

“Twitter”pated by Teeth

by Benjamin Lund, Editor
Dentaltown Magazine



Dr. Leonard Tau, Pennsylvania-practicing dentist, loves technology. This is evident with his iTero, CEREC Omnicam and brand new Canary System taking center stage in his practice, and also by his massive online social media presence. Herein, *Dentaltown Magazine* chats with Dr. Tau about how he uses social media to communicate and also, how he runs a successful practice without participating with insurance.

Dr. Tau, why did you choose dentistry as your career?

Tau: Growing up in New York, my father had a dental office in the basement of the home I grew up in. I would venture down to his office whenever possible and watch him transform people's smiles. The look on his patients' faces when they were done was amazing. My dad instilled a lot of ideas about being a dentist and it was the obvious choice in a career path for me. Initially my intention was for us to practice together but soon after I started college my father was forced to sell one of his offices due to an illness. As fate would have it I ended up in the Philadelphia area where I settled and purchased my current practice in 2007.

What is your practice philosophy? How do you cultivate this philosophy in your practice?

Tau: My philosophy is to practice quality, comfortable, painless dentistry in a state-of-the-art dental office. I am always looking for the latest and greatest technology to provide my patients



Photography by Richard Quindry Photography

Name: Leonard F. Tau, DMD

Graduate From: Tufts University School of Dental Medicine in Boston, 1999
University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, 2000

Practice Name: Pennsylvania Center for Dental Excellence



and they expect that when they come into my office. From the initial visit to my office and continuing throughout the entire treatment and recare we give our patients a “wow” experience. In terms of comfort, we have blankets, pillows, iPods, paraffin for hands and massage chairs, etc. My team knows we need to provide our patients with the very best care possible.

Tell us a little about the competition in your area and what you do to differentiate yourself.

Tau: I have many dentists in a small radius around the office. Most of them are heavy insurance practices, which helps separate me from the rest as I do not participate with any insurance plans. I am located in a small strip center and I have a dentist a couple of doors down as well as directly across the street.

We have our patients fill out a “Comfort Menu” so they know what is available to them, and a “Please Handle Me with Care” form so we know what would make them uncomfortable while in our office. I go with my patients to OS consults and implant surgeries so when they wake up I am there to insert their immediate denture or even hold their hand during treatment. We listen to our patients’ needs and concerns. What also differentiates me is my online reputation.

How would other dentists in your community describe your practice?

Tau: High quality, ahead of technology, early adopter, trend setter.



Office Highlights

Bonding Agents

- All Bond Universal
- Prime & Bond NT

Burs

- Brasseler Diamonds
- SS White Carbides

Cements

- 3M RelyX Unicem

Implants

- Nobel Biocare
- Restore BIOMET 3i
- Straumann

Front Desk Products

- Dentrax
- Lighthouse 360

Impression Materials

- Impressionless, except for partial and dentures – 3M Imprint

Patient Financing

- CareCredit
- Springstone
- Your Health

Restoratives

- 3M Filtek Supreme Plus
- SureFil SDR Flow

Technology

- Biolase WaterLase iPlus
- CEREC Omnicam
- Dexis Digital X-rays
- iLase
- iTero
- The Canary System

Whitening

- KöR Whitening Deep Bleaching System
- Zoom

Practice Location: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Office Opened: 2007

Practice Size: Five operatories; seven employees

Website: www.pcde.com

continued on page 50

Do you specialize in any specific areas of dentistry or prefer certain procedures over others?

Tau: I like all areas of dentistry except surgical procedures. I refer out extractions, implant placement and perio surgery. As far as a favorite, I love doing Invisalign.

What piece of technology has the biggest “wow” factor for your patients?

Tau: My new CEREC Omnicam; I can offer patients same-day crowns. The response from my patients has been great. They love not having to come back for a second visit.

Which piece of equipment has provided the fastest return on your investment?

Tau: I recently purchased the Canary System which allows me to see under amalgam restorations and fillings which I have been watching for a very long time. We are now replacing and finding significant caries underneath them.

What is your approach to integrating new technology into your practice?

Tau: As someone who is always looking to incorporate new technology in my office it is not difficult at all. My staff is used to it. When I buy something new I always talk to the team prior to purchasing it and explain why I think it would be a good fit. After training, for which we usually set up a half day or full day to be trained, we try and use it as often as possible so it becomes part of our daily routine. My team flies with me to off-site training when necessary.

How do you accommodate emergency appointments?

Tau: I never turn away an emergency patient. I will always find room in my schedule. You never know when that person will need a ton of dentistry or refer a large amount of patients. Many dentists shy away from emergencies. I embrace them.

What is the most rewarding experience you've had as a dentist?

Tau: I had a 12-year-old boy who came to my office from Lancaster, Pennsylvania –more than two hours away. He would not smile because his two front teeth had some terrible staining that nobody could treat. His mom found me on the Internet since I had promoted KöR. They came in and I told them I thought we could fix his teeth with deep bleaching. An amazing transformation in not only his smile but his confidence as well. He has not stopped smiling since. I am still treating him with Invisalign Teen so I am constantly reminded about how life-changing it was for him.

You're known as a social media expert in the dental profession. What first intrigued you about social media and what should dentists know about how to effectively use this form of communication to their advantage?



Dr. Tau (center) and his team.

Tau: I have always been on a computer – connected and communicating. I see social media as another way to communicate with people, not necessarily as a way to advertise my business. Although I have had a good ROI [return on investment] with social media, most dentists will not and that is a big misconception about social media. Social media is about communicating. It is about listening. It is about providing another layer of customer service to patients and potential patients. It is not about selling. If all you do is talk about selling things nobody will give you the time of day.

The biggest advantage of social media is probably that it is mostly free and you can reach a large group of people faster than with any other form of communication. In terms of importance, I would say Facebook and YouTube are the most important for dentists, followed by blogging, Pinterest and Twitter. Most dentists do not understand social media but there are many companies who can help out. You need to get involved with social media as your patients are, as well as your competition.

Tell us about your team.

Tau: I have an amazing team that works for me. Without them I would not be successful. They come in everyday excited to work. I have one full-time front desk/office manager who is amazing on the phone. We just hired a part-time front-desk assistant to help her out. I have three dental assistants including one EFDA and two full-time hygienists.

What does a typical day at your practice look like?

Tau: Our day starts with a morning huddle 15 minutes before we start to give us direction for the day (our itinerary). Our schedule, which is normally full, is very busy. We do a lot of restorative dentistry, our hygiene department is fully booked and as an Elite Provider of Invisalign we have a lot of patients picking up their trays and being checked. We generally see about 65 new patients a month so we always have a steady flow in our office.

continued on page 52

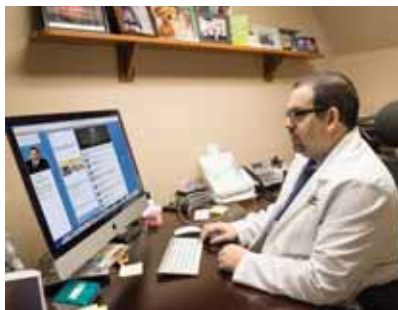
In your opinion, what are the biggest problems dentistry faces today and what do you think should be done about them?

Tau: One issue is the new patient generation. When I give seminars throughout the country on dental marketing one of the biggest concerns I hear is practices struggling to attract new patients. Most offices do not market at all. Moving forward, practices that do not market will suffer. Practices need to use the Internet to let people searching for a dentist find out about them.

Another problem is dental insurance. It amazes me how our profession can let insurance dictate the amount we charge and the amount we are to be reimbursed. Insurance companies have decreased reimbursement. At the same time expenses and overhead have increased. There is no way the profession can give the same quality with a decrease in reimbursement. On the same note, patients are not taught about dental insurance. Most think it is like medical insurance where a small copay covers everything. Patients do not realize you cannot buy good dental insurance. I think the American Dental Association needs to start a public awareness campaign letting people know the truths and myths about dental insurance. I am glad I do not need to rely on insurance in my office.

How has Dentaltown changed the way you practice?

Tau: When I first contemplated purchasing my practice in 2007 one of the first things I did was post on Dentaltown to get



input. Now, six years in my office, I use it often to see what others are asking, and if I have a pressing issue I will start a thread. I also use it to help other dentists with marketing, social media and online reputation. I was fortunate to do a CE course on social media and write an article about Yelp for the magazine. The feedback from my fellow Townies has been great. I can say that without Dentaltown things in my dental career would certainly be different.

What advice would you give dental students who are about to get out into the real world?

Tau:

1. Learn how to market your practice. Establish social media sites before you leave school. Students may not have “capital” as in money, but they have a huge advantage as in “social capital” and most know how to use the tools to communicate and connect.
2. Learn as much as you can in school. Practice! You are in school for a reason. Take advantage of it. If I could go back I would spend more time in perio and oral surgery, as I refer most out.
3. Join organized dentistry. It can help you out immensely.
4. Do not be God in your office. Answer the phones, help out, learn about insurance, etc. Your patients and staff will appreciate it. ■

Dr. Tau's Top Five

iTero	CEREC Omnicam	Invisalign	The Canary System	Kör Whitening
When did you start using it?				
2008	2012	2007	2013	2008
When do you use it?				
Digital impression for crown, bridges, veneers and Invisalign	Right now, posterior crowns, but taking more cases for anterior work	To straighten teeth	During hygiene and new patient examinations to check virgin lesion for decay, under composites or amalgams	To whiten teeth that are dark or stained; for patients who have been told they could never whiten before
How do you market it to patients?				
Online and by telling patients about it when they are in the office	Online, TV news spot and informing patients in-office	Online and education during hygiene	Education in-office, online	Online, before/after photos
If you could change anything about the item, what would it be?				
Wand could be smaller	Faster computer	Wish the cost was a little less expensive	N/A	I would like to not have to use KÖR's impression material