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Don Simkovich

clean teeth and detect decay, and point-of-care imaging or 3D x-rays. The industry generates about \$60 billion dollars a year in fees, according to the website Dental Economics. One of the latest advances is the old-fashioned practice of providing great customer service.

Advances in the dental care industry include clear braces versus metal, using lasers to gently

An Australian study published in 2012 concluded that patients "valued having a caring dentist who respected them and listened to their concerns without 'blaming' them for their oral health status." **Dental Tech Trends**

The general public may not notice the trends in dental care because about half of all

Americans don't go to the dentist regularly and many practitioners may not implement the latest tools.

Dr. Jack Von Bulow, a dentist in Temple City, east of Los Angeles, told me that laser technology

is seen as new and yet he's been using it since 1998. "It's been 16 years and lasers are great for cleaning teeth and restorative work. The technology

allows you to shape tissue and seal things up and treat cold sores. A periodontist I know was at first hesitant to implement it in his practice and now he teaches a course in laser surgery." He estimates no more than 5 percent of dentists use lasers in their practices.

Interpersonal Skills

Dentists and other health care professionals shouldn't just rely on equipment. Dr. Von Bulow

listening."

told me during an interview that "the best technology we have is between our ears." He's taken steps to building a patient-centered practice that includes giving patients a gift on their first visit and building genuine rapport. "When you have a purposeful dialogue going on [with the patient] there's a lot you can learn by

disease, lung disease, and sleep apnea are some of the ailments dentists can detect."

is described on their website as a "life-damaging and life-shortening disease."

The American Sleep Apnea Association reports that 22 million people a year suffer from what

He noted that regular dental visits give him a window into a person's overall health. "Heart

Dr. Von Bulow has seen pre-school age children with the sleep disturbance. "A kid comes in about 3 or 4 years old and the parent says the child's struggling to breathe. Big tonsils. It's the

Keep Learning

"I've learned about it through continuing education and I can be proactive about it."

Continuing education is one of the best ways for dentists to differentiate their practices, says

kiddie version of sleep apnea.

Dr. Von Bulow. His advice applies for entrepreneurs in all industries. "There are two economies." One you can't control. The other one, my business, includes me learning from the best practitioners I know. "I also want to make going to the dentist fun and in doing so I make a world-class difference in

people's lives."

The American Sleep Apnea's website has a range of resources for patients and health

Dr. Von Bulow's website has additional information on oral health care practices.

Click here for an overview of the article abstract on what dental patients value.

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