

## Baby Boomers Make Cosmetic Dentistry Boom

By Lorin F. Berland, DDS; Larry Brooks, DDS; Paul H. Westbrook, CDT

I would venture to guess that many dentists reading this article belong to the Baby Boomer generation, which currently makes up the largest group of Americans. This middle-aged generation is an important force in the American dental marketplace because it constitutes a large group of people who have the means to get appropriate dental care. However, as a result of advancements in preventive dentistry, most of these people do not need much acute or even restorative care. So dentists are seeing more people who would accept but not need much of their services. This may present problems for dentists who only restore sick dentitions, but it is a golden opportunity for those wishing to address the issues of well-patient cosmetic dentistry.

Well-patients in dentistry are a large and growing number of people who do not exhibit active dental disease. Although not dentally sick, many of them would improve their smiles if they could just see the benefits. But to approach these people in a meaningful way, dentists must update their case presentations and planning methods. Traditional tools, such as wax-ups, photo albums, and intraoral mock-ups will always be useful, but they all have severe limitations. They only show how teeth (not how patients) will appear following treatment — and that's rarely enough.

People generally place more importance on the appearance of their teeth as they get older and their bodies begin to deteriorate. The latest dental technologies offer people many ways to actually improve their teeth with age, making this a great time to be in cosmetic dentistry. Better materials and techniques have enabled dental professionals to conservatively rejuvenate teeth in a short time. Whitening and/or porcelain veneers can create a health-

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Figure 1.



Figure 2.



Figure 3.



Figure 4.



Figure 5.



Figure 6.

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ier, more attractive, and natural-looking smile. Everyone looks younger and healthier with a great smile. The latest technological advance in cosmetic dentistry is Smile-Vision On-line Computer Imaging, a new approach to visual cosmetic case presentations. Smile-Vision can provide solutions to the limits of traditional tools and help patients visualize the complete aesthetic result.

#### CREATING THE DESIRE

There are a myriad of different courses available to dentists interested in improving their delivery of cosmetic dentistry. And almost all participating dentists have learned a great deal from these courses. However, practice makes perfect, and the best way to become proficient at something is with repetition. The only way to get a lot of cosmetic dentistry opportunities is to create patient desire. And the only way to get patients to want better looking teeth is to show them how good they could look. That is exactly what Smile-Vision does, as illustrated in the following case presentation.

A 50-year-old patient came into the office for his 6-month check-up. We joked about getting older and how we were falling apart. He asked me if he'd look better if I fixed his teeth.

The hygienist brought the interested patient to the on-line computer imaging service, which is located on a cart. In less than 1 minute, his picture was sent by modem to be processed. In 3 days, the office received a handsome folder with before-and-after pictures (Figures 1 and 2). The folder was then sent to the patient, inviting him to come in for a complimentary consultation to discuss his possible treatment. I did not hear from him until his next check-up. He came to the appointment with the folder and told the assistant he wanted "that killer smile" as soon as possible.

Following a discussion on his options ranging from ortho to whitening to veneers, we decided to whiten his teeth with splint therapy using Nite White Exrel NSP 16% carbamide peroxide (Discuss). Enamel remineralizing toothpaste was used to reduce any mineral loss. During the 2

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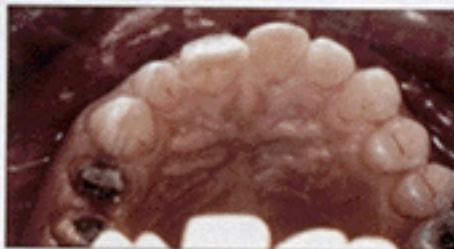


Figure 7.



Figure 8.



Figure 9.



Figure 10.



Figure 11.



Figure 12.



Figure 13.



Figure 14.



Figure 15.



Figure 16.