preparations for which adhesive protocol will be used) both from Ivoclar-Vivadent, are available to provide predictable cementation using convention or adhesive techniques.

CONCLUSION

Today's aesthetic dentistry is all about options. Dentists now have a material with which they can do anterior or posterior restorations. There are four different opacities or translucencies of the material, so any kind of creative esthetic look that you'd want to see can be realized in a restoration. From a full crown to an inlay, from an onlay to a veneer, IPS e.max offers many esthetic options with its materials, so dentists and their laboratory ceramists can be as creative as their imaginations allow, with the added benefit of the dentist having options in terms of the preparation and cementation protocol used.

Editor's Note: MicroDental's highly-skilled technicians will choose the ingot type and fabrication method for each of your cases in order to provide you and your patient with the strongest and most-esthetic result.



Thriving During an Economic Slowdown

By Sam Kherani, DDS, FAGD, LVIM



Recently the Dow dropped over 350 points within one day and there was a sense of relief. Yes, “relief.” We are witnessing a time period when swings of 900 points in a day is a reality. It signifies that we are all very much connected to the economy and gone are the days of isolation when one can decide to stay out of the economic foray.

The main reason for this close connection to the economic realities is that not only are all goods and services ruled by the law of supply and demand but that such a rule is highly efficient partly due to freely available credit. Availability of credit can and does drive up demand and there may be a sense that the availability of credit has no bottom and that the prices will keep going up. Far from the truth, we have seen that credit can only go so far and that reality has to kick in sooner or later. Credit today is extremely tight. This begs the question as to how we can maintain the demand for our services as dental professionals in light of such drastic and scary economic fluxes.

The supply and demand rule as a barometer for prices is the logical part of economics. The intuitive part of economics tells us that the “cheapest” product or service may be the most “expensive” depending on its Value. The Value of any product or service is its “relative” worth, utility or importance. There is a famous saying that goes as follows: “The good feeling of the lower price is long gone while the aggravation of the poor quality persists for a very long time.” There are potential dental patients that consider bargain fees but I would like to underscore that most people who have discretionary dollars, and they are plentiful, are discerning and looking for good Value rather than a discounted fee.

Most healing in dentistry depends on the quality of the performed procedure. The true test is in the functional, aesthetic and longevity of the treatment delivered. In uncertain economic times, it is not the relatively cheap dentistry that people with discretionary funds will be turning to, but rather high-value dentistry that will meet the test of function, aesthetics and most importantly longevity. That is why a niche practice with a reputation of delivering such value is critical as it makes the dental practitioner recession proof.

Such a philosophical approach to delivering dental services does not happen overnight. It requires effort on the part of the practitioner to put the building blocks in place. These include a mind-set of performing procedures in a manner that you would want performed on yourself, a truly caring attitude to make your patients receive your level best and to immerse yourself in state-of-the-art, live-patient continuing education courses. Incorporating such an approach into ones practice philosophy will lead to recession proofing your practice. More importantly, there is great satisfaction derived from knowing that the right thing is done each step of the way.

The very premise on which the Las Vegas Institute was founded takes into account the gist of this message. Excellence, leading-edge and effective learning are at the cornerstones of the Institute. No stone is left unturned in providing everything necessary so that the participant is equipped to make the necessary change in his/her mind and office.

We sometimes hear from dental professionals that they have high overhead, and therefore, spending time away from the office is very expensive. Added to that is the cost of the course, travel, etc. “If you think that education is expensive, try ignorance.” Education stays with you forever; it changes the way you think, the way you interact and is the best tonic for the mind. Education can never be too expensive. It is essential that the practitioner makes a commitment and then stays the course. A practitioner must have fortitude in the decision making and then perseverance to stay the course. I had been in private dental practice for 27 years before accepting the Clinical Director's position at LVI full-time, and this mind-set has empowered me to succeed handsomely through many rough economic times.

Do not focus on the doom and gloom that is present every day. Rather, focus on the silver lining as there is always one. As a dental practitioner, if you have not done so already, I invite you to be a solid rock that cannot be moved by the ebb and flow that modern economics will deliver from time to time.

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Hadassah Udelhoven
Soldotna, Alaska

This was perfect timing for my wedding! I love the result and photo taken. Thank you so much Dr. Hu!



MAC by MicroDental Laboratories has been an exceptional partner for my practice for almost a decade. The quality, level of care and communication far surpass any other local, state and national lab I have ever worked with. Whether it is neuromuscular or a simple smile makeover, MAC takes the time and effort to plan, design and deliver the customized results each of my patients desire to have. Simply stated, MAC brings unparalleled artistic and natural beauty to my cosmetic cases, leaving a lasting impression for my community and even region.

Jerry C. Hu, DDS
LVI ALUMNUS
Soldotna, Alaska