



PRACTICE PRODUCTION WHITEPAPER SERIES

By Roger P. Levin, DDS 

“THE MISSING SYSTEMS”

REACH YOUR PRACTICE'S
TRUE PRODUCTION POTENTIAL AND
ACHIEVE CONTINUOUS GROWTH



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Introduction

Two things to keep in mind about practice success:

- 1) Very few practices reach their true production potential.
- 2) You don't have to be one of those practices.

While most specialists have superior clinical skills, those skills alone do not guarantee practice success. There are many outstanding clinicians who operate struggling practices. In fact, 90% of practices operate far below their production potential.

Most specialists are prevented from achieving the highest levels of success by what Levin Group calls “The Missing Systems™.” Most doctors will say, “I have good systems.” But are they the *right* systems? Do they allow you to...

- Continually increase production?
- Continually increase referrals?
- Continually increase profitability?
- Maintain a low-stress practice?
- Enjoy high professional satisfaction?
- Reach financial independence sooner?

The more inefficient and outdated the systems, the harder the practice has to work. But no matter how hard the practice works, it will never reach its potential without effective systems.

Unleashing the Practice’s Potential

What is missing from most practices is a series of step-by-step systems that must consistently occur for the practice to reach its true production potential. While at first the idea of implementing new or better systems and processes may seem like a great deal of work, let me assure you that when the right systems are incorporated as part of the practice’s daily activities, managing the practice actually becomes much easier and more rewarding.

Why would this effort be worthwhile? The answer is that the average dental practice in the United States today has a production range around \$800,000. Yet there are many practices that generate much higher revenues from \$2 million to \$6 million.

The majority of doctors want to know how to increase their practice production while maintaining a low-stress environment and high professional satisfaction. There are two types of dental practices:

- 1) The Plateaued Practice™—this type of office accounts for 90–95% of all dental practices
- 2) The Continuous Growth Practice™—only 5% of practices fall into this category

Plateaued Practices often reach average production levels and then stay there for years. Continuous Growth Practices, on the other hand, typically produce more than \$1.4 million a year and continue to grow, in all economic conditions, spending little or no time on any plateau.

The difference between the Plateaued Practice™ and the Continuous Growth Practice™ is the concept known as The Missing Systems™. The eight areas where excellent systems result in significantly higher production for the practice are:

1. Scripting
2. Scheduling
3. Collections
4. Case Presentation
5. The New Patient Experience
6. Customer Service
7. Referral Marketing
8. Financial Management

Practices that have implemented *The Missing Systems™* spend little or no time on plateaus and achieve greater financial success in a low-stress environment. These doctors report that they enjoy practicing dentistry more and have additional free time. Implementing *The Missing Systems™* has not only increased their production, but has improved their lives.

Dentistry in the 21st Century

Since late 2008, if the economy has taught us anything, it is—practices have to be innovative and prepared to meet the challenges of a changing economic landscape. In previous decades, doctors could enjoy a high level of success even with inefficient or outdated systems. The recent downturn exposed the inherent weaknesses in that practice model.



In the past, operating a dental practice was an almost guaranteed success. Today, that is no longer the case. Dentistry is more complex. Patients expect more from their doctors. New specialists are facing higher and higher levels of debt. Competition for new patients is more intense.

If doctors want to reach their true potential, they can no longer ignore or neglect what's missing in their practices. And that's the management or business side of dentistry. This is the area where specialists have received the least amount of training.

Implementing step-by-step systems is the most effective way for doctors to reach their full practice potential. These processes will allow practices to increase their revenue over 20 years by \$4 to \$6 million and enable specialists to reach their goal of financial independence years earlier.

Practices that are able to implement effective systems will gain the following:

- Improved production, profit and efficiency
- Lower stress and a more enjoyable work environment
- Time for the doctor to focus on leadership and team-building without detracting from patient care
- A motivated team that enjoys learning and is willing to participate in practice growth
- Higher levels of patient care and satisfaction
- The ability to train new team members more efficiently
- The capability to rapidly adapt to change

Systems, the Team and Success

Why do systems matter? Remember that dentists depend on the dental team. What does the team rely on? Systems. If team members do not have efficient, updated systems to rely on, stress and chaos will occur at some point. Stress will wreak havoc on you, your team and ultimately your profit potential.

Inevitably, the performance of a stressed doctor and staff will decline. As the practice's efficiency takes a downturn, practice production is affected. This, in turn, leads to even *greater* stress for the doctor. Only effective systems can stop this disintegration from occurring.

Like the best businesses in other fields, top-performing practices understand that the time it takes to put step-by-step systems in place is critical to long-term success. Even though it may require extra work on the front end, there are many rewards. We have seen this demonstrated routinely as clients transformed their practices into million-dollar businesses.

Conclusion

Do you have a Plateaued Practice™ or a Continuous Growth Practice™? What would you like to have? To make the jump to continuous growth, doctors need to implement the Missing Systems™ in their practices. Improved business systems allow you to make the most of your clinical training, reaping the rewards of greater success.



Dr. Roger P. Levin is Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Levin Group, Inc., the leading dental practice management and marketing firm in the United States. Levin Group delivers premier comprehensive consulting solutions that result in Total Practice Success™ for dentists and specialists in the U.S. and around the world.

A third-generation dentist, Dr. Levin is one of the profession's most sought-after speakers, bringing his Total Practice Success™ seminars to thousands of dentists, specialists and dental professionals each year. Since founding Levin Group in 1985, Dr. Levin has been a pioneer in developing the practice management and marketing systems that lead dentists and specialists toward creating the ideal practice—A Levin Practice™. Under Dr. Levin's leadership, Levin Group consultants provide clients with strategies that work and with results that last.

Dr. Levin serves on the Boards of the Friends of the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, the University of Pennsylvania School of Dentistry and the National Museum of Dentistry. In 2004, Dr. Levin was named an Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year in Maryland. He writes for numerous dental publications and has authored more than 50 books on growing successful dental practices.

Since 1985, Dr. Levin and Levin Group have shown thousands of dentists, specialists and their teams how to build a Levin Practice™ and continually increase practice production and profit, create a low-stress environment, develop high professional satisfaction and build the pathway to financial independence.

Levin Group is headquartered in Baltimore, Maryland, and has a second location in Phoenix, Arizona. For more information on Levin Group's programs and services, visit www.levingroup.com.