NEW DENTISTS

Steve
WORKING HARD TO BUILD HIS PRACTICE TO HELP HIS PATIENTS AND HIS FAMILY.

- Takes a lot of pride in doing quality work.
- Enjoys interacting with patients.
- Concerned about declining insurance reimbursement rates.
- Still has an eye on his student debt.
- Likes the variety of his work.

ADA  American Dental Association
America's leading advocate for oral health
Who is he?
Steve is a 32-year-old dentist who is part of a dental practice in Orlando, FL. Steve got married out of dental school and has three-year-old twins. He is the third generation of dentists in his family, following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather. He appreciated the quality of life that he had when he was growing up, and was attracted to the kind of lifestyle that his father and his grandfather had as dentists.

Starting out is exciting. As a new dentist, Steve is beginning to pay attention to developing the business side of his practice, as well as keeping up with advances in dentistry. He enjoys the variety of things he does every day, but is likely the most time-stretched of any member segment. Launching a practice, getting to know his patients and having a young family can sometimes be overwhelming.

What is important to him about the dental profession?
Steve is proud to be a new dentist. He endeavors to perform quality work without compromise. He’s enamored with working in a field where he can positively impact people’s lives which allows him to enjoy life outside of the office, too.

What’s motivating and meaningful to him?
Steve looks forward to professional success. He strives to deliver a patient-centric approach to care, and helps to educate his patients so they will take more responsibility for their oral health. Steve also values spending time with his family and being able to provide the kind of life his father provided for him. It’s what keeps him working hard as a dentist. Steve is aware that, with so much riding on him, he must pay attention to his own overall health.

Motivating and meaningful
• His family and friends, providing for his family, helping others.

Communication
• As he is pressed for time, the best avenues for reaching Steve are via email or social media. Photo and video content is likely to be most effective, especially if it offers insights on how to be a more effective practitioner.
Most pressing issue(s) for him.
Steve is very optimistic about his career trajectory, but is still burdened by dental school loans while now financing his part of the practice. He doesn’t feel that he can truly “make it” until he’s settled up those debts. He’s also concerned about the reimbursement rates that insurance companies are providing to him. Dealing with insurance companies is an aspect of practicing dentistry that he didn’t anticipate when he was in dental school.

Finally, he’s also a little frustrated by the fact that most of his patients don’t take more responsibility for their own oral health. He only sees them twice a year — he wishes they understood that the rest is up to them.

What is he looking for from an association membership?
Steve enjoys and respects the professionalism of dentistry, so he’s looking for a dental association to protect the profession from outside influences who don’t have an understanding of what it takes to practice dentistry properly. He sees organized dentistry as very important, especially as a voice in regulatory and legislative issues that impact the profession.

And as a new dentist, he wants to be able to turn to his professional association for ways to optimize his practice of dentistry. He likes the idea that he’s doing different things every day, so he’s always looking for ways to stay on top of new techniques, and wants to get that kind of information from his association.

What defines his ideal dental association?
Steve wants to see the dental association that he’s a part of being led by those like him — dentists with real-world experience who understand the issues he’s facing and speak to him in ways that are relevant. He values professional networking opportunities and learning from the experience of others. Because he’s just getting his career going, he’s looking for a good value for the benefits that he’s receiving for his membership dues. The benefits he gets are important to him, so he’s not looking for low pricing — just a good ratio of cost to benefits. More than any other segment, new dentists like Steve appreciate things like discounts that an association offers. Steve also wants the association to act as a strong voice for him with insurance companies as he struggles with reimbursement issues.
A conversation-starter idea.

“You’ve been practicing for a little while now; give me your impressions of being a dentist. What’s met your expectations, what’s been surprising to you, what do you wish someone had told you about being a dentist before you graduated from dental school?”

A sample approach to talking to him about the ADA.

“We’re here for you. As your professional association, we’re all about standing up for you and the profession, ensuring that dentists like you have a bright future. We want to help set you up for success. We offer programs that can assist you with everything from student debt you may have to connecting you with more experienced dentists to providing you with information and resources that can help keep you on top of best practices in dentistry. And we’re here to represent you and the profession as a whole on regulatory, legislative and insurance-related issues. If you have questions about your practice, feel free to come to us first — we’re ready to help. We know that you have limited time, so we want to make it easy for you to access ADA benefits and get the most out of your membership.”

How Do We Reach Steve?

Steve is busy with his practice and family life, so he spends less time in his media mix than other members. Most of his time is spent watching television and movies, on email or doing other various things on his computer or mobile device. He is a moderate social media user, spending a little more than three hours a week on those platforms.

When Steve is on social media, it’s primarily Facebook, but he’s also using YouTube, Instagram and Pinterest — visual platforms that indicate a high interest in photos and video. Steve is using Facebook and YouTube for both personal and professional reasons. On the professional side, he’s probably got a Facebook page for his practice and a professional LinkedIn profile, and may be using YouTube to watch instructional videos or even posting some video content related to his own practice.

Steve uses his computer when he needs to get things done: researching and shopping for items, making travel plans, researching health-related topics, looking for job opportunities and doing his banking. His mobile devices are typically used for creating and sharing photos and video, social networking, streaming content and consuming news. Steve’s email use is split evenly between his computer and mobile devices.

We can effectively reach Steve on the social platforms that he visits. Facebook and LinkedIn ads allow us to target new dentists like Steve based on age, job title, interests and other factors. Time-pressed new dentists like Steve will likely respond to more visual-based messages that they can scan quickly, so creating infographics or short videos aimed at them is the best way to engage them. But there should also be a place in the social media mix for the ADA to provide content specifically for Steve — content that speaks directly to how the association can make him more successful and a better dentist. This can include updates on advocacy on behalf of the profession, tips on practice management and videos of new dental techniques.