



case study: dental clinic

client: dental clinic

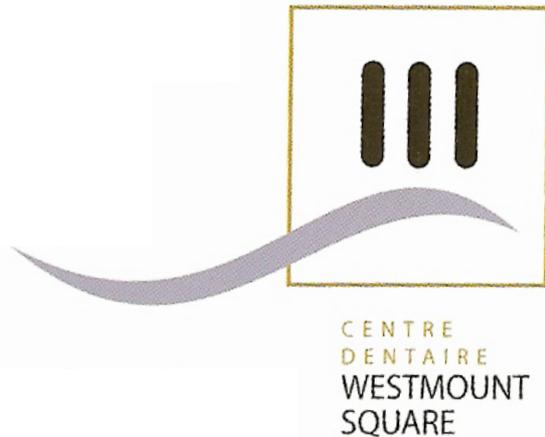
This dental clinic initially contacted us for a new sign in one of their external windows. People were having trouble finding the clinic, even though it was in a prominent location. The dentist and his team thought an eye-catching sign – or perhaps a large-screen television – would attract people’s attention and generate new business. And new business was sorely needed. The clinic was not generating enough new patients to justify the employees that the principal dentist had on staff.

After assessing their situation, we recommended changing the name and logo, changing out all the external signage and taking measures to enhance the overall employee and patient experiences. They agreed.

The result has been a dramatic increase in the number of new patients, representing thousands of dollars of new revenue, as well as a much more productive team.

before

The original name and logo were generic and easy to miss. They conveyed nothing in particular – not even very strongly that it was a dental clinic.



after

The new name conveys genuine care.

The new logo clearly communicates the fact that this is a dental clinic. And it uses colors that suggest warmth, trust, freshness and cleanliness.

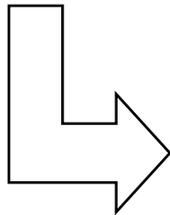
The symbol is a subtle reference to the integral role that oral health plays in overall health. It also implies total care and the aspiration to optimum health.



external signage

before

The original signage was somber and easy to miss. New patients had trouble finding the clinic, even though it was in a prominent location. And the space wasn't working to attract new patients.



after

The new signage was eye-catching, clearly branded and attractive.

The photo of the woman was chosen because (1) she looked very healthy, (2) she was not so beautiful that it was an unrealistic example, and (3) she is eating fruit, which tied in with the clinic's broad definition of patient health.

The tagline: **"Caring for you, your health and your smile."**

In place of a generic image in the rectangular lightbox, we put a group photo of the dental team as an introduction and an indication that they were friendly and welcoming.

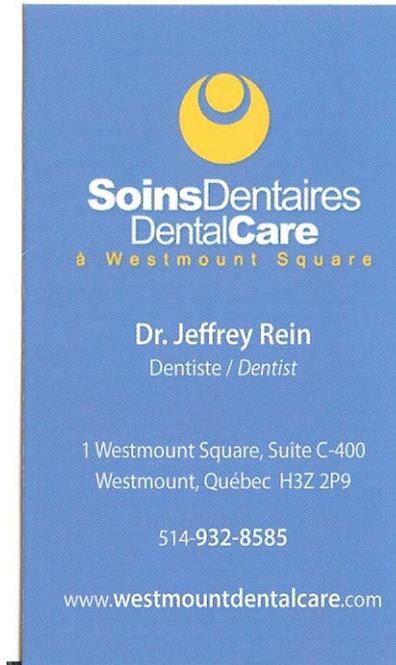
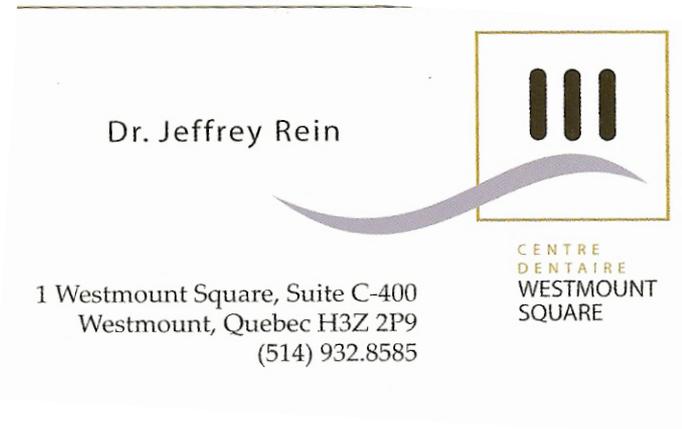
We also added a "Welcome! We are accepting new patients!" message to the door (1) to help people find the door, and (2) to overcome the common assumption that

the clinic was not accepting new patients.

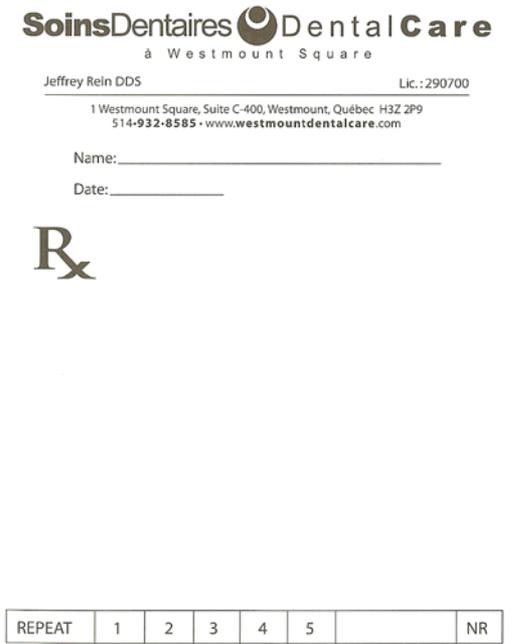
On the reverse side of the smiling woman sign, we put a life-size beach scene to create the illusion of open space within a small examining room.

stationery set

before



after

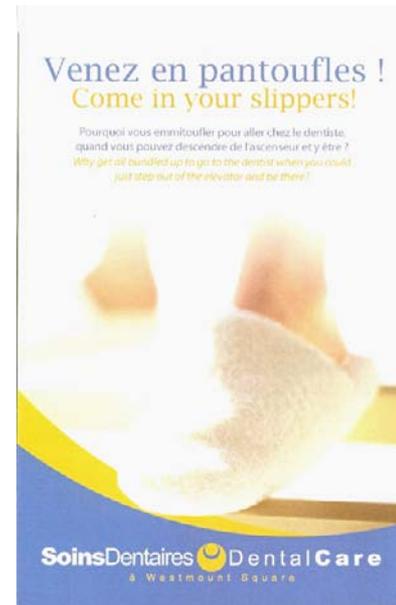


website

We developed a simple one-page website for the clinic.

postcard

To attract new patients from the condominiums above the clinic, we designed a direct-mail postcard.



front



back

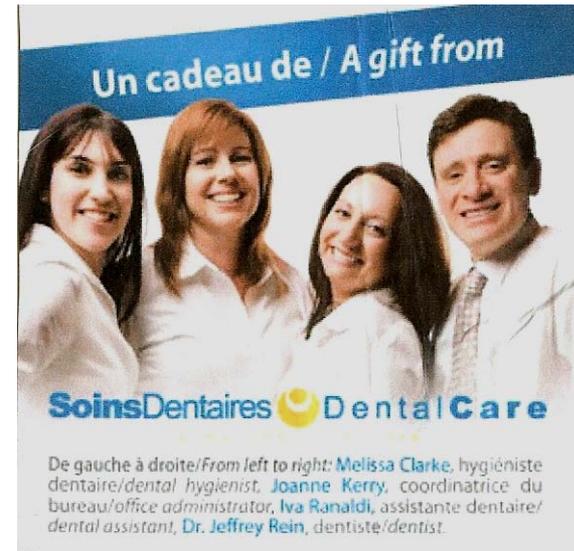
gift baskets

To attract new patients from the office towers above the clinic, we put together gift baskets full of apples – which are good for your teeth and your overall health -- and delivered them to all the offices in the same building.

The idea was to get past the receptionist, make an impact and introduce the clinic in an ingratiating way.

Branded bookmarks stood out between the apples and a tag on the basket handle featured a photo of the team with a message about the gift.

Result: The initiative paid for itself within three weeks, not including the life-time value of these new patients.



mission statement

As a short-hand version of the Constitution that the team could easily share with patients (and that could quickly keep the team focused on their goals), we drafted this Mission Statement for them to display in the reception area.

Our Mission:

To **collaborate** with you in caring for your oral health and appearance by:

earning your **trust**;

showing you that we **care**;

informing you;

and **inspiring** you

to make your oral health and appearance a top priority.

communication

With these goals (and Cambium) as their guide, the team made many small decisions that together made a big impact, such as:

- Posting biographies in the reception area.
- Purchasing name tags for everyone on the team.
- Canceling subscriptions to *People* and *Us* and replacing them with health-related magazines.
- Changing the wording and location of the cancellation policy notice.
- Adding thoughtful explanation to their medical questionnaire form.

before

The primary dentist shared his frustration at the counter-productive tension within the office.

interventions

The team needed to clarify and commit to the experience they wanted to create together.

Michelle interviewed each team member individually. She conducted a patient survey. And she brought the group together for a half-day meeting. Each person felt able to voice their concerns and points of dissatisfaction. And they also felt invited to imagine the best possible outcome for themselves and for the team.

after

Michelle drafted a Constitution and fine-tuned it with the whole team at a brief gathering. This document (see attachment) now acts as the guide and filter for everything that happens within the clinic.

The dentist introduced weekly staff meetings to track and improve how well the team was living up to these high standards.

He was also able to make the decision to let one team member go: though her technical skills were satisfactory, the manifesto made it clear that she was not working toward the less tangible elements of the team's vision. The tension within the office was noticeably relieved. And the new hire integrated with the team smoothly with the help of clear guiding principles.

We want to change the relationship our patients have with their mouths.

Specifically, we want to help them understand the integral role oral health plays in their overall well-being. And we want to inspire them to make their oral health and attractiveness a priority in their lives.

In the process, we want to elevate our dental clinic to a respected, valued partner in self-care and self-respect.

The first result of our efforts will be dramatically improved oral and overall health among our patients – and eventually among a broader population, as our example inspires other dental clinics to take a similar approach to patient care. The second result will be a sustainable, rewarding business, in which our patients are active, enthusiastic participants in their own care, and our clinic enjoys steady growth.

4 main scenarios have to be true to reach these goals:

1. We work to earn trust

The starting point for our relationship with patients is trust. If they can't trust that they're going to receive excellence in the technical quality of our services, then nothing else matters.

First, we make patients aware of our qualifications and capabilities. We communicate that we are trained in state of the art techniques and technologies. And every detail of the patient experience supports the image (and reality) of technical quality and hygiene.

Second, we build trust by demonstrating our professionalism and self-respect in every interaction. The starting point for this is our personal appearance and behavior. We are supported in our professionalism in part by efficient inventory management, scheduling and laboratory systems. But more than that, it is made possible by our own respect for each other as we work together to earn our patients' trust.

2. We show that we care

Building on the foundation of respect, we treat each patient like a welcomed guest. In their every interaction with us, people feel valued and taken care of. There are signs of our thoughtfulness and care throughout the office. And our own friendliness and humor help people feel at home and comfortable with us.

3. We educate

Because we care, we are able to educate. We provide information at every opportunity, in ways that patients can accept and internalize. We answer questions respectfully. We use humor where it is appropriate and helpful. And we motivate and reassure.

4. We inspire

More than that, we inspire with our passion for oral health in all its forms and implications. Our patients immediately perceive that this is not just a job for us: it is a mission. To us, oral health is the gateway to overall well-being. And we want nothing less than optimal health for our patients.

When all four of these scenarios come together, it creates collaboration. We are not doing something to our patients or for them. We are working with them in a collaborative relationship.

And it's a relationship of mutual respect. Our patients value our time and we value theirs. They let us know that they appreciate who we are and what we do for them. And we do the same.

This leaves us each feeling supremely fulfilled at the end of the work day. And it is this collaborative relationship that we credit for the superior health and well-being of our patients.