Raising your game

Any busy dentist knows that keeping up with change and getting on top of your business, requires time, of which there isn’t much spare. Simon Hocken offers some time-saving tips

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compete with each other for pa-

market, while running micro-

businesses which effectively

play together in the same prac-

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business models for our clients.

2008 is around creating new

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ties for early-adopters and a lot of

other health and beauty services.

to regard dentistry as a, ‘look

ward better clinical skills, more

age, ‘raising their game’, be it to-

from lack of business and financial

home or in their community.

Are you ready to raise your game?

When I coach clients to envis-

age, ‘raising their game’, be it to-

wards better clinical skills, more

business success or more per-

sonal fulfillment, their eyes light

up with ambition, and at last, I am

working with an excited and en-

ergised dentist.

Time for change

Dentistry, dental practice and the ‘business of dentistry’ is changing fast. Rapid change al-

ways creates many opportunities and the good news for ‘game rais-

ers’ is that your time has come.

What’s more, the public’s per-

ception of dentistry and dentists is changing too. No longer do

they see dentistry as being about pain relief, restoring teeth and

prevention. Thanks to the me-


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ways creates many opportunities and the good news for ‘game rais-

ers’ is that your time has come.

Some of them are finding oppor-


tunity to regard dentistry as a, ‘look

good feel good’ service sitting comfortably alongside many

other health and beauty services.

There are many opportuni-

ties for early-adaptors and a lot of

our work at Breathe Business in

2008 is around creating new

business models for our clients.

Some of them are finding oppor-


tunities by questioning the status quo.

For example:

For many years, dentists who

work together in the same prac-

tice (as expense sharing partners or associates) have behaved like

market stall holders, sharing the

cost and benefits of a covered

market, while running micro-

businesses which effectively

compete with each other for pa-

ients (and sharing any profit gen-

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of courses can feel like a rare

luxury. Building a business where

you are one of several fee earners

cases this situation and frees up

opening a second practice in a

nearby city centre. He intends

this practice to become a fran-

chise model so that the success-

ful business can be replicated

across the area. We are helping

him get the business model and

the business plan right, before

we help him look for finance and

start recruiting his new manage-

ment team.

These dental entrepreneurs

are all playing a bigger game and

they will all need strategies and

tactics to help them succeed.

Ten steps to freedom

1. Limit the time you spend car-

rying out clinical dentistry (to

a maximum of 28 hours per

week) and put a boundary

around it.

2. Get up an hour earlier.

Give yourself time in every
day to think bigger than just

the doing and the delivery of

clinical dentistry.

3. Take steps to maintain your

confidence and self-belief.

Avoid people who want to

trash your ideas.

5. Think about and audit your

unique skills and abilities

6. Decide what other resources

you will need (time, people,

money).

7. Find the right people with the

right knowledge and skills to

help you.

8. Create enough investment/

investors.

9. Set a time scale(s) for raising

your game and do what it

takes to stick it.

10. Make sure that every week

you take some action to

progress your game.

In my experience as a dentist

and as from coaching a lot of den-


ts, not having sufficient time to

stop and make the changes gets in

the way of playing a bigger game.

Some dentists believe that they

sell their time and therefore they

spend far too much time carrying

out dentistry and not enough time

thinking, focusing, planning and

implementing. Then, paradoxi-

cally, because they are by nature,

perfectionists, they become

scared to take action because they

are obsessed with getting it right.

Once you’re free

1. You may decide to play a big-

ger game by expanding your clin-

ical skills to meet the new

market place in dentistry.

2. You may decide to play a big-

ger game by leading your busi-

ness and getting it working ef-

fectively and expanding it.

3. You may decide to play a big-

ger game by changing your busi-

ness.

Whatever you decide, now is

the time for you to get off the den-


tal hamster wheel and play a big-

ger game. I