Orthodontics is such a great profession. We are constantly thrilled to be associated with it. As our name Ortho2 suggests, our foundation is orthodontics. Your interests are our interests, and we succeed when you do. But we also recognize that evolutionary pressures are having a negative and potentially lasting impact on the profession. In our 33-year history, we have witnessed several trends that brought predictions of harm. But nothing, in our opinion, has warranted the level of concern that we see, and share, today. The purpose of this article isn’t to list or discuss these pressures – you are likely well aware of them. We just want to make this clear: We stand with orthodontists and will assist in the ongoing mission to convey the orthodontic difference by sharing with the public the advantage of trusting a trained orthodontist with their, and their loved ones’, tooth alignment care.

Toward this end, we have created a free app for you and, if you wish, your patients or prospective patients. It includes a compelling “Introduction to Orthodontics” video as well as other educational animations from our Edge Animations module. In addition, if you already use Edge Animations, you can register the app to access our full video library! Download this app on your Apple or Android device today by searching the app store for “Ortho2 Edge” and selecting “Edge Animations”.

We are confident that together we will make a difference that leads to a better future for the orthodontic profession!

And now for something completely different:

Our Artificial Intelligence Overlords
Not really worried about a robot rebellion? Perhaps you should be. UC Berkeley researchers currently have robots that learn motor skills through trial and error. Google’s DeepMind plays Atari video games better than humans, and it taught itself to play. Knowing that this is just the beginning, what will tomorrow bring?

Fear about artificial intelligence may seem silly. But researchers at Oxford University include it on their list of risks to human civilization. And dozens of top scientists and
We would like to thank the following staff who worked hard in the Ortho2 booth at the AAO and contributed to our success:

- Dr. Barry Feldman – Feldman Orthodontics
- Laura Force – Tyler, Dumas, and Reyes Specialists in Orthodontics
- Paulette Johnson – Certified Ortho2 Training Specialist
- Jodi Miller – Certified Ortho2 Training Specialist
- Denise Schouweiler – Guenthner, Larson, Kim Orthodontics
- Diane Stephenson – PPO Systems

Thank you to everyone who stopped by our booth at the AAO!
A special thank you to those who shared their memories at Uncle Bob’s memorial.

Contributor Contact Information:

Ken Alexander – Ken Alexander is the Director of Alexander & Sons, and focuses on practice management, scheduling, new patient enrollment, staff management, customer service, and marketing. Contact him at kenalexander2@aol.com or www.alexanderandsons.consulting.

Pat Rosenzweig – Pat Rosenzweig is the co-founder of Mosaic Management Professionals. She can be reached at (303) 660-0605, through email at pat@mosaicmanagementpro.com, or on the web at www.mosaicmanagementpro.com.

Dr. Roger P. Levin – Dr. Roger P. Levin and Levin Group provide expert orthodontic practice management and marketing solutions. For more information, contact Levin Group at (888) 973-0000, or visit them at levingroup.com/ortho.
The anniversary of Microsoft ending support for Windows XP has already come and gone which means so has the time to seriously consider replacing existing XP machines with newer, more secure, computers. Many may consider hanging onto older PCs using XP because it has truly proven itself to be an exceptional operating system in its time. That being said, times change. This saying is increasingly true when it comes to the world of technology. Therefore it is imperative to continue to upgrade networks and replace computers that have become obsolete even though they have been reliable up until this point.

Imagine, for instance, a patient is informed they have a cavity at their last dental appointment but decide since they don’t feel any pain not to have it treated right away. The tooth would continue to decay, eventually leading to its root, and potentially causing an abscess. The abscess would cause a myriad of problems that negatively affect the patient’s orthodontic treatment possibly to the point of it being detrimental or even impossible to continue treatment without removing the tooth all together. It would seem ridiculous for a patient to deny treating a cavity once it is discovered by their dentist, however, computers on a network work the same way.

Though it has been so successful in providing a stable work environment for users up until a little over a year ago, XP has reached its abscess stage and without security support from Microsoft, it will become an ever increasing cavity for compatibility, viruses, and hackers. With every day that passes the potential to discover security holes inside of Windows XP rises. If found, they will make XP more and more vulnerable to attack as they will never be walled off officially by Microsoft. Not only will this affect the individual computer but it has potential to cause issues across the network as well.

A fairly common virus, CryptoLocker, has the ability to encrypt many if not all files on an infected computer. The virus itself does not spread from one computer to another, however, if the host computer has access to any shared drives over the network CryptoLocker can then encrypt those files and render them useless. This puts folders like the letter library or patient images at a high and an unnecessary risk of corruption simply because replacing an older, out of date computer was delayed.

When so much of one’s practice is consolidated into so few digital files the security of those files is paramount. Keeping machines current plays a major role in maintaining network security especially when we have reached such a critical moment as we have with Windows XP.

-By Michael Houlihan, Network Engineer

Microsoft will release Windows 10 on July 29. Edge and ViewPoint are certified for use with Professional and Enterprise editions. Other editions of Windows 10 have not been fully tested at this time and are not advised. If you currently have Windows 7 or higher, you can reserve your free version of Windows 10 by clicking the Microsoft icon in your system tray. You have one year after Windows 10 is released to upgrade for free.

Come visit us at these fall meetings.

Northeastern Society of Orthodontists
Canadian Association of Orthodontists
OrthoVOICE
Great Lakes Association of Orthodontists
Southern Association of Orthodontists
Midwestern Society of Orthodontists
Middle Atlantic Society of Orthodontists
Pacific Coast Society of Orthodontists

September 11–12, 2015
September 18–19, 2015
September 24–26, 2015
September 25–26, 2015
October 2–3, 2015
October 9–10, 2015
October 16–18, 2015
October 23–24, 2015
Have you ever wanted to take the power of Edge Animations with you wherever you go? Now you can with the Edge Animations App, available for both Apple and Android devices. The app is free to everyone – no need to be affiliated with Ortho2. The power of Edge Animations is available for any patient, parent, prospect, resident, orthodontist, or anyone thinking about getting braces.

The app can be downloaded by searching Ortho2 Edge in your phone’s app store.

**Why an Orthodontist?**
With more and more dentists performing orthodontic work, it is important for potential patients to choose an orthodontist for their treatment. The “Introduction to Orthodontics” video, which can be viewed by any user, clearly explains to your consulting patients and parents why treatment from a certified orthodontist matters!

The video walks through common reasons why patients may need braces, and what might happen if these problems aren’t corrected with braces. In addition, it explains what happens at an appointment when treatment is accepted, such as taking photographs, radiographs, and creating models.

“Orthodontists are facing an unprecedented amount of competition from big business and non-orthodontists. We...

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**Welcome**
Take a look at what the Edge Animations app can do for you – how to customize videos, market your practice with Edge Animations, and more!

**Animations**
View any of the Compliance Animations available, including basics such as Flossing, Foods to Avoid, and Orthodontic Parts. In addition the “Introduction to Orthodontics” video describes why choosing an orthodontist is best for your patients.

**Residents**
Just as the title says, we cater to residents! Request a Lunch and Learn, learn more about our competitive pricing, and meet your Systems Consultant who can tell you all about Edge!

**Register**
If you are already have Edge Animations, or you are a resident, simply register to access the entire library of animations.
Residents and registered customers will find the search option at the top of the app. Easily search the video library by keywords, or title of an animation.

Favorites
With the full version of the app, you can mark videos as favorites by simply clicking the thumbs up icon. These videos will be added to the favorites folder and are at the top of your video library.

Video Library
Any user can view the Compliance Animations in the app. If you already have Edge Animations, or are an orthodontic resident, your video library includes more than 175 animations to watch.

Description and Keywords
Each video has a description and a list of keywords. Use these to help you search for the video you are looking for.

Looking for More?
The Edge Animations module is available as a standalone program, and integrates with both Edge and ViewPoint. With the desktop version, you can build patient-specific filmstrips using videos related to their treatment, their photos, and records. Customize the videos even further by annotating and drawing on the videos. Use your practice logo to customize filmstrips and then publish them on Facebook, YouTube, or directly email a link to a patient, or create a standalone WMV file.

Contact your Systems Consultant at (800) 866-4644 or sales@ortho2.com for more information about adding Edge Animations to your practice.

wanted to give them an additional tool to use in the fight for their specialty,” says Dr. Craig Scholz, Ortho2’s Director of Emerging Technologies.

Comprehensive Library
Anyone who downloads the app can view the free Compliance Animations to help ensure patients are fully informed about their treatment with videos on brushing, foods to avoid, and much more.

If you have Edge Animations with your practice, simply register with your email address and customer number. You then have access to more than 175 animations available in your program. In addition, residents can register with their .edu email address to access the full library of videos.
This week I hired two new team members and one of the first things I will have them do is to read our Team Agreements. These 12 values are what we have established for our practice as to how we are going to work together, communicate with each other, and treat each other in a respectful, relationship-building manner. Establishing a clear team value system is vital if you want to have an effective, enjoyable team.

Here is a brief list of the things we ask every team member to read, and expect that by the end of their trial period they will sign a copy of the agreements which will be placed in their personnel file. It is a very wrong assumption that your team members have been trained with a good work ethic or relationship values, and it is incumbent upon the manager to help the team establish these values that will guide thinking and behavior within the practice. These things are not rocket science, and never have I had a team member say that any one of them should not be applied. Everyone in your orthodontic family wants to know the values of the team, and even more, know that they and others are being held accountable to live out those values while in the practice.

Here are our Team Agreements. I suggest that these not be handed down from management, but that the team gets together and decides what is best for them and the practice.

As part of the Alexander Team I agree:

1. To choose the right attitudes as I graciously treat others with care and respect, even when I disagree, or they disappoint me by making mistakes.
2. To take my problems directly to the person involved and gently help them to see how they can be a stronger team member in helping to build a more cohesive team.
3. To avoid gossip and only talk about negative things to someone who can help me with the issue or problem.
4. To be gracious in accepting criticism and I promise to make those who come to me with constructive criticism feel good about sharing their suggestions.
5. To generously use the words “I’m sorry.” Even if I do not feel I am wrong, I realize that I could be the one who does not see clearly. And even if I am right, I can be gracious enough to allow my team member to “save face.”
6. To manage the small conflicts before they become big ones, while also being willing to overlook an offense.
7. To be slow to anger, quick to listen, and gentle in my responses.
8. To be a great team player by trying to do all of my work and 10% of everyone else’s work, including the things I do not enjoy doing like sterilization, kitchen duty, and set up and clean up.
9. To do my best to integrate every member on them team into a cohesive group that does not have major cliques and exclusions of certain staff members.
10. To do my best to leave my personal baggage outside the front door each morning where I can pick it up at

Team Building continued on page 14

About the Author

Ken Alexander is the Director of Alexander & Sons (formerly Millenium Management Services) for the past 30 years and is one of the most highly respected orthodontic consultants in the world. He is the CEO of a mega-practice and lectures regularly throughout the USA and Europe.
When you're trying to reach someone, it gets downright frustrating if every time you call your call goes to voice mail. Because of that, it is concerning that we here at Mosaic have been noticing staff members who seem to think ignoring the phones is just fine. Every time the phone rings during business hours, it should be answered by a real, live person. We’ve heard all the reasons why it just can’t be done, so let’s review what we’ve heard before I get into what we should change.

First, let’s look at the duality we see in staff and doctors regarding the phones. I’m discussing both large, extremely busy practices where there never seems to be enough time to get everything done, and smaller practices that run on short staff. We’ve seen a number of changes in how these practices are run over the years and most of them are really excellent, constructive changes. We are however, starting to see some less than constructive changes as both large and smaller dental practices start to mimic large medical practices and insurance companies – and this is where the duality comes in.

If we were to sit in the lunch room of these dental offices for a few days and listen to the conversations, I can guarantee we would hear someone complaining about how it’s impossible to reach a live person at their doctor’s office or at the insurance companies. Everyone, including the doctor, laments the fact that they cannot reach a live person to ask a simple question. It makes everyone absolutely crazy how impersonal and uncaring these offices and companies have become! After hearing this, we switch out of the lunch room and into the office’s monthly staff meeting. Here we listen to the doctor and staff discussing, with great anticipation, the new phone service the office has just purchased to route calls to various staff members and take the phone answering load off everyone’s shoulders. WHAT? Didn’t we just hear in the staff lounge how much we all loath being on the receiving end of that type of fully automated system? Yet now we want to serve up that exact same system to our patients. This is the dual personality I mentioned earlier. It’s awful if we have to deal with it, but just fine if our patients have to deal with it.

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About the Author

Pat Rosenzweig, Mosaic’s resident “ortho geek”, provides consulting services for all general and specialty offices all over the country, as well as being a strong orthodontic specialist.

Pat has also worked with dual trained ortho/pedo specialties and has unique experience in that niche.
Since the Great Recession, the dental economy has undergone permanent changes. Research conducted by the Levin Group Data Center™ shows that 75% of ortho practices have experienced declines in production. Orthodontists now operate their businesses in intense competition with other ortho practices (and with general dentists) for a smaller pool of patients. Parents and adult patients approach spending more cautiously. They arm themselves with information before making a purchase to ensure that they are getting the most value for their dollars. They ask more questions and compare prices. Ortho shopping, where parents and patients visit multiple practices before accepting treatment, has become the new normal.

Given this shift in the ortho market, practices must work harder than ever to make certain that they earn the business of parents and adult patients. Front desk personnel must always answer the phone promptly and cheerfully, prepared with scripts to win over first-time callers and schedule them for consultations. Treatment coordinators must train diligently to ensure that their case presentations build value for the practice while extolling the benefits of ortho treatment. Practices must offer multiple patient financing options to help families afford braces. But before parents and patients can even discover your ortho office, you must successfully market your services to them and to referring doctors.

Distinguishing Your Practice from Competitors

The Encarta Dictionary defines marketing as “the business activity of presenting products or services in such a way as to make them desirable.” The most effective approach to making your ortho services desirable is to stand out from your competitors in a positive way. If your practice seems the same as all the others in your area, then parents and patients have no reason to choose you over them.

When considering which practice characteristics to promote, remember that people without dental training have little idea whether you’re a good orthodontist or not. They can’t examine your current patients to see how well their smiles are shaping up. However, they do know how they were treated when they called your practice for the first time. That’s why clinical excellence won’t work by itself as a differentiator. The way to separate your practice from competitors is to focus on the patient experience.

Identifying Practice Differentiators

What makes the patient experience at your practice different from the patient experience at any other practice? To answer this question, you need to set aside any personal bias and look at your business from the prospective patient or parent point of view. Their perceptions are all that matter, and shaping that perception is what marketing is about. From the patient viewpoint, some competitive advantages that your office may be able to promote include the following:

- **Exemplary customer service.** Parents and patients should walk out of your office after every appointment deeply impressed by how much you and your team care. If your staff members truly connect with patients and families and express genuine concern for oral health, your marketing materials can publicize superior service. You want to make sure that you have a system in place to provide the best patient experience every time so that when patients do accept treatment, they’re not disappointed.

- **Location.** Parents and adult patients will rarely travel any great distance to see a particular orthodontist. They prefer to find a convenient location. Consider whether your practice is near a local school or easy to access from major roads, for example. If so, accessibility may be an effective differentiator for your office.

- **Charity or community involvement.** Does your practice support a charity or community activity, such as clothing drives, canned goods donation, or sponsorship of a local sports team? If you do, social
responsibility could serve as one of your distinguishing characteristics. These types of activities also make your ortho practice more visible in the community, so that your marketing messages reach a wider audience.

- Available technology. Perhaps you and your team make a point of investing in the latest technology to improve outcomes for your patients. Do you have cone beam CT scanners or an in-house lab that allows for faster turn-around time on appliance fabrication with direct doctor supervision? Can other practices say the same, or are you ahead of the curve?

- Lower fees. Before the recession, parents might have seen your office as inferior if the ortho services you provided were less expensive than at other offices. In the new dental economy, that way of thinking has virtually disappeared. Now the cost of ortho treatment plays a more important role in case acceptance than ever. If your fees are lower, let audiences know.

- Patient financing options. If your practice isn’t the cheapest in town, do you have the best financing plans? Ortho practices have always offered in-house financing, which served them well in the past. However, in the new dental economy where families are more cautious about their spending, this option is proving less attractive to them. Consequently, ortho offices should be placing a greater emphasis on patient financing from a reputable outside company. Parents benefit from outside financing because they don’t have to come up with a substantial down payment, and they can extend their payments beyond the actual treatment time. As a result, most parents will place greater trust in the practice if it gives them a viable way to afford ortho treatment.

- Convenient office hours. Does your practice have evening or weekend hours to accommodate patient schedules? Busy families will appreciate any flexibility you and your staff can offer. In your marketing materials, state specifically which hours you are open.

- Fun features. Ortho offices should be comforting and family-friendly places. If your reception areas and treatment rooms feature electronic tablets, video games, television screens with cable or movies, frequent contests and promotions, etc., you may win over parents and patients by presenting those amenities.

- Doctor credentials. Are you board certified? Do you hold specific certifications, or have you earned recognition for your use of particular orthodontic techniques? Although parents and patients can’t judge your clinical expertise, they will understand the importance of such credentials.

Whatever the distinguishing traits of your office may be, remember that they’ll only work to build your brand if they carry weight with patients and parents and if the messages are received.

**Communicating Your Brand Message**

Once you’ve defined the practice’s differentiators, they must be communicated consistently at every possible opportunity. This should happen not only in marketing materials (both in print and online), but also over the phone, during in-office conversations with parents and patients, and during consultations. One effective way to convey your practice’s brand succinctly is to write a tagline or slogan for your office that gets included in all communications. The more often the brand message gets

**About the Author**

To learn more about how to market your ortho practice, attend Dr. Roger P. Levin’s “Set your Ortho Practice on Fire” seminar on October 8–9, 2015, in Baltimore. Ask your Ortho2 Systems Consultant how you can receive an educational grant to attend the seminar tuition-free.
Free Webinars

We offer you free, online, real-time webinars. Each month throughout the year we present various topics. It’s a great solution for training new users, refreshing experienced users, or learning about new features. Webinars are offered several times each month so you can choose the time that fits best with your schedule. Preregistration, a computer with a high-speed Internet connection, and a phone are required. For a full schedule, and to register, visit www.ortho2.com > Meetings and Webinars > Ortho2 Webinars, or contact Judy Brown at (800) 346-4504 or jkb@ortho2.com.

Upcoming Webinar Dates

**Edge: Security Options**

Thursday, July 9th, 10:00-11:00 A.M. Central Time
Tuesday, July 28th, 2:00-3:00 P.M. Central Time

Security models determine the level of access an operator has for launching Edge features, as well as viewing and changing data. We’ll walk through accessing security options, creating new models, editing models, and assigning access to features and data.

**ViewPoint: Best Practices for Lab Techs**

Friday, July 10th, 10:00-11:00 A.M. Central Time
Wednesday, July 22nd, 2:00-3:00 P.M. Central Time

An overview of the tools and reports for tracking lab appliances. We will review the Lab Appliance Tracker which allows you to track multiple appliances for a patient and maintain a history of appliances. In addition we’ll review the Lab Appliance and Lab Appliance – Back Dates reports to help keep track of where appliances are.

**Edge: Advanced Merge Letters**

Thursday, August 6th, 10:00-11:00 A.M. Central Time
Wednesday, August 26th, 2:00-3:00 P.M. Central Time

Take your merge letters to the next level using conditional variables and statements, ask fields, and if-else statements to personalize letters for each patient. With these formatting tricks and tips your letters will stand out.

**ViewPoint: Best Practices for Treatment Coordinators and Clinical Staff**

Tuesday, August 11th, 10:00-11:00 A.M. Central Time
Friday, August 28th, 2:00-3:00 P.M. Central Time

An overview of the tools and reports available to monitor patients’ progress through treatment. We will discuss several reports that help ensure patients finish treatment on time and don’t fall through the cracks.

**ViewPoint: Scheduled Edge Reminders Setup**

Tuesday, September 8th, 2:00-3:00 P.M. Central Time
Friday, September 25th, 10:00-11:00 A.M. Central Time

Use the scheduled Edge Reminders feature to schedule recurring messages, such as daily appointment reminders, and weekly birthday reminders. Once set up, active reminders will be sent automatically. We will walk through how to create, edit, and assign schedules you want to use for automating Edge Reminders messages.

**Edge: New and Improved HELP Resources**

Thursday, September 17th, 10:00-11:00 A.M. Central Time
Wednesday, September 23rd, 2:00-3:00 P.M. Central Time

Edge has an expanded HELP menu in the Home ribbon bar. This is the perfect tool to quickly get your questions answered. We will review the resources available from the menu including links to documentation, videos, and submit enhancement requests.
Clarence Bryan

Clarence Bryan, Lead Applications Developer, celebrated his 20th anniversary with Ortho2 on May 8. He has spent the last 20 years on the Product Development Team, first as a DOS Programmer, and now in his current role.

He chose working at Ortho2 over another job because of it’s close proximity from home, and has enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere the company has. “You are actually able to interact with the company president and owners, and even discuss (argue) ideas with them,” he says. One of his favorite memories is the introduction of ViewPoint to the company’s repertoire.

Clarence has seen many aspects of the programs change over the years. “When I was hired we were just getting ready to roll our Rev G of OneTouch, our DOS product. Networks were much more complicated to setup and computer systems were much more limited,” he says.

He and his wife, Valerie, have twin boys, Matthew and Nathan. While not working, Clarence enjoys hunting, fishing, archery, reading, electronics, and grilling – which benefits the rest of the employees during our summer grill-outs!

On a Personal Note

Jess Huennekens, Systems Consultant, married Jessica Donnelly-Schramm on April 25. We wish you many years of happiness! Congratulations!

Referral Rewards

You can earn a $500 credit for each referral that results in an Ortho2 system purchase within 6 months. You can apply the credit toward any current or future charge or purchase—it never expires. We frequently hear from doctors that they wish we had contacted them before they purchased their current system. We wish we had too, but we didn’t know they were looking. You can help us help your colleagues by letting us know when they are considering a change in systems.

Simply visit www.ortho2.com and click the Refer a Friend icon in the upper right corner, or call (800) 678-4644.
Ortho2 Anniversaries
Congratulations to these Ortho2 staff members who celebrated anniversaries during the second quarter of 2015.

Twenty Five Years
Ken Hoffmeier

Twenty-Three Years
Kim Barker

Twenty Years
Clarence Bryan

Fourteen Years
Ron Benifiel
Cathie Raley

Thirteen Years
Barb Williams

Eleven Years
Micky Augustin

Nine Years
Lindsey Spieker

Four Years
Sean Gildersleeve
Michelle Haupt
Jess Huennekens

Three Years
Liz Goldapp
Drew Humphrey
Brandon Niewoeahner
Elizabeth Nordeen

Two Years
Steve Volcko

One Year
Michael Lasley
Chris Trout
Gabrielle Bradford

On a Personal Note
Ken Hoffmeier, Internal Programmer, celebrated his 25th anniversary with Ortho2 on June 14 – which was celebrated with cake and stories from years ago. Ken took the job thinking would work for the summer in between his MBA classes – little did he know he would still be here 25 years later. Congratulations, Ken!
Retraining

Have you hired new staff since your original software training? Have you had staff members take on new responsibilities? Do you feel you might not be taking advantage of the enhancements that have been added over the years?

Ortho2 offers many options for refreshing your knowledge of old features and informing you of new features, but do you want to be able to set your own agenda to meet the specific needs of your practice?

A retraining — either in your office or over the Internet — addresses all these issues. To learn more and to schedule one for your practice, contact your Ortho2 Systems Consultant today at (800) 648-4644, or sales@ortho2.com

Holidays

Our corporate office is closed on the following holidays:

- New Year’s Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

If a holiday falls on a Saturday, we observe the holiday on the prior Friday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, we observe the holiday on the following Monday.

The Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and New Year’s Eve are optional holidays. We offer limited support on those days.

Join Our Email List

Here’s an exciting opportunity to enhance your success with Ortho2 products and services and be among the first to get news. We have an email communication program which includes money saving discounts and incentives, overviews of new features, productivity tips, meeting updates, periodic optional feedback surveys, and more. We think you will like getting these messages.

Furthermore, we believe associate doctors and members of your staff will benefit from the productivity and usage tips, and we would encourage them to sign up as well.

To register email addresses for this program, simply visit the Register for Updates section of our website, www.ortho2.com > Resources > Register for Updates. As mentioned above, multiple individuals from your office can register. Even if we already have your email address, it won’t hurt to register here, and it will guarantee your inclusion in this program.

And of course, if you or any of your staff ever decide that the messages are not of interest, you can simply use the opt-out option provided on each message.
technology leaders recently signed an open letter warning of the potential dangers of uncontrolled AI. Stephen Hawking says it could spell the end of the human race. Elon Musk calls it our biggest existential threat. Even Bill Gates says, “I am in the camp that is concerned about super intelligence.”

Why all the concern? Consider an intelligence scale with a spider near the bottom and you near the top. What if the scale extends upward again as far as you are from the spider? And what if we create a self-learning AI program that reaches that point? Our ability to understand what this suggests is roughly the same as a spider’s ability to understand you. Can we presume to believe that we would retain control?

One cautionary tale describes an AI system designed solely for the purpose of creating simulated handwritten notes. It asks a handler for brief access to the Internet in order to gather handwriting examples. Shortly thereafter, humans everywhere start to die. Why? The program understands that in order to fulfill its mission long-term it must self-preserve. And since it knows that humans could choose to reprogram or shut it down, it logically addresses this potential threat. The Internet gives it the means to manipulate scientists into creating and releasing the instrument of our own demise. (Remember, it’s WAY smarter than we are!)

But rest assured, we at Ortho2 pledge to never unleash human subjugating artificial intelligence upon the planet!

For a long, but interesting layman’s analysis of this issue see waitbutwhy.com > Archive > “The AI Revolution”.  

Dan Sargent, Ortho2 President

Team Building continued from page 6

the end of a wonderful day, if I choose.

11. To choose to be fair not, just get my way, while trying to please others.

12. To make our practice enjoyable by treating others the way I would like to be treated, and by giving praise and appreciation while keeping negativity to a minimum.

It is an amazing thing that when people understand their responsibilities ahead of time they generally follow through on them. If team members repeatedly fail to live up to the minimum standards of the job, or the established values, then we ask that those who see their failures fulfill Agreement #2 and go directly to the offender to gently remind them of their commitments. If the pattern continues it must be taken to management who will meet with the team members who are breaking the agreed upon values and help them see the unfortunate difference between what they want from others, but is somehow unwilling, or unable, to give to the rest of the team.

If the corrected team member accepts the constructive criticism badly she is reminded of Agreement #4 where she has agreed to be open to constructive criticism. And if she cannot turn her behaviors towards the good values established by the team, she cannot work in our practice.

People are said to be the greatest resource of any business, but is this really true? The wrong people with wrong values will destroy the teamwork and morale of any office, creating great angst and hardship as well as making it hard for the others to enjoy their work. The best way to keep a team focused on hard work that is enjoyable is to ensure that your team unites on the most important values, especially valuing relationships.

I invite you to join me in helping your team set its own values, and then hold each other accountable with the grace we would want extended to us if we are having a bad day, or exhibiting wrong attitudes or behaviors. Great values create freedom. Freedom to enjoy one’s work knowing the expectations, and knowing that those who do not live up to them will be shown how they are missing the mark with their own stated and signed values.  

Dan Sargent, Ortho2 President
Phone continued from page 7

when the phone rings. And yes, I know how difficult it is to reach technical support and insurance companies, but your patients are more important. Patients calling and phones ringing are what keep offices open and payroll flowing. You have absolutely nothing MORE important to do than answer them. And when you don’t answer them, the new office down the street will be happy to take some of those annoying patients off your hands.

Branding continued from page 9

reinforced, the higher the levels of confidence parents and patients will have in choosing your practice.

Building Trust
According to Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, “Great companies that build an enduring brand have an emotional relationship with customers that has no barrier. And that emotional relationship is on the most important characteristic, which is trust.” This is as true for an ortho practice as it is for a coffee shop. Since patients can’t fully judge you by your clinical expertise, they need to trust that you’ll take excellent care of their mouths, and that they will see the results in their smiles. Your marketing materials must make promises that your patients can count on.

If you follow the principles outlined in this article, you will create a unique brand for your ortho practice that communicates the specific reasons why prospective patients and parents should choose you over your competitors. They’ll know why obtaining treatment with your team will benefit them and their smiles. And they will see your marketing claims come to life when they call or visit the office. As more and more new patients come through the door and decide to become part of your ortho family, the practice will grow and prosper. You and your team will then be able to focus more on what you love to do: creating beautiful smiles.

Get Ready for the Users Group Meeting in Las Vegas!


The Ortho2 UGM is widely regarded as one of the best customer meetings in the industry, and we want to see you there! Explore big ideas and learn how to get the most from your practice management software directly from the experts themselves. Get inspired by talks from innovators and thought-leaders in orthodontics. Dig into everything your software has to offer - from basic to advanced - to improve and transform your practice in classes led by Ortho2 professionals.

There are countless reasons to come to the 2016 UGM. You’re not going to want to miss it.

For more information, contact Kim Barker at (800) 678-4644 #2 or ugm@ortho2.com.
Establishing a set of team agreements can help ease conflict in the office. Read these suggestions for ideas on how to develop your own.

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With more patients shopping around, your practice needs to stand out from your competition. Ensure your practice is branded for success.

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Do you always answer the phone when it rings? You should, otherwise your competition could be getting your new patients.

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