

## What's in a Name?

By Sheree D Whatley

**So how important is the practice name? On a scale of 1–10: is it a 1 or a 10? Let me illustrate my point by using the experience of a well established and very successful practice, based in Hertfordshire.**

This practice was set up in 1957 by Bernard Bloom. In 1990, Bernard's youngest son David joined and persuaded his father to move to new premises and call the practice 'Bloomsbury Dental'. Jay, a contemporary of David's from Newcastle Dental School, joined in 1998 and Bernard retired shortly thereafter.

As the reputation of the practice grew, it became clear that with a name like 'Bloomsbury' many potential patients mistakenly thought the practice was in Bloomsbury, London or was an offshoot of a practice based in London, with the same name. It was therefore difficult for David and Jay accurately to assess how well they were doing with so much confusion. Nor could they measure the effect of all their marketing efforts. They soon realised that 'Bloomsbury' said nothing about the ethos and culture of their practice. It was clearly time for a change.

Obviously, the change encompassed more than just the name. David and Jay readily understood that they needed to have a clear, concise and consistent message expressed and implemented by everyone in the practice. Their re-branding exercise had to sum up the complete customer experience. It had to establish their unique identity. It wasn't just the direct branding: name, logo, business philosophy, and website. More importantly, it had to do with the way that their customers, and potential customers, would think about their practice.

So what did they re-name their practice? David and Jay changed the name to 'Senova Dental Studios—Our Passion, Your Smile'. 'Senova' means 'new smile': much more apt for two of the UK's leading cosmetic dentists. So how successful has the change been? On a scale of 1–10, David and Jay feel it's a 10 and their patients seem to agree. Check out their website [www.senovadental.com](http://www.senovadental.com)

So why do David and Jay feel that it's a 10? While undergoing the re-branding exercise, they appreciated that patient loyalty

arises not so much out of rational considerations but more on the basis of emotional affinity and personal connection. For them, customer retention and referral had always been a key part of their success. They needed to build on this by ensuring that the patients felt even more welcome and valued. They wanted to do more for their patients than anyone else did and even more than their patients would expect. They wanted to show their patients that they meant a great deal to them.

They had introduced the spa-concept to the practice in 2005; recognising that few people look forward to a trip to the dentist even though they know

that the end result is going to leave them looking and feeling so much better than before. During long, and often messy procedures, David and Jay's patients are cocooned in their own soothing and calming world with a choice of music and films to watch, booties and blankets to keep them warm, hand treatments to aid their relaxation and crucially, dental bibs that keep them dry and their clothes completely protected.

Remember, I said they wanted to do more for their patients than anyone else? Yes, they have invented dental bibs that offer total protection and comfort. The idea was sparked by David's wife who, while undergoing a smile-lift, was unnecessarily

distressed by having the neckline of her outfit and hair soaked in the process. She advised David that the spa-concept was let down by the inadequacies of their dental bibs. David challenged her to come up with something better, so she did—CollarDam™.

Remember, small business branding is about getting your target customers to see you as their preferred choice. Building a brand isn't just about what you do; it's about what you do to differentiate yourself from everyone else. Your brand should articulate the total experience of doing business with you. It should be a dependable, consistent and yet special experience every time. **DT**

CollarDam™ Premier Protect ([www.collardam.com](http://www.collardam.com)) offers the ultimate in patient comfort and protection. It uses a revolutionary crystal fibre technology, which permanently changes colour to alert the clinician when the bib needs changing.

In fact, it does exactly what its name suggests. In addition, clients can use the tail of the bib to dab away any excess moisture from their faces, freeing up chair side assistants to concentrate on assisting the clinician. The client feels less anxious and so does the whole dental team. It's amazing how big a difference something like this can make to the client's overall experience.



### Contact Info



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## Whiter still and whiter in the USA

**Demand is huge for procedures that bleach and brighten smiles according to a recent report in Florida Today. "It's a huge market," says Dr. Kimberly Harms, a private-practice dentist in Farmington, Minn., and a consumer spokeswoman for the American Dental Association in Chicago. "So many people are bleaching their teeth today, we had to adjust our shade guides upward recently" to re-**

**flect the demand for brighter, whiter teeth, she says.**

Another dental group, the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry, which represents dentists who specialise in cosmetic treatments, estimates the demand for tooth whitening has risen 300 percent in the past decade. Millions of Americans buy whitening products over the counter or turn to dentists for a brighter, more dazzling smile.

"Bleaching is the No. 1 dental procedure requested by patients under 20, and in those 30 to 50 years of age, as well," says Dr. Bert Chodorov, a dentist who is an accredited Academy member and runs the Center for Advanced Cosmetic Dentistry in Melbourne, Fla. "Older individuals also want this. White and bright is beautiful." He cautions however that, while some people want 'white, white, white,' his per-

sonal preference is for a more natural look, which sometimes is the only realistic option. "You don't want the first thing that comes into the room to be your teeth," he jokes.

Dentist Dr. Lisa Goff describes the tooth-whitening demand as "absolutely huge" with costs that range from \$300 to \$550. Although there are two in-office dental whitening procedures available, neither is cov-

ered by insurance. The lowest price tag is for standard whitening, which involves creating a customized plastic model of the mouth for in-home bleaching. Typically, individuals wear customized mouth trays containing a whitening solution for several hours a day or overnight, for two weeks, after a proper fitting.

The alternative, a more expensive whitening procedure, uses a light to accelerate the bleaching process during a one- to two-hour visit to the dentist's office. The best known system is called the 'Zoom'. What makes it so much more expensive is the chair time, Goff says, although "the Zoom gives you a great jump-start" on whitening, and there is less gum irritation and sensitivity than with the trays.

Cindy Ville, an Indialantic, Fla., resident who recently underwent the procedure at Goff's office, says she is happy with the results, seeing an immediate difference in her teeth in the 'before' and 'after' photos. "It was a long time to sit in the chair," she concedes. "But, from what I understand, you use the Zoom just once and then maintain with the trays and the (whitening) gel." **DT**

