

# BUILDING A BRAND THAT BUILDS



| BY JUDY KAY MAUSOLF

Our dental care will evolve more in the next 20 years than it did in the previous 50. On the horizon is a bright and exciting future...with the qualifier that we must be willing to embrace growth and change. This change involves a high-touch, high-service, and high-care patient experience; not just fixing teeth!

There is a buzz of fear in the dental industry. Many dental teams fear they are going to lose their existing patients to new doctors, group practices and corporate dentistry. The truth is, patients who are happy with their dental office seldom leave. We lose existing patients only when we haven't created enough of an experience to build loyalty. There are two exceptions: the patient has relocated, or they only came to your office initially because you were a participating provider of their insurance and are no longer. AND they only, only, only, only...did I say only?...care about insurance coverage.

Happy patients, as a rule, are loyal patients. If we want our patients to be happy it is important to consistently deliver a good experience from the start. Notice I said good, not exceptional. The ironic part is, the patient's experience doesn't have to be exceptional. Patients are happy with consistently good. Consistency reinforces

expectations. When the patient's expectations are being met they are happy and loyal. Consistency builds loyalty and trust...it builds a brand!

A brand is who we are, who we say you are, and what our patients experience consistently. It must be all three.

It is, in essence, our reputation. It's the two or three adjectives our patients use to describe our office...friendly, awesome, caring, high-tech, always late, always upsell, etc. What do your patients say about your practice? What is your brand? If you don't know, it is time to find out. People are loyal to brands they like and trust. Is your brand worthy of your patients' loyalty?

Let me give you an example. I love EVERYTHING about Heinz ketchup...the color, the texture, how it pours, and most importantly, the taste. I can count on Heinz being the same every time. I am loyal to Heinz ketchup.



I want someone who looks at me the way my brother looks at ketchup!

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## ...BRAND LOYALTY CONTINUED

I would never, ever, ever even consider tasting another ketchup, let alone buy it! I say this regardless of the cost, because I can definitely find cheaper, or the latest and greatest, or even Auntie's homemade. Heinz meets my expectations every time, so I am totally loyal. I ask you to take a moment to think about the brands you are loyal to and why.

Let's talk about cost for a moment. Marketing has sold us a bill of goods when it comes to cost. We are told to run ads focused on free or reduced. It's not the cost that stops people from buying, or we wouldn't see so many people with iPhones glued to their ear. You get the picture. Cost is a deterrent when there is lack of value. Are you building a valuable brand?

If you don't already have a valuable brand, or any brand for that matter, there is no better time than the present to build one.

Doctors, it starts with you clarifying your vision or dreams. What is the reputation you desire? Simplify by reducing it to no more than two or three adjectives. If it is more than a few, it will be confusing for your team and your patients and will not create a clear brand.

Next, involve the team. Share with your team the two or three adjectives that support your vision for your brand. Discuss as a team how you can create a consistent experience reflecting these adjectives with every patient at every visit. What do your patients need to see hear, touch, smell, and taste to think, feel, and experience the brand? I can't stress this too much: consistency is key. If you don't have consistency, you don't have a brand. It is necessary to be consistent five out of five times with every team member, every patient, and every visit; consistent and congruent with your people, services, amenities, systems/protocols, and transitions. It only takes one "less-than" experience to weaken or diminish your brand and lose patient trust and loyalty.

For example, let's go back to ketchup! If Heinz came out with a new and improved ketchup and stopped making their original (shuddering thought!), I would give the new and improved imposter one chance. If I didn't love it, if it didn't meet ALL my expectations for Heinz, I would no longer be loyal. I would now be open to trying any new ketchup in town!

Build a brand your patients value and it won't matter who comes to town! ■

I invite you to join me at AADOM's 12th Annual Conference in beautiful Boca Raton, Florida, September 15-17, 2016 if you would like to learn more about building a valuable brand and loyal patients. I will also be presenting on Communication, Team-Building and Service!



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## MEET THE AUTHOR

Judy Kay Mausolf is a dental practice management

coach, speaker and author with expertise in helping others become happier and more successful! She coaches dentists and their teams on how to become better leaders, work together more effectively, and deliver service with passion and fun—which ultimately result in growing their practice.

She is Past President of National Speakers Association (Minnesota Chapter), Director of Sponsoring Partners for the Speaking Consulting Network, and a member of the National Speakers Association and Academy of Dental Management Consultants. She is author of two books, *Ta-Dah!* and *Rise & Shine!*, and a contributing author for many dental magazines. She also publishes a monthly newsletter entitled "Show Your Shine".

Judy Kay lives in MN with her awesome husband Steve, who makes her special coffee every morning, and Zoe, the "it's all about me" seven pound Yorkie!

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