

## You Should Know:



Dr. Todd E. Shatkin

We introduced Shatkin F.I.R.S.T. to readers of *Dentaltown Magazine* in April 2011. We recently sat down with Dr. Todd E. Shatkin to see what's new and upcoming with the company.

### What's changed with Shatkin F.I.R.S.T. since it was last featured in *Dentaltown*?

**Shatkin:** We have seen our business double since 2011, and we moved to a 12,000 square-foot building. This building has more space than we currently need, giving us the luxury to grow into the entire space as the business expands. The office area where Shatkin F.I.R.S.T. was originally located has been completely modernized into the Shatkin Training Centre dedicated in memory of my father Dr. Samuel Shatkin, an

## Shatkin F.I.R.S.T.

by Benjamin Lund, Editor, *Dentaltown Magazine*

exceptional educator. The center is our educational mini dental implant learning facility designed for our expanded two-day mini implant course, which includes live mini implant procedures viewed by the course attendees. Since opening the center we have had dentists from 46 states and five countries come in for the course. In 2012, Dr. Gordon Christensen was an esteemed presenter at a special three-day course.

Our lab has grown from six to 20 highly experienced technicians currently led by a well-respected lab manager who gives our lab director, Valdemar Blaszak, the time to concentrate on advanced technology like zirconia milling, 3D printing and the 3Shape Digital Scanner in our lab. This benefits our valued customers by the superb quality of their lab restorations at reasonable fees. No longer do our customers have to depend on traditional impression techniques, as we now are a distributor of the 3Shape TRIOS Digital Impressioning System. We provide a "fixed-on-six" hybrid fixed restoration with zirconia framework offering a value-based alternative that is retrievable by the dentist. To help dentists build profitable practices with mini dental implants we have F.I.R.S.T. Mini Dental Implant Marketing so dentists can reach the right patients with the right mini implant messages to achieve cost-effective marketing results.

### How has *Dentaltown* impacted your business?

**Shatkin:** We track how our course attendees discover Shatkin F.I.R.S.T. One of the more prevalent streams of course attendees is dentists who have learned about us through *Dentaltown*. These dentists, because of their entrepreneurial spirit, think outside the box and are more open to change, which is important to the procedures we offer.

### Are you still personally reviewing all the cases you receive?

**Shatkin:** This is a question I am frequently asked and the answer is yes. Every morning before I start with my practice, I review all the cases that arrived the day before. We have developed an excellent system where all the required information I need to diagnose the case is present before I even view the case. Rob Zielinski, who has been with the company since the beginning, works closely with me handling all the administrative details and lab tasks with the

cases. I also now have a great associate dentist in my practice, which frees up more of my time for Shatkin F.I.R.S.T. I am still available to take pre-op or post-op calls and texts from dentists who need my assistance. I enjoy providing this personal attention to our Shatkin F.I.R.S.T. customers.

### Tell us why dentists should work with Shatkin F.I.R.S.T. if they're placing mini implants in their practices?

**Shatkin:** Since 2003 we have helped dentists around the globe by providing training, case planning, surgical stents, crowns, bridges and dentures. By 2011 we were a well-established one-stop shop for mini dental implants. We provide thorough training and customer care on mini dental implants. Dentists value the simplicity of receiving their finished lab case together with the prescribed implants and not having to invest in a large inventory of implants in their offices.

### What is the most rewarding experience you've had in training dentists and working with them in placing mini dental implants?

**Shatkin:** The most rewarding aspect of training other dentists is when I receive personal notes or phone calls from dentists who have had tremendous success with our procedures.

### Why do you suppose more dentists aren't placing more mini dental implants?

**Shatkin:** I believe there are a number of factors. First, dentists are generally careful in adopting new technology and are cautious of change. Second, the complexities we face in operating and managing our practices can cause us to be distracted from seeing the positive opportunities available to us for treating our patients and building our practice earnings. Third, dentists might be reluctant to start placing mini implants to avoid possible hard feelings with the oral surgeons to whom they refer their implant patients.

I firmly believe, from the positive results I have obtained in my practice with mini dental implants and from the 9,500 dentists I have trained, it is just a matter of time until mini dental implants become mainstream in general dental practices. ■