

Article 1

I sometimes think that the best advice to give anyone is to ignore most of the advice they're given. Or at least take it with a pinch of salt.

The reality is that we are bombarded with selling messages day in, day out and it is beyond difficult to sort the wheat from the chaff. In such circumstances it is hardly surprising that buying decisions are often made in haste and without taking into account important considerations.

I'll be quite honest and say that, yes, it annoys me that dentists make ill informed decisions frequently based on what they are told by salespeople who have little understanding of how a dental practice works. That's why I say take most of the advice you are given with a pinch of salt. If your buying decisions rely on always getting the cheapest deal, you know suppliers will cut each other's throat for the business. But the short term benefits will soon evaporate. That I guarantee.

Nobody is going to tell you they're rubbish

I plan and design dental practices. I have a passion for it, have many years of experience and I'm good at it. But you'd expect me to say that and I'd be surprised and disappointed if you took my word for it.

What I want my clients to do *is* to challenge me and the claims I make. I **want** them to ask awkward questions. I want them to see examples of my work. I want them to do this because if they do, chances are they'll be doing the same with my competitors....and that works very well for me. Now, I quite accept that you're not going to apply the same purchasing criteria to investing major sums into your practice as you do when you buy consumables.....or do I?

Sadly, the bottom line is that even when it comes to practice design and surgery planning many dentists go for the cheapest option. I don't say this is always going to be the wrong decision because actually understanding how a practice works can enable a good designer to come up with creative solutions that represent true value for money. What I **am** saying is that having a clear and considered set of objectives will pay handsome dividends.

What I am going to do over the next six months is give you a set of guidelines that will be helpful if you are planning to invest in your practice. If you choose to follow them they will make a significant contribution to your long term efficiency and profitability.

It's advice that, on this occasion, I hope you won't ignore.