

# A NEW GENERATION FOR COSMETIC DENTISTRY

**A**pppearance and self-esteem have long been intertwined. So, as our social media and selfie culture continues to grow, it's no surprise that more and more young people and adolescents are seeking out cosmetic dentistry as a way to enhance their appearances. The dental world has taken notice and responded with easy and affordable ways to whiten, straighten, and restore smiles.

For patients with unattractive, crowded, or spaced teeth, cosmetic dentistry offers a solution that can be beneficial in many ways, among them instilling greater confidence and self-esteem. But when considering treatment options, especially for younger patients, the conservation of tooth structure should be paramount. As an accredited cosmetic dentist, my ultimate objective in any dental treatment is to restore health and function, as well as esthetics, using the most conservative method possible. That's why introducing this March issue of *Dental Product Shopper*—which explores some not-so-invasive cosmetic treatments like whitening, clear aligners, and composite veneering systems—is so exciting.

When it comes to veneers, porcelain veneers are steadily increasing in popularity among today's dental practitioners for their ability to conservatively restore unaesthetic anterior teeth. The bond strength of veneers is stronger when bonded to enamel than that of dentin, so if the teeth can be positioned into better alignment prior to prepping, it's a win-win for clinicians and patients since significant tooth structure can be saved. By being minimally invasive and prepping just the enamel for restoration, we can raise the success rate for veneers significantly because the bond strength to enamel is significantly higher.

That said, direct composite veneering systems are also on the rise, as they offer patients the best of both worlds—a direct composite restoration that's less labor intensive, combined with the aesthetic advantages of lab-fabricated veneers. These prefabricated composite enamel shells are customized by size and shade and act as a guide toward easy restoration of anterior teeth without the need to freehand or do invasive prep. So, in a single appointment, patients are rewarded with the instant gratification of leaving the chair with a beautiful, selfie-ready smile.

Direct restorative techniques like these not only cater to a new generation of cosmetic-minded patients, but are changing the game when it comes to offering minimally invasive restorative treatments that are just as durable and esthetic as the old ways.



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In the words of one of *Dental Product Shopper's* esteemed evaluators, "The last 10 years of dental technology haven't only been overwhelming and impressive—they've been absolutely fun." They've also been transformative for dentists and the care they provide to patients. That's why it's such a thrill for us to present the results of the 2018 Dental Technology Census, a yearlong survey of dental professionals nationwide that provides a window into how technology is being integrated into practices and what dentists are expecting to purchase in the near future. While some technologies are just starting to pick up steam, others have become the standard of care. We tell you which ones in our coverage beginning on page 44. What technology is having an impact on your practice? Email me at [bdonahue@dentalproductshopper.com](mailto:bdonahue@dentalproductshopper.com).

**Brian Donahue — MANAGING EDITOR**

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