

Dental Marketing: THE COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

Dental Health - It's All in the Packaging!

By **LeeAnn Shipowick, RDH, B.Sc.**

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People love good packaging and let's face it, good packaging sells. What woman doesn't enjoy the robin egg blue boxes of Tiffany & Co. or the packaging of a Starbucks coffee with their fancy names and protected cups or the Westin Hotel's heavenly bed concept? These smart companies sell their products with clever packaging.

In dentistry, we are in the business of health and it's time for our practices to package, promote, and sell our products. Most dental hygienists are proficient at scaling, root planing, probing and flossing but often don't realize that they are also packaging a product to sell. As a profession, collectively, hygienists believe it is their calling to remove by all methods possible, the microscopic granular gunk; ridding the mouth of toxic bacteria, harmful plaque, calculus and exudate, tooth by tooth, until their patients' mouths are as clean as humanly possible in order to fight the ominous battle of periodontal disease. Most hygienists believe they make a difference in their clients overall health and studies fully support the whole healthy mouth, healthy body truth. However, and what many hygienists do not understand, is that it is up to us to sell the product of health to our clients.

How do we package health (both dental and overall health)? We package health by making

it important and clearly communicating that to our clients. We package health by not rewarding the periodontal diseased delinquents by rushing them through therapy. We also package health with value added service such as lip balm and warm towels during treatment or blood pressure readings to name a few. Then we sell our best possible treatment plans for the client's total body health. We slow down, take the time to package our service and then simply sell good health.

It is the dental hygienist's responsibility to understand and package themselves as necessary items in the shopping cart of life. Our clients are busy, over scheduled and have their own list of priorities so we need to communicate to them the importance of dental health in relation to overall health. There are many studies that support the direct correlation of periodontal disease to heart, immune system and other health problems. And yet we hygienists are timid, sometimes too self conscious to sell our product - health. Be assured that if our clients understood that plaque and calculus were causing them illness and further risk of serious illness, you can bet that they would value and want immediate attention to rid themselves of the toxins that threaten good health.

It's time for us to package health as a product and move to the top on the shopping list of life's priorities.

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Contemporary Esthetic Article
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The Efficient Post

Clinical efficiency is a desirable objective for dental practitioners. We seek efficiency in several ways: we want to be able to provide a service using simple techniques, with the smallest number of materials and in the fewest number of steps possible; we want treatment to be resolved in the fewest number of office visits, with high long-term success rates and clinically simple, effective, and predictable re-treatment options. Fiber posts have provided advantages in all of these aspects.

Traditional approaches to providing a post/core restoration have required at least 2 office visits for a cast post/core with concomitant anxiety about passivity of fit, or the insertion of prefabricated metal posts that offered the advantage of assured fit and 1 visit convenience, but still threaten tooth longevity because of inherently poor stress transfer properties¹⁻⁵ and irretrievability when compared with fiber posts.⁶

Recherches Techniques Dentaires (RTD),

the creator of the original Composipost, has been manufacturing fiber posts for over 15 years. Millions of their biocompatible posts have been used and they have demonstrated respectable longevity in vivo.⁷⁻¹⁰ Because of their stress absorption and distribution capabilities, stemming from their dentin-like modulus of elasticity, they seem incapable of fracturing roots in vivo.¹¹

Authors criticizing the strength or retrievability of some fiber posts have created confusion among cautious practitioners. It is of paramount importance to understand that not all fiber posts are the same. RTD posts have evolved over 4 generations into today's Double Taper (D.T.) Light-Post which is strong, yet flexes with the dentin, is translucent, radiopaque,¹² and anatomically tapered for the maximum preservation of tooth structure.¹³⁻¹⁵ It is also retrievable in minutes via a customized, corresponding reaccess kit. The D.T. Light-Post has been demonstrated to be more fatigue resistant in vitro than some other fiber posts.¹⁶

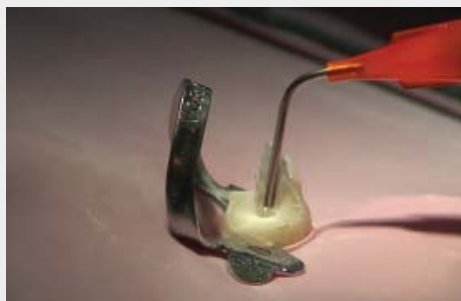


Figure 1 - Canal is shaped, cleaned, and dried with preparation burs, which accompany the fiber post kit. Self-etch cement is injected into the post space using low-viscosity placement tip.



Figure 2 - Fiber post (colored blue at room temperature) is seated into post space.



Figure 3 - Excess self-etch cement is teased to cover remaining dentin.

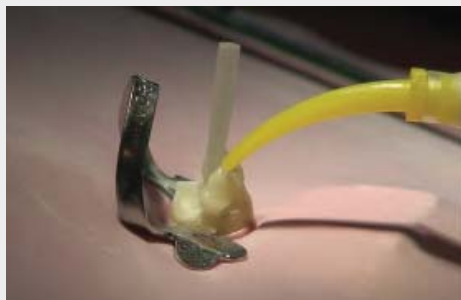


Figure 4 - Dual-cure core material is injected onto post and prepared tooth surface.

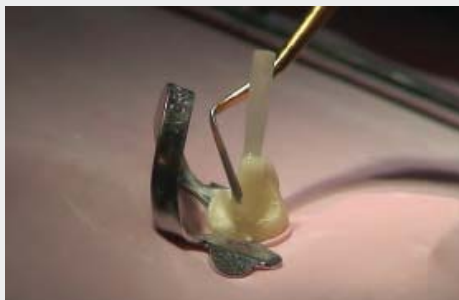


Figure 5 - Core material is shaped as it starts to gel, then light cured. Note post has become translucent at mouth temperature.



Figure 6 - Excess post length is to be trimmed. Post is initially cooled with air/water spray.



Figure 7 - Color has returned to post after a few seconds of air/water spray cooling.



Figure 8 - Completed post and core is tooth color at mouth temperature.



Figure 9 - Before post removal, tooth is cooled with air/water spray and suction so that post can be easily visualized.



Figure 10 - Post removal begins with reaccess kit. Fiber post material melts as bur reaches speeds of around 20,000 rpm.



Figure 11 - Slight remaining post material is observed around canal orifice. Original canal shaper bur is used to remove this material.



Figure 12 - Final shaper bur is inserted to premeasured length to ensure complete removal of fiber post.



Figure 13 - It is possible to confirm complete removal of the original post because of a complete lack of blue color in the canal.

RTD recently introduced another innovative technology into their post system. As with the use of tooth-colored composite restoratives, clinicians occasionally face technical difficulty distinguishing and removing these restorations because they are designed to blend in with the color and appearance of tooth structure and can be difficult to see. This led RTD to develop the D.T. Light-Post Illusion, which is colored at room temperature, but becomes colorless in seconds at intraoral temperatures. The color can be restored on command, by irrigating with cool water, should revisualization become necessary. The accompanying in vitro photo sequence demonstrates this color transition as the post is placed and removed (Figures 1 through 13).

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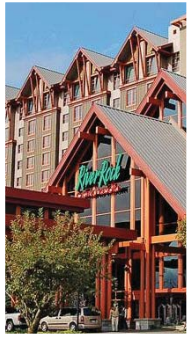
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Dr. Tony Pensak



Dr. Ricardo M. Carvalho

I once worked at a company which employed 50 people, all of whom worked at the corporate headquarters in the same 4,000 square foot office building in the United States. We all lived in different directions: north, south, northwest, southeast from work, none more than 30 miles away. There were no housing complexes where we lived and no physical obstructions in the way (mountains, lakes, oceans, etc.).

The company's president made an economic decision in relocating all 50 employees to a new office location. In doing so, he didn't take into account how the move might affect the distance employees had to travel to work.

After the move, the president found that the new headquarters was closer to his home. It worked out great for him because he also got a fancy new office with more room. Once the move was finally completed, every single employee, myself included, was closer to home than before the move.

If we all still work in the same office together, as before, how can this be?



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September 20 - 22	Delta Regina Hotel 1919 SK Drive, Regina, SK	CDSS - 2007 Annual Scientific Session Visit our booth #40 for great specials!
September 20 -15	Shaw Conference Centre, Edmonton, AB	Edmonton & District Dental Society - Northwest Dental Expo Visit our booth #C2 for great specials!
October 19	River Rock Casino Resort, Richmond, BC	Dentistry's Strongest Link - The Latest Trends in Adhesion Technology (Seminar and Hands-On course)
October 25- 27	The Grand Okanagan Lakefront Resort and Conference Centre, Kelowna, British Columbia	Thompson Okanagan Dental Society - Dental Conference, Exhibits and Annual General Meeting
November 9	Metro Toronto Convention Centre	Winter Clinic - Toronto Academy of Dentistry Visit our booth for great show specials!



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