A new type of meeting

OrthoVOICE sets itself apart with different speakers, social events

By Kristine Colker, Managing Editor

If you were to plan your own orthodontic convention, what would you want it to have? More time in the exhibit hall without conflicts with educational sessions? A new generation of speakers who haven’t yet shared their stories with others? A way to have dinner at some great restaurants and meet new friends without having to put in so much effort to make those new friends?

These are just some of the things Dr. Clarke Stevens had in mind when he planned OrthoVOICE, a new type of orthodontist convention taking place in Las Vegas from Sept. 16–18.

“I’ve been to several orthodontic meetings around the world and seen the different ways people have presented academic programs,” Stevens said. “European meetings often have more people involved than the regular list of speakers. We thought it would be interesting and creative to invite different types of people.”

For instance, Dr. Scott Law is a practicing orthodontist in Killeen, Texas, who just finished his residency in 2009. He will speak on “Hit the Ground Running While Training for a Marathon — Know When to Pass the Baton and Win the Relay.” Dr. Jennifer J. Garza started her career as an orthodontic assistant and now has her own paperless practice and is a biologic orthodontist. She will share how her experiences have shaped her philosophies for her practice.

Each day of the meeting, there will be sessions for orthodontists and sessions for staff, with two to three tracks going at the same time. However, attendees aren’t limited by their job descriptions — if an orthodontist wants to attend a staff-focused presentation or vice versa, he or she is more than welcome to do so.

Another idea taken from European meetings, Stevens said, will be a more creative use of exhibit hall space. Not only will attendees have one-hour breaks to explore the exhibits, but vendors are encouraged to pick a topic they want to discuss and spend their meal sharing information with others.

For Dinner With Strangers, attendees will find a list in their registration materials of various restaurants around Las Vegas where OrthoVOICE has made reservations for eight to 10 people. Attendees will pick a restaurant they want to go to and will then show up for dinner with other attendees who they haven’t yet met.

“Sometimes I go to a meeting alone, and I wonder where I’m going to eat,” Stevens said. “But this way, you can go to a great restaurant and have a great evening with some new friends.”

Stevens said he likes that OrthoVOICE is being held in Las Vegas and plans to keep it there every fall.

“Vegas is a great place to have a meeting because it’s sort of an entertainment capital, and people love to come there,” he said. “It’s also nice to have stability and have a meeting in one place every year, so if someone can’t make it to the AAO one year, they know they will have this nice alternative.”

To register for OrthoVOICE, go to www.orthovoice.com. Orthodontists and staff members are $250 each and residents are $200. To make reservations at Planet Hollywood from $129 per night, call (877) 244-9474 and use code “smovo0.”