

Occasionally we pound our spoons on our highchairs about some aspect of dental marketing that we feel is being overlooked or under-considered.

In this issue, our spoon bashing rant is about emergency patients. It's called: "Why do so many dentists hate emergency patients?" Subtitled: "What's wrong with making some good dough today?"

Yes, we've heard all the arguments – "Oh, they're just one timers - get them out of pain and they never come back." That's a good one, and it has the rather attractive feature of also being true. Here's another – actually a spin off of the first one: "Well, they aren't going to join our 'family of patients' so why should I bother with them?" Another nice one - and also quite true.

But our favorite is: "They mess up our schedule!" We really like that one. It's like complaining that when you won the lotto you had to actually *drive down* to the office to pick up the million bucks. Why can't they just do a direct deposit? Sheesh, how inconvenient!

So, what is an emergency patient? **Caveat:** We're talking about a REAL emergency patient. Not some druggie who's oddly allergic to everything except Percodan.

It's someone who calls or comes into your office and they are in PAIN. What does this almost always boil down to? Root canal, build-up and crown, right? Isn't that right about 95% of the time? And being that they are in PAIN and want relief (like right now!!!) - that seems to us to be a MOTIVATED patient, wouldn't you agree?

Do we not want and dream about and advertise for MOTIVATED patients?

You could actually tell them they have to make peace with their four ex-wives and pay all their unpaid child support before you'd treat them. And they'd say, "No problem, and I'll even send my Mom some flowers and oh, do you need your car washed?"

We would call that an easy sell, wouldn't you?

These services amount to what? Just fill in the blank. No matter what your fees are, it's a good bit of dough isn't it?

And emergencies also have these other features and benefits:

- They are not like veneers – RCT and crown are covered (at least partly) by insurance
- This is an unexpected increase in production.
- Many times, your advertising expense for this money is low or none, consisting mostly of a line on your website that says, "Emergencies Welcome." Or, if you use online scheduling, an option they can choose that says, "Emergency Now."

So what if they never return to join your "family of patients?" Who cares? You just made some income you didn't expect to make that day! And, if you didn't hurt them, or make them feel guilty, they now think you're wonderful.

At that point they will either change their behavior and decide to see you more often, or they will continue their neglect and you know they will be another emergency for you down the road. Either way, you win!

Give it a try!

You will have to prepare of course.

You will have to have a flexible team, a team that cares about relieving a patient's pain more than having exactly 30 or 60 minutes for their lunch break.

You will have to have a team who can come in early and potentially stay a little bit late.

You might even ask the front desk to help seat patients and turn over rooms every once in a while.

Oh the tyranny.

You may also have to forward your phones and carry the forwarded phone around with you when you are out of the practice. We understand separating the office and your home life is important to you. It should be.

So, when you cannot monitor your phones, let it go to voicemail. When you have a moment, check your voicemail. Most voicemail systems convert to text anyway.

Another way to help emergency patients is to invite them to send a text. If you have "Are You Having a Dental Emergency" on your website with a "text us" link, you can text them back a link to your online scheduling widget. Poof! New patient! \$2,000 in unexpected production.

Of course, if you are doing digital ads to capture those near you who are experiencing dental pain right now, there's a whole encyclopedia we could write about that. Perhaps some day.

For now though, we are just trying to warm you up to the idea of building your practice, at least partially based on efficiently handling emergency dental patients.

MORE STUFF:

Case Studies: If you want to read some case studies from dental offices who have found their marketing bliss, [Click here](#).

More Education. If you want to become more of a dental marketing nerd like we are, you can find a world of dental marketing education resources on our website, [Click here](#).

Marketing Plan: If you want us to build a marketing plan for your practice, [Click here](#).

If you want to discuss dental marketing topics with professionals and dentists alike, we invite you to join us at our: [Dental Marketing Mastery Facebook Group](#).



If there is ever anything we can help you with, you can find us on our website or by telephone at [855.950.5305](tel:855.950.5305).

We sincerely hope this guide helps you connect with more patients who can benefit from the services you provide.

If you wish to discuss this guide in more detail with our CEO, Mark Dilatush, you can access Mark's Calendar here: <https://npi-education.com/3nxLvDy>.