

NEED AND DESIRE IN DENTISTRY



Orlando Monteiro da Silva, President of the National Association of Liberal Professionals. Former President of the Portuguese Dental Association.

Dentistry, like other medical fields, lives in a limbo, in a conflict between its curative and aesthetic aspects.

Between the need to prevent, treat and rehabilitate functions and the desire to look better, to correct, to alter, to whiten, to align the teeth, jaws and attached structures for aesthetic reasons.

This conflict is resolved naturally with a holistic approach to these two inseparable aspects.

Aesthetics and function must fundamentally and for the dentist be integrable.



Clients, that is, all those who in their essence will be able to choose to whom they entrust the improvement or resolution of their perceived needs, more connected to function and felt desires, more connected with aesthetics, tend to separate both aspects.

We, as dentists, need not only to identify and be informed about these different Needs and Desires, but also to present our Solution to meet them.

And how?

First of all, referring to the audience we intend to address: our target.



Sometimes our target is not focused solely on the customer, someone abstract who has the ability for different reasons to choose or not our services, and who may become a consumer in our organization and, if they have a disease, a patient that we accompany in our clinical life.

Our target may be people or organizations that have influence in circles that may refer to our services. They are not only the "influencers" of Instagram or Tik Tok, but above all those who, due to their credibility, their exposure, their knowledge, constitute an interesting audience in the potential promotion of our person, our capacity, our qualification, our services.



insurance of a country of the European Union to provide treatment in a network of clinics in our region; or a travel agency for a cruise ship, one of the many that pass through Portugal, in which its patients can be informed that they have dental services that can solve problems, urgent or other at the place of stop, arrival or departure of one of these cruises.



It can be an established community in Portugal of retirees from Nordic countries, the USA and central Europe, to whom we travel to provide health care or whom we welcome into our clinical facilities.

Fundamentally, what can and should vary depending on the positioning in the market is the way a clinical organization or practice approaches the target in the audience so that potential customers choose the services that are offered; and that when we address different audiences, our message is adapted, depending on several factors, namely the aforementioned Needs and Desires of each one of them.

It has been studied that potential customers, consumers and our patients want very targeted and specific messages when it comes to healthcare advertising.

It is therefore crucial to adapt messages to this reality, depending of course on the solution we are proposing.

A solution, a value proposition must also adequately provide the characteristics, specific attributes or particularities of our services.

These characteristics may include relative tangible aspects, team qualifications, professional experience, facilities, equipment, technologies, comfort, parking, among many others that may be available.

But what is truly decisive for the target we want to reach are the Advantages, the Benefits, what people or organizations have to gain from the characteristics of the services they offer.

And why?

Basically because the customer's explicit or implicit question is always the same: what do I benefit or gain from it?

And this is where our message should be greatly refined, focused, simple and concise. Improved aesthetics. Chew all kinds of food without discomfort. Pain-free procedures. Prevention of halitosis. Improved personal appearance. Smile with aligned teeth. A more confident smile. Interdental spaces without impaction.

In other words, in the description of the services we provide, it is crucial to emphasize the advantage or benefit for our target, well-being to the detriment of the characteristics of our services, which should be available, but in a second plan, or at most in a parallel plan if they are very relevant.

This identification, this separation, is important.

Noise messages should be removed so that target audiences can focus on the essentials.

One of the big mistakes that is observed in the communication of dental clinics is that the messages are confusing. Indecipherable at times.

It's exactly the opposite that it should be. The simpler and more objective, the better. ■

If our services are more focused on veneer placement, whitening, tooth alignment, our target will probably be a younger audience, which values more the desire to look good, to improve self-esteem and appearance.

Our target could be an insurance company, for example, for which it can be very important to ensure that insured patients who are going to undergo cardiothoracic interventions are properly monitored in terms of oral cavity pathology and consequently the number of post-surgical complications decreases.

It could also be a service mediation agency, as there are several, of a national health service or of public or private