How to take your dental practice from GOOD to GREAT

As consultants specialising in the development of medical practices, we often hear the following concerns from our clients:

- “As a dentist, I am very good at what I do. But ever since I opened my clinic, I’ve been constantly worried. I become anxious when I see that the appointment book is empty.”

- “I wonder how I could stand out from the hundreds of other clinics in town.”

- “I spend so much time hiring and training new staff that I have no time for myself!”

Having worked in the healthcare industry for over 15 years, we believe that these concerns are the last things you should be worrying about. As a specialist, your focus is to improve the health and aesthetics of your patients’ teeth, and as a human being, to enjoy your life to the fullest.

So, how do you achieve this peace of mind? We would like to share The ZENSE way to success for your dental practice. This approach is based on our 30+ years of collective business management experience in the healthcare industry, and in the dental field, and our practical knowledge of taking a specialist clinic from GOOD to GREAT.

The ZENSE way to success

Our approach integrates oriental wisdom into Western management principles to guide a business towards achieving its highest growth potential. It stems from three fundamental principles and beliefs.

Raising awareness: We believe that awakening—the realisation of the nature of reality—is the first necessary step to any sustainable transformation. By analysing the economics and operations of your clinic, and benchmarking it against the best industry standards, ZENSE helps you uncover the business reality confronting your practice.

Embracing holistic simplicity: We believe that the most comprehensive solutions can also be the simplest in design. By using holistic but simple frameworks and systematic processes, ZENSE is able to get to the core issues and give you powerful recommendations that will transform your business.

Excercising a single-minded focus: We believe that clarity of mind and quiet but relentless determination can move any mountain. ZENSE can guide you through the execution of its recommendations and ensure focused delivery throughout the business.

Concrete solutions for your practice (Fig. 1)

1. Devising an effective marketing strategy

A marketing strategy that ensures a consistent message and experience across all of the patient touch-points with your clinic is absolutely essential.

- Who are your target patients and how will you reach them?
- What is their perception of your practice?
- Who are your direct competitors and what are their strengths?
- What are your practice’s unique selling points?

The brand of a dental practice is essentially the set of attributes, strengths and weaknesses, that your potential patients perceive. It is what your patients believe, recognise and remember about your practice. Whether it is unique or powerful enough to attract potential patients to your clinic is up to you; you need to differentiate your self from others.

Based on our extensive industry experience, the following are fundamental to building a strong brand for your dental clinic: sitioning need to be consistent. It is more than what the customers can see; it is also what they perceive, consciously and unconsciously, when interacting with your clinic.

- Use the right channels for your marketing. A well-designed website can bring in over half of a clinic’s patients, but word of mouth, industry forums and public media are also critical. The key is to identify what works best for you and your clinic.

2. Getting more (satisfied) patients (Fig. 2)

Develop a systematic, tactical approach to maximise the yield of patients as they move through the purchase cycle.

- Which channel is the most effective in bringing you new potential patients?
- Which potential patients turn into actual customers, and which do not and why not?
- How do you maximise clinic revenue from each patient?
- What percentage of your patients have been satisfied enough to refer new patients to you?

The revenue of your dental practice depends largely on how many patients you treat. As you can see from Fig. 2, the pathway, every step counts for increasing the flow of patients. Improvement in any and every step throughout the pathway will produce material results. In general, we work in two simple directions:

- Increase the inquiries flowing into the clinic. Inquiry is the first contact point when potential patients reach your practice. It will depend directly on how effective your marketing programmes are.
- Decrease the drop in actual customers through the clinic. Once a patient reaches your practice, it is up to you and your team to convince him to accept your therapy offering. There is no greater marketing sin than failing to close on a potential patient who has made the effort to reach out to you! At each touch-point, there are many ways to improve the yield, and every step counts. For instance, one of our clients held regular forums for potential patients. We helped to increase the consultation sign-up rate by 25% by redesigning the forum presentation slides and coaching the physician on her presentation skills.

3. Organising for success

In our experience, physicians often feel that the burden is on them to make their practice successful. That pressure can lead to a lot of stress, but it does not need to be that way. We believe that an effective organisational infrastructure can be a great boost to your individual efforts as a physician who is focused on treating patients. We use a 5-S model below to explain this relationship and implica tions (Fig. 3).

- What are the core values and vision for your practice, and do your staff believe in and support these?
- How do you make your staff highly capable and motivated to give 100% of their potential to your clinic?
- Do you have clear, real-time visibility on the performance of your practice?
- What best practice systems and processes can boost your clinical work?

While this is a broad area, based on our experience, there seem to be several factors that will allow your practice to thrive:

- Hire the right staff with the right skills that the practice needs. Provide them with the necessary coaching, support, and training.
- Reward them for exhibiting the desired behaviours and performance.
- Determine the shared values of the practice, making sure they are well communicated and embraced by your staff.
- Develop systems and processes earlier on to make your life easier, and your decision-making quicker. For example, a simple financial analysis system will help you know where you made money (and why) and decide where to improve your efforts.

In conclusion, we have a simple message for you—your dental practice more successful and your life easier at the same time! At ZENSE, we believe that applying simple and practical business management principles can transform your practice, and your life.

Knowing is the beginning. Knowing is everything.

Start now and complete our online survey and in return you will learn more about dental practices in your area! 🎨

Company Info

ZENSE Healthcare is a Singapore-based company established in 2011 with the objective of helping specialist practice owners, healthcare manufacturers, and service providers ensure profitable and sustainable business growth. The ZENSE way to success is a holistic approach to helping its clients design people-oriented business solutions that bring success and satisfaction to patients, doctors, and other healthcare professionals.

Asia is our focus, with clients in Hong Kong, Singapore and China. www.zensehealthcare.com