

# Realizing Your Full Potential

*OrthoSynetics, Inc., is dedicated to helping orthodontists achieve business success by managing the non-*

*by Chelsea Knorr, staff writer, Orthotown Magazine*

OrthoSynetics, Inc. (OSI), is a practice management/business services firm that assists orthodontic specialists with the non-clinical aspects of running their practice. The company currently serves about 300 orthodontic practices nationwide. OSI President and CEO David J. Marks is a seasoned health-care executive with more than 33 years of executive health-care management experience with an emphasis in multi-state, multi-site companies. His specialty area is in physician/group practice management. *Orthotown Magazine* spoke with Marks to learn more about the company.

## **David, can you please tell our readers about your career leading up to when you joined OrthoSynetics?**

**Marks:** After beginning my career in EMS/hospital administration in 1977, leading the establishment of one of the first paramedic, helicopter transport and level I trauma/burn/spinal cord injury centers in the country, I moved to the nationally recognized emergency medicine consulting and management firm of Stern and Associates in 1983 where I served as executive vice president for 10 years.

In 1992, I accepted the role of division vice president for EmCare, a company that provides turnkey emergency and ambulatory care services to more than 3 million patients annually at 140 hospital emergency departments in 30 states. Following a successful IPO, rapid growth and expansion, I took the position of COO of USCardioVascular, a cardiology practice management company startup focused on outpatient diagnostic facility development which we grew to a multi-state and multi-faceted company over the subsequent 10 years. I took over as president and CEO in 2004.

My tenure at OSI began in October 2009 as chief operating officer and I was appointed president and CEO in July 2010.

## **What's OSI's mission?**

**Marks:** Our purpose is to help doctors realize the full potential of their practice. We accomplish this by providing orthodontists with a dedicated team of business experts who are all focused on one thing – the success of the doctor. The accomplishments of our current clients speak volumes. With our suite of business services, OSI affiliated practices experience improved new patient starts, significant increases in profitability and, best of all, an overall improved quality of life. Through the implementation of our services, OSI takes the headache of managing the non-clinical aspects of a practice away from the doctor. This allows the doctor to focus on their clinical practice and patient care, while taking home more compensation and enjoying their increased “off time” with family and friends. We continuously modify our systems and service offerings to ensure OSI clients sustain their competitive advantage in their marketplace.

## **Tell me about the OSI team. What type of experience they offer?**

**Marks:** OSI is comprised of many specialized departments. Each department has a director with more than 15 years of experience helping doctors grow their top line while improving their bottom line at the same time. These departments work as an integrated team delivering quality assistance to optimize the practice's performance. Our team handles the non-clinical functions of a practice so the doctor can concentrate on providing patients with exceptional care and beautiful smiles.

*continued on page 36*

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*Dr. Michael Delgado (left) and  
David J. Marks, OrthoSynetics president & CEO*

*“We not only provide the doctor the solution to his/her business challenges, but we also execute the solution. Our services are fully integrated with one another to ensure success.”*

### **What types of services do you offer orthodontists?**

**Marks:** Our suite of fully integrated services include: practice development and enhancement consulting, revenue cycle management, purchasing, practice accounting, business insurance, practice and equipment financing, marketing, real estate/construction/facility management services, human resources management, patient insurance/benefits/eligibility verification, recruiting and practice transition planning and implementation. We basically can do everything except put braces on patients.

### **How do you group these various services into packages?**

**Marks:** Our service packages are fully customizable. Our strategy is to perform an initial assessment of the practice operations and identify opportunities for potential growth and efficiencies. A business development consultant then provides service package recommendations that are tailored to the needs of that doctor. We often find that it is the combination of all services together that result in the greatest success.

### **What are the resources OSI offers?**

**Marks:** OSI has a team of more than 100 professionals who are all experts in their respective areas. With the vast amount of talent we have in-house we are able to provide hands-on guidance in all key areas of practice operations. Our skill set includes expertise for newly-in-practice doctors, doctors in a growth stage of their career as well as those planning retirement or a sale in the next five years. We have the equivalent of a full-service marketing firm “in-house” to develop

practice branding and marketing campaigns to increase patient starts and build brand awareness. We also offer the benefit of in-house legal counsel for HR issues, loan or sale closings and general legal questions regarded to everyday business matters. OSI can also recruit employees and associates for practices. Practice-operation experts bring a variety of “best practices” to our clients. We also enjoy key partnerships with industry suppliers, leveraging our 300 practice locations, to provide clients with ideal products at the best possible price.

### **How are your services appropriate for each newly in-practice, growth mode, practice in transition and mature practice life stage?**

**Marks:** Service needs vary depending on the practice life stage. A newly-in-practice doctor is facing many important decisions that will have significant impact on the practice for years to come. Typically these doctors come to us for our “Newly-In-Practice” program which provides the services a new orthodontist needs to begin a successful practice while saving the orthodontist approximately \$110,000 in their first year in comparison to market rates (after including our nominal fees).

A growing practice can also benefit from our sophisticated marketing, practice consulting, purchasing, real estate, recruiting and equipment financing services. The mature practice often looks to us to kick-start growth, recruit associates, tune up “best practices” and begin to look at a transition plan in the future. The practice in transition can benefit from our legal departments expertise on practice sales as well as recruitment of buyers.

### **How do you support orthodontists during their engagement with OSI?**

**Marks:** During our partnership, an orthodontist can expect to typically have a team of 30 individuals working together to ensure success for the practice. We follow a proven system that ensures timely and successful execution of all best practice recommendations. One of our strongest features is that we dedicate

a practice account executive to each practice. Their role is to oversee all facets of the business from an operational and financial perspective, ensuring all service expectations and financial returns are on plan each month.

**David, what interactions do you personally have with orthodontists on a daily basis?**

**Marks:** My typical day is filled with discussions with our orthodontists regarding industry trends, new initiatives at OSI and strategic planning for their practice. There are a lot of new and exciting improvements we are rolling out to the practices that will further increase the service levels we provide clients.

**What separates OSI from its competitors?**

**Marks:** There are no other nationally focused (38 states, Puerto Rico and soon to be Canada) full-service, turnkey, orthodontic practice management companies in the industry today. OSI offers a comprehensive set of business services all under one roof. We not only provide the doctor the solution to his/her business challenges but, unlike external consultants that leave a practice with a plan the practice has to implement, we also execute the solution. Our services are fully integrated with one another to ensure success.

**Can you share a few examples of success stories with our readers?**

**Marks:** We have many success stories. The most telling and current one I can share with you is that on average, our affiliated practices have continued to grow their patient starts as well as their net income over the last three years in a very difficult economy while the average orthodontist has declined in both, some at double-digit rates.

**How did you measure these results?**

**Marks:** We measure our results by the individual doctor's level of satisfaction on OSI's achievement of the goals we initially set together when he or she became a client.

**How can a doctor integrate OSI into his or her practice?**

**Marks:** Simply by calling our new business phone line at 877-OSI-1111. We will have one of our new business specialists and a practice consultant discuss the doctor's goals and analyze where OSI could assist the practice. Doctors will also see us exhibiting at many of the national and regional orthodontic trade shows.

**What does the future look like for OSI? Any plans in the works?**

**Marks:** The future is bright for OSI – we are adding new affiliates, providing new services and improving our existing services on a monthly basis. This trend will continue and significantly improve as the word spreads on the value of our services and the ability of OSI to meet or exceed our doctor's stated goals.

To learn more about OrthoSynetics, Inc., visit [www.orthosynetics.com](http://www.orthosynetics.com), or call 877-OSI-1111 or 888-622-7645. ■



*David J. Marks, OrthoSynetics president & CEO (left) and Dr. Michael Delgado.*