

You Should Know:

VisionTrust is a marketing communications company dedicated to helping clients build their marketing strategies and branding programs. *Orthotown Magazine* talks to Jeff Behan of VisionTrust.

Jeff, tell me about VisionTrust and what you provide to orthodontists.

Jeff Behan: I think the best way to explain it is with a quick analogy. If you've ever built a custom home or office space, you know that it takes a team of people to build it right. Framers, masons, roofers, electricians and other specialized craftsmen work together, driven by the general contractor – that one person you trust to manage all the people and elements that will make your vision a reality. The same is true when you're ready to build your brand and marketing programs, but many practitioners trust their branding and marketing to a staff member or contractor without the experience and tools necessary to build a holistic program that creates profit and reflects positively on the brand. Others focus on a single element, like case acceptance, professional referral or search engine optimization, without first building a foundation that will differentiate them and move people to action. A marketing program built this way is the equivalent of trying to build a house by hiring only roofers. VisionTrust is the general contractor – a full-service marketing communications company helping our clients build a marketing and branding program that will stand the test of time, uncertain economic conditions and the ever-changing competitive landscape. We work with more than 1,500 orthodontic practices and a number of the top manufacturers supporting the profession. VisionTrust's passion is helping practices develop and tell their unique story in a way that makes them the practice of choice for anyone considering orthodontic treatment, and creating strategic advantage for our clients. Our services cover the entire spectrum of marketing communications, including:

- Brand and Corporate Identity Development
- Strategic Marketing Plans
- Web Site Design and Development
- Referral Nurture Programs
- Patient Education Videos
- Patient Testimonial Videos
- Custom Messaging for Front Office and On-Hold Systems

VisionTrust

by Benjamin Lund, Editor, *Orthotown Magazine*

- Sales and Customer Service Training
- Ads for Web, Print, Radio and Television
- Media Management

What is your personal background prior to starting VisionTrust? How did you get started in orthodontics?

Behan: I've always been a communicator. I started VisionTrust in 1993, focusing on consumer marketing for a wide array of clients and industries, including energy companies, Intel Corp., Delta Airlines and Navigant Consulting/J.D. Power & Associates and other well-known companies. During that time we also worked extensively with ophthalmologists, orthopedists and family practitioners, but had no idea how focused on orthodontics we would become.

Late in the year 2000 an orthodontist in Colorado Springs had an over-the-fence conversation with one of his neighbors. That neighbor was a member of the VisionTrust team. The doctor told my team member that he knew we did the marketing for the best-known ophthalmologists in the city and he would like us to do for him what we did for those doctors.

Working with that doctor opened the door for VisionTrust to begin our work for Align Technology, Ormco and other great suppliers. I didn't know it at the time, but one brief conversation between neighbors changed my whole world and is responsible for VisionTrust's deep appreciation, dedication and commitment to helping the orthodontic profession. Now my very favorite work-related moments are those when a doctor takes the time to let me know we're making a difference – not just for him/her, but also for the entire profession.

What is your philosophy at VisionTrust? What is your goal?

Behan: We believe every practice has a story to tell. We believe no professional should toot his/her own horn and engage in "here's what makes me great!" marketing. We believe that there's no better way to grow the practice than through the words and actions of satisfied patients and parents who are willing to tell your

story for you. We believe that having a strategic marketing plan, tied to specific goals for growth, is always more effective than the opportunistic approach we see when we first meet most practices. We believe marketing is not just a front-office activity. We believe that it is no longer sufficient to speak of marketing in terms of "internal" and "external" because the lines between the two have blurred, and as a result, we believe any marketing initiative designed to create and encourage referral is "relational marketing." Everything is "consumer marketing." Our goal is to make sure the practice's story is developed, that patient and professional referrers know how to tell it, and that every place where the practice touches the community is a positive brand moment. Specific goals are set with each client and we work with their team to make those goals reality.

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What would you consider to be the "best kept secret" about VisionTrust?

Behan: I often hear statements like, "I didn't know you did that." The fact is, VisionTrust is a team of people including graphic designers, videographers, editors, media specialists, Web designers/programmers, copywriters and consultants with years of orthodontic and dental experience.

How can people contact VisionTrust if they wish to work with you?

Behan: Much in the same way most American orthodontists offer a complimentary initial consultation, we offer a free one-hour needs analysis. This is a great first step. It allows us to learn about the practice, research other practices in the area, and determine what the practice's marketing and training priorities ought to be. It also gives the doctor an opportunity to learn more about us. Contact us through our Web site www.visiontrust.com or by phone at 719-531-7527. ■