

## Population Forecast Impacts Orthodontists

*Chris Bentson, President of Bentson Clark & Copple, LLC*

The world's population is growing, and we can see the population impact during our daily activities. As we move forward through the recession, new home construction is beginning to take place, foundations for new schools are being poured, and even the number of cars on the interstates is increasing. The US Census Bureau estimates that the country's population will continue to grow at a record pace, with a birth taking place every seven seconds. It is projected that the US population will reach 363,500,000 by 2030, a 29% increase from 2000.

Knowing the current number of children and the estimated number of children there is likely to be in the future is not only critical to effective social planning, but important for orthodontic practices nationwide. Besides being an indicator for the need for orthodontic services, the total number of children determines the demand for schools, healthcare and other services for children and their families. By tracking and understanding the US Census and other reliable data for the geographic area in which you practice, it is easier to plan and make smarter decisions for your practice and its future. Clearly, from the perspective of an orthodontist, knowing the growth in the number of children can determine the demand for one's services in an overall market and within particular areas of the county.

## Maximizing Case Acceptance with a Creative Twist

*Nancy Hyman, Founder of Ortho Referral Systems*

Increasing case acceptance in these turbulent economic times requires an extra measure of creativity beyond the traditional tools of the trade. There are many challenges facing treatment coordinators today: job losses, increased competition, loss of insurance, price wars, dentists providing orthodontics in their office, and a general "wait-and-see" attitude by the consumer.

As a practice growth consultant and a team member in the office of Dr. William Hyman, I have had the opportunity to test several concepts that have proven effective in increasing case conversion percentages. With a few simple additions to your current protocol, I am confident that you will experience an increase in case acceptance. I have outlined three recommended strategies.

## Credit Crisis Prompts Expansion of Office Payment Plans

*Casey O'Keefe, Vice President Marketing & New Product Development for Vanco Services, LLC.*

The credit crisis came as a big shock for families accustomed to having a wide range of finance options. In 2008, the recent era of easy credit ended abruptly when the home mortgage market went south and took other credit markets with it. Credit-dependent economic activity slowed dramatically as lenders, in a jarring reversal, swung from too lenient to too tight almost overnight. Credit started seizing up for even the most creditworthy consumers and businesses.

Re-financings, second mortgages, credit lines and traditional healthcare financing were suddenly off the table as families attempted to line up funds for orthodontic care and other elective healthcare services. Some procedures can be deferred indefinitely. However, orthodontic treatment for young patients is typically initiated within a fairly narrow timeframe and ideally is not postponed for long.

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## The Impact of Fees on Investment Performance

*Gregory Smith, Chief Executive Officer at Smith, Salley & Associates  
Brian May, Portfolio Manager & Analyst at Smith, Salley & Associates*

**R**esponsibility is always the price of freedom. But we are now responsible for so many decisions requiring so much homework that many of us feel helpless and paralyzed. The risks of inaction or unwise action are rising, even as many of the professionals on whom we would like to rely for guidance are proving untrustworthy and even corrupt...Future benefits depend on how wisely we invest, which looked pretty easy until the market turned south two years ago. Now we are learning how much we don't know about risk and diversification and how poorly equipped most of us are to choose among 8,282 U.S. mutual funds. The yearning for reliable advice is so widespread that a Charles Schwab commercial shows a family doctor who makes a house call (remember those?) and winds up giving investment advice. 'Wouldn't it be nice,' goes the ad slogan, 'if the person you trusted most was your financial adviser?'

## Training an Expert Staff

*Chad Greer, President of Trapēzio*

**A**mong the many issues facing orthodontists today, identifying and retaining staff members is a recurring challenge that directly impacts both the efficiency of the practice and the care delivered to patients. For orthodontists, when it comes to juggling the myriad of activities involved in running a successful, efficient practice, the task of providing high-quality training standards for both new and existing staff members is often conducted in a less-than-optimal fashion. With the increasing need for professionally-trained staff and orthodontic assistants, orthodontists today have an ideal resource at their disposal for meeting this challenge, namely Trapēzio.

For the past 10 years, Trapēzio - home of the Academy of Orthodontic Assisting (AOA) - has been providing targeted, relevant training curriculum to orthodontic assistants throughout the world. With over 2,000 graduates to date, the AOA trains and accredits orthodontic assistants, in addition to providing continuing education courses. Founded by practicing orthodontist Dr. Doug Depew, Trapēzio empowers orthodontists to provide the highest quality care to patients in an environment that benefits the patient, the staff, and the orthodontist. As such, the AOA curriculum is endorsed by the American Association of Orthodontists (AAO) for educating and training orthodontic assistants through a platform that provides tangible, measurable results. Course curriculum covers a variety of topics including oral and dental anatomy, intra-oral procedures, appliances, models, infection control, x-rays, patient management, and much more.

## 2009 GORP Questionnaire Results

*Laura Overcash, Director of Marketing at Bentson Clark & Copple, LLC*

**B**entson Clark & Copple recently had the opportunity to survey approximately one hundred residents during the 2009 Orthodontic Residents Program hosted by the University of Minnesota. We asked a variety of questions regarding their anticipated plans after completing residency programs, their expectations, and other topics pertaining to the orthodontic industry.

## The Wooden Nickel Goes High Tech

*Brenda Ashwell, Principal & Senior Advisor at PracticeGenius™  
Tina Durfey, Principal & Promotions Coordinator at Putting on Promotions*

**I**ncentive or reward programs are being utilized today in almost every industry. From airlines to coffee houses, businesses everywhere are seeing the many advantages of loyalty programs. These programs offer significant benefits when used within orthodontic practices as well. When properly executed, they help increase capacity, schedule efficiency, and reinforce patient compliance -- all while driving a greater treatment experience for the patient. This is achieved by attaching a prescribed value to certain practice standards.

Rewarding positive behavior, though simple in concept, can produce outstanding results. An incentive program benefits your clinical efficiency while leveraging your marketing dollars by increasing new patients and greater practice loyalty. Take, for example, rewarding patients for inviting friends to visit your office. Not only does this increase patient referrals, but it also builds on the relationship with your existing patient. Being a member of your practice fosters a sense of belonging, loyalty and pride.