

Give your practice an Extreme Makeover

In 22 years of practising dentistry, I have tried numerous marketing and publicity-related ventures. Although many have been very successful, nothing has had a greater impact than appearing on a TV show. In case you've missed it, *Extreme Makeover* features 'real world' participants who undergo a real-life Cinderella story of their own. They receive plastic surgery, tooth whitening and other dental services, and a complete beauty and wardrobe makeover. On top of all that, they're placed on a rigorous physical training and nutrition regimen. The results for each participant are invariably amazing.

Shortly after the first episode aired, my practice received well over 1,000 emails from patients interested in the featured procedures. I referred many of those patients to dentists all over the United States while others ended up in my office. We did 30 Zoom! chairside whitening treatments within the first two weeks of the show's airing. I've also done countless veneer cases as a direct result of this appearance, with a lot more on the books.

Not only can I affirm that it has brought new patients into my practice, it also has had the same effect on many dentists' offices around the country. For the first time ever, prime time television highlighted what a tremendous impact cosmetic dentistry can have on people's lives. When the pilot aired, the network was pleasantly surprised by its popularity. Not only did *Extreme Makeover* beat *The West Wing*, it was one of the highest rated reality shows of the year. Everybody cares about looking good!

Shortly after the first programme aired, a dentist friend of mine called and suggested that I share my experiences with our colleagues. Based on his comments, I thought that it might be interesting to develop what I'll call 'A Blueprint for Extreme Success' that other dentists could use to create their own *Extreme Makeover* session locally. Follow these 10 steps and you might be very surprised at the response.

- Take a course on media training and

public speaking

- Keep the focus on the face and the teeth.
- Stick to the best aesthetic procedures for dental makeovers: in office tooth whitening, porcelain veneers, and bonding
- Find a great publicist!
- Develop a personal media plan
- Pick your top 50 candidates and have them come into your office for screening
- Find a good woman - women buy cosmetic dentistry much more than men do
- Make sure you perform procedures that make up a significant portion of your everyday practice
- Once you select the candidate or candidates, hire a professional to tape everything you do with the patient.

One of the things I often hear from other dentists is, 'Yeah, sure, that's fine for you, but you're in the Beverly Hills area with a celebrity clientele. We just can't pull something like that off.' It seems to me that *Extreme Makeover's* ratings prove that everyone, everywhere, is interested in improving their appearance. Treat all your patients like celebrities, and you will be the number one star in their lives!

Bill Dorfman



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