

The Pennsylvania Center for Dental Excellence Using the (social) Tools of the Trade



THE PENNSYLVANIA CENTER
FOR DENTAL EXCELLENCE

OVERALL PRACTICE GROWTH
FROM 2009 to 2010

+50%

GP
GENERAL PRACTITIONER

For a dental professional who originally had no interest in Invisalign, Dr. Leonard Tau has come a long way. So far, in fact, that his overall practice grew 50% from 2009 to 2010. And Invisalign was a large part of that growth.

Back in 2007, when he took over the general dentistry practice of his predecessor, Dr. Tau — principal of the Pennsylvania Center for Dental Excellence in Philadelphia — saw that he was losing patients who needed simple corrective treatment. Some problems, of course, such as those requiring major bite changes, called for the expertise of an orthodontist. But for simple spacing and crowding issues, Dr. Tau wondered if there wasn't a way to keep those patients, and their production, in his practice. The answer, he realized soon enough, was Invisalign.

A PROMISE OF GROWTH

"Invisalign makes it easy for many types of corrective procedures," says Dr. Tau. "Not only that, Align's marketing prowess is formidable, and provides a built-in advantage to any dental professional." In 2009, Dr. Tau's practice — which today consists of approximately three-quarters adults — started 14 patients on Invisalign treatment. A year later, it was 52 patients, virtually all of whom were incremental; that is, individuals who didn't want braces and who thus wouldn't be patients if it weren't for Invisalign. This increase of 271% in case starts represented approximately \$250,000 in additional revenue to the practice. Even Dr. Tau could not have foreseen such growth, and went so far as to promise his staff a trip to an upcoming Invisalign event if they ever reached as many as 10 case starts per month.

THE DENTAL SOCIAL NETWORK

In quest of that growth, and with a keen eye toward current trends in the popular culture, Dr. Tau took it upon

himself to become a savvy digital marketer. In addition to revitalizing his practice's website, making it more engaging and interactive, Dr. Tau uses an online communications system that allows patients to communicate with his office via email, including confirming appointments and providing feedback. The service also pushes reviews of his practice online, where he has over 235 reviews reflecting the quality dentistry he provides.

All of this contributes to Dr. Tau's strong online reputation, which also includes a huge presence in social media, from Facebook and Twitter to YouTube, blogging, and even a mobile website, all of which he maintains himself, spending from 30 minutes to one hour a day. "In this day and age," says Dr. Tau, "you've got to be out there, visible and vocal in every way, shape and form. I'm all over the place."

Dr. Tau's most striking success has come from his use of the increasingly popular "Daily Deals," from social media companies such as Groupon

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2009 INVISALIGN CASE STARTS

14

2010 INVISALIGN CASE STARTS

52

2010 INVISALIGN CASE START INCREASE

+271%

2010 ADDITIONAL REVENUE

\$250K

2011 INVISALIGN CASE STARTS
THROUGH Q2

69



DR. LEONARD TAU

and LivingSocial. "In June 2010, he offered a deal comprising any one of four options for \$59 — exam/cleaning/x-rays, veneer preview, zoom whitening, and an Invisalign preview, which came with impressions, photos, x-rays, and \$500 discount if the patient began treatment. The deal was so successful — it produced 19 new case starts — that Dr. Tau repeated the offer several more times over the course of the following months, resulting in a cumulative \$300,000 in new production added to the practice.

Contributing to that new business was a further 50-some Invisalign cases. "The reason the Invisalign option worked so well," notes Dr. Tau, "is that these people had known about or had heard of Invisalign, and were basically searching the Internet for a discount opportunity to take advantage of." Today, a full quarter of the Center's practice is Invisalign-based, putting it well on its way toward becoming the only GP Elite Provider in the Philadelphia area.

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

Dr. Tau didn't stop there. Because he operates a fee-for-service practice, he also offers an Oral Health Savings Plan — essentially a discount service whereby patients pay a yearly fee of \$295, and receive two exams, two cleanings with x-rays, and discounts on other services, including Invisalign treatment. Additionally, he offers payment options, such as 24-month,

no-interest financing, which allows patients to take on procedures they would have otherwise had to forgo. "When patients know what their monthly payment is going to be, they are more comfortable," says Dr. Tau.

Dr. Tau never envisioned himself doing so many Invisalign procedures. Partially, this was because he originally didn't believe that Invisalign could handle so many types of cases. "But then I went to the Invisalign Forum in Palm Beach, Florida, in 2010. This event changed my dental practice life, with respect to Invisalign. I saw cases that I was letting leave my practice that other dentists were doing with ease; cases that were easy but that I had previously believed were difficult. Today, my entire staff recommends Invisalign to virtually any of our patients who could possibly need it. And even if they don't want to do it right away, a seed has been planted."

As if to underscore the strength of Dr. Tau's efforts, in the first half of 2011 alone, his Invisalign case starts were up again, this time 36%, to 69. Which meant, of course, that he had to make good on his promise to take his staff to the 2011 Invisalign Summit in Las Vegas. "My team had a wonderful time and brought back many pearls of wisdom that we can incorporate into the practice. I would definitely go back again. And, apparently, so would my staff."

DR. TAU'S TIPS FOR GROWING
YOUR PRACTICE WITH INVISALIGN

1. Build an online reputation, with your website as your marketing hub; get testimonials — make your patients talk glowingly about you.
2. Use social media fully, including "daily deals"; don't be afraid of these packages to attract business.
3. Maintain your education: attend Invisalign summits and events; learn what Invisalign can do.
4. Plant the Invisalign seed; it gets patients doing their own research, which often brings them back to you later for Invisalign.