



Marketing with



in-house printing

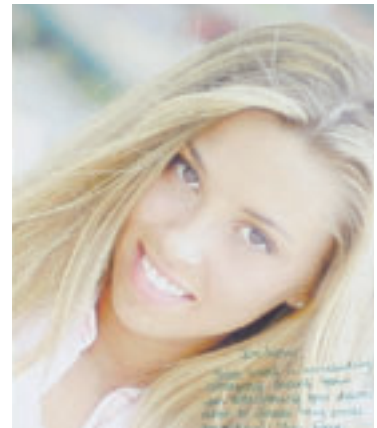


Figure 1 →

digital cameras & in-house printing

My first article explained how I use digital cameras and different settings for each situation. The second article shared how I market my practice externally using a digital camera to take fashion-style portraits for print ads and TV commercials. This one tells how we market internally after our external marketing brings patients to our office.

These photos are of my patients, and I'm the photographer. I use a Canon 10D and a 100mm macro lens. We print them in-house using a Canon s2000. I like the i9100 now because the s9000 is no longer being produced.

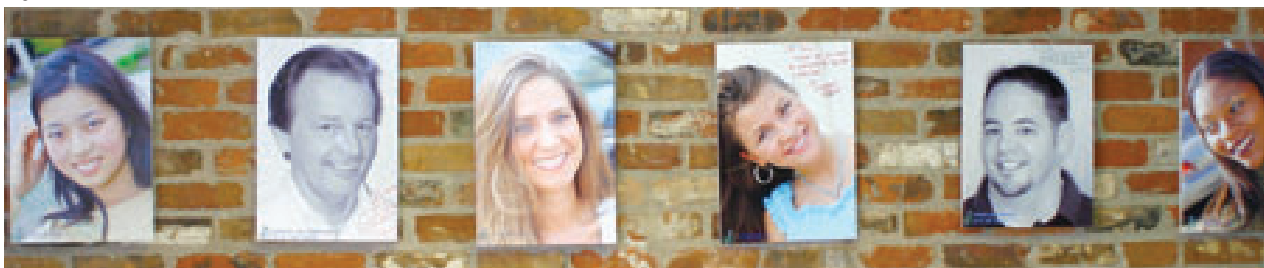
My previous article explained how I design my ads specifically for the mediums in which they will appear. I match portraits in my ads with my target audiences. For example, if I run an ad in a college newspaper, I wouldn't use a portrait

of an elderly woman or one of a family hugging one another. I would use a young model that college students find appealing and want to emulate. In other words, I use photos of different types of patients according to where and how my ads will run.

Let's say a typical patient has seen our print ads or TV commercial (information about our commercial may be found at www.tonysoileau.com), probably went to our Web site, www.smilesbysoileau.com, and has just walked into our office. The patient hasn't spoken to anyone or taken a seat. We still need to market ourselves at this point. Patients come in, but that doesn't mean they trust me or are willing to have any dental

services done. I want patients to know right away that we are different. So, instead of having a traditional office, I turned our office into a dental

Figure 2 →



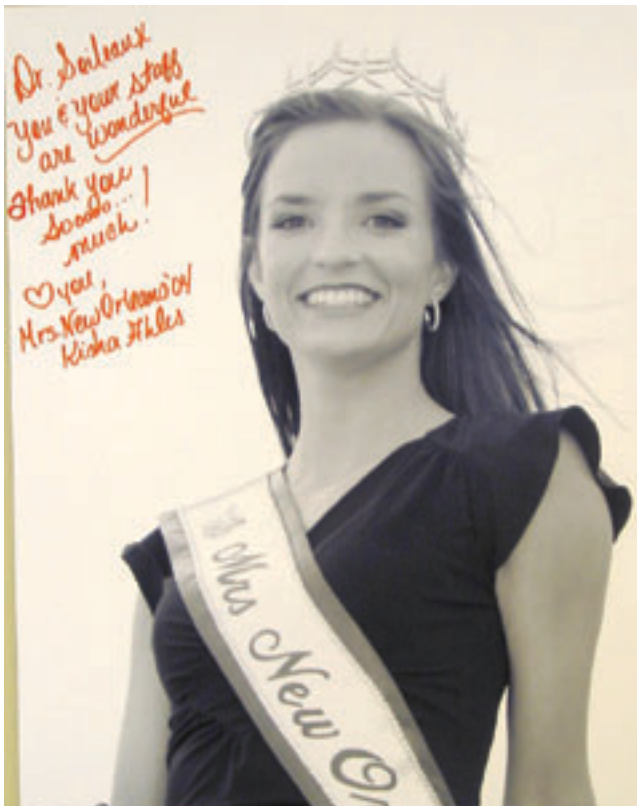


“Cheese!”

art gallery. Consultants had told us for years to display a wall of smiles. We transformed one wall into a showcase full of glossy photos and testimonials. I liked this idea, but I took it a step further. The dental care we provide isn't just technical service — it's also art. The porcelain restorations my ceramist creates are beyond just dental restorations; they're porcelain sculptures of teeth.

I want my patients to have that same feeling — that what we do is art as much as science. I noticed that art galleries don't put all their paintings on one wall like dentists do with their walls of smiles. Museums spread their pieces on every wall in the gallery so people may walk around and view them individually. The paintings are separated from one another so each may be appreciated. I did the same, suspending 13-by-19-inch portraits of my patients throughout my office, as seen in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 3



Each poster-size portrait includes a written, patient testimonial that we encourage new patients to read. I cannot emphasize enough how valuable the handwritten patient testimonials are. Other patients walk from print to print reading how great we are. While I like the idea of keeping the testimonials in nice, leather-bound books, I display mine for everyone to see.

At this point, I don't try to market my veneers or any kind of dentistry. New patients haven't met any of my team, including myself. They just walked through the door, so I want them to see *whom* I treat first. I want new patients to know that if the people in the photos can trust us, they can, too. The photos are about *who* we treat, not *what* we treated. We have news anchors, politicians, beauty queens, models, old patients, young patients, and others. (Some people don't agree with beauty pageants, but everyone knows the winners find the best to enhance their looks. I use the portraits I take of my beauty queen patients to market who they are and the crowns they wear more than the smile makeovers I did for them. See Figure 3.) I hang those prints throughout my reception area.

INTERNAL MARKETING

Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 4 is the ad I made of Courtney, and Figure 5 is the portrait of her that hangs on my wall. Notice the different types of photos. The ad has one purpose, as I discussed in my previous article — to stop your eye on my ad when you see 10 others on that page. The portrait shows *who* we treat and how great her smile looks because of us.

Can you see the difference? It is small but important. As I said, I use specific photos for specific types of marketing. Both photos were taken in 20-minute photo shoots with no special equipment. I used my Canon 10D and a Canon 100mm macro lens. Anyone can take similar shots. Let your marketing principals guide you. If you have popular people in your community — storeowners or coaches whose smiles don't need to be great, place those photos on your walls to show *who* you treat. My new patients probably know at least one of the many people in photos displayed in my waiting room. When they look at the portraits, they may read written testimonials about trusting us and loving our services.

Now, the patient has seen our ad, visited our Web site, dropped in, seen the people we treat, read the testimonials, been greeted by our staff, filled out our cool forms (you may get a copy at www.smilesbysoileau.com or during my digital photography courses), and now they get a tour of our office. We take them throughout the office, and everyone stops to say hello. I don't take off my mask and loops, but I at least stop drilling to thank patients for coming. We designed the tour to show patients all the portraits and get them thinking about their own smiles and oral health. As the tour takes them past the reception room, the portraits change from *who* patients are to more about what we did for them and how great they look now, as seen in Figures 6 and 7.

Some of the photos are labeled “before” and “after.” Some are separate photos with the portrait in black and white and the smile in color. And of course, the prints are autographed. This makes it easy for new patients to start thinking about smiles on the prints and what they would want different about their own smiles. They almost always find a particular smile they like best and say that is what they want. In other words, before they even sit in the dental chair, they've seen who we treat and work we have done. Patients start making decisions about what they want based on their thoughts about the photos. Now, this doesn't mean patients will go through with any treatment, can afford it, or will not have insurance issues. At least they start thinking about what we *could* do for them. That's the main purpose for the photos and testimonials on our walls. Images in my ads stop your eye, images in my reception room get you to trust us, and images in my hallway get you thinking about how great your smile could look if you want it and can afford it.

Figure 6

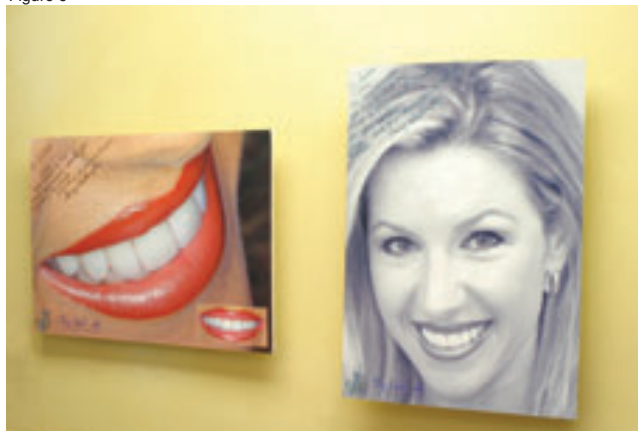


Figure 7



INTERNAL MARKETING

This isn't complicated. Just think about the thought processes your patients go through when they come into your office. Now, think of what type of photo would help in their decision-making. Display that photo next to them.

Now, the patient is finished with the tour and has met everyone. He or she probably has a smile in mind that he or she likes best. Then, the patient is seated in the treatment room. In there, the photos become more clinical. We want to get specific about the patient's smile and what he or she wants. (How many teeth do we restore? Color? Shape of incisal edge? Length?) See Figures 8 and 9.

Now we can use the smiles on the wall to guide the conversation. We talk about what patients want to customize their smiles. When they pick out a close-up of a before-and-after, we show them a portrait on the adjoining wall of to whom the smile belongs. See Figure 10.

We even have smiles on my ceiling from which they may choose. The transparent prints are on my ceiling lights. Color explodes through them. When the patient is laid back, this is what he or she sees. These are my own portraits and smiles that I have printed onto transparent film by Norman Camera of Kalamazoo, Mich. Call (800) 900-6676 for more information. See Figures 11 and 12.

By now, patients have chosen the smiles they like. Then, we ask them if they want to see how great those smiles would look on them. Of course they say "yes." Smiles on my wall are in my

Figure 8



Figure 9



library in Image FX software (Scicam USA). For case presentation,

some dentists only use photos of their work while others use only imaging. I use both — pictures and imaging. The combination is amazingly effective for us.

Near the beginning of appointments, we take five images of patients' smiles and occlusal arches. My team then takes whichever smile patients like best of all the photos in our gallery and inserts it onto each patient's smile on the computer. Flat screen monitors mounted to my light poles allow patients to see how great they can look with new smiles. By using editing software such as Image FX, my team can take five to 12 images with a digital camera, download them into the software, and edit smiles within 10 minutes. This creates a fast, powerful case presentation. It also is non-threatening to patients because they make up their own minds with help from the photos.

Now I've shown how I use images to draw eyes to my ads, gain trust in my reception room, get patients thinking in my hallways about their smiles, and get them excited in my treatment rooms about how great they could look with smiles they want. I do this with few verbal skills or sales pitches — just prints my team or I take with a digital camera and a macro lens, an inkjet printer, and about \$4 per print in materials.

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Figure 10



Figure 11

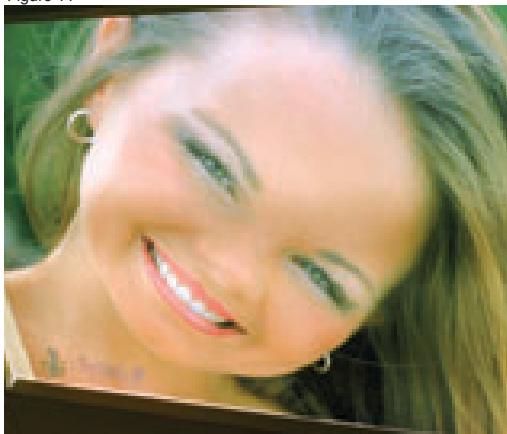


Figure 12

