

## Ep #145: Jerry Jones - We Have Found the Enemy and He Is Us



### **Full Episode Transcript**

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**Dr. David Phelps and Evan Harris**

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## **Ep #145: Jerry Jones - We Have Found the Enemy and He Is Us**

Jerry Jones: You look around at any successful individual, they all have strong mindsets. They're constantly playing mind games with themselves. They're strong leaders. They don't wait for things to happen. They make things happen. If the dentist wants to be successful in their chosen career, they have to be willing to do those things. That is a bare minimum requirement.

You are listening to the *Dentist Freedom Blueprint* podcast, with David Phelps and Evan Harris. Navigating you through the uncharted waters of a turbulent economy with straight-forward advice to, transform your practice into a self-sufficient cash machine, compound your net worth assets, and multiply, multiply, multiply your passive cash flow streams.

David Phelps: Good day, everyone. This is David Phelps with the Freedom Founders Mastermind Community and the Dentist Freedom Blueprint Podcast. Got what's going to be a really fun, exciting ... I know it's going to be a very dynamic discussion today with my good friend, Mr. Jerry Jones. Jerry, how are you doing, sir?

Jerry Jones: Fantastic, David. It's good to see you and good to be seen.

David Phelps: As always, my friend. Jerry, we go back a good few years now. We're both obviously in the dental arena. Me, as a former practitioner, you never as a practitioner but you've been very, very close to it. In fact, you probably hear the ringing in your ears sometimes from the high speed hand piece. Am I correct?

Jerry Jones: I do, yes. That's absolutely correct. As you've mentioned, I've got a dental office here in Salem, Oregon. Little six office with a couple of doctors and we're open five days a

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week. Been at it for 15 years as a non-dentist owner of a dental office and it served me very well as a research and development lab for my own business.

David Phelps: I'm going to get back to how that began in a minute, but I want to give people a little bit more information about who you are because I know a lot of people already know you, but those who don't, I want them to get to know you. I know, Jerry, you have a great business acumen. You've got a mindset that really understands business, like none of us coming out of dental school ever got in school. That's what makes you as successful, I say even as a non-dentist, I think it's more helpful that you're a non-dentist as a business owner. You're also a really, really savvy marketer. I know that because I've been around you, I get your newsletters, I attend marketing conferences, very high end together. I see where your head space is. I have huge respect for you. I know you know what you're doing.

You and I both know that marketing is the crux, it's the cornerstone of any business. Other things have to be there, of course. Operations fulfillment, building a team, but without marketing, you've got nothing. You're clearly an expert in that area, an area that most dentists, most of our colleagues don't even begin to understand. That's one area your key in. As you said, you've been in the dental space now for well over 15 years. Your company's Jerry Jones Direct. You're the number one internationally recognized membership-based boutique dental marketing and advertising firm focused on both patient retention and turnkey new patient solutions. You've got clients in the U.S., England, Australia, and Canada. You opened your current from scratch four doctor office in Salem back in 2003. As you said, Wellness Springs Dental of Salem.

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You publish three newsletters. The Successful Practice, The Direct Marketing Profit Insider, and the Profit Practice Insider. The mini-magazine, Life, Liberty, and Happiness, each and every month reaching tens of thousands of dental patients and is the author of multiple books, which I have. I think I have every one of them. You speak on a variety of topics. Let me give these topics because I think it helps people understand a little bit more the breadth of your knowledge and background. Topics such as startup practice marketing, mature practice growth and sustainability, new patient attraction and retention strategies, de-commoditizing dentistry, how to compete against big chains and win. Who isn't interested in hearing about that today? That's huge.

Advanced practice building strategies, peak productivity and time management, and any other customized topics one requests. Jerry, you bought, sold, or started 15 different companies including multiple dental offices and a dental assisting school. We could go a lot of different directions today. It's an opportunity for you and I and to give to our listeners what's at the top of your mind. We can converse about anything. We didn't really plan this out other than we knew we were going to get together today. We know whatever we talk about is going to be fun and exciting. Where would you like to take this today? I'm going to let you drive.

Jerry Jones: There's two things we ought to talk about, maybe three. I just came back on Saturday night kind of late, just a few days ago from an event I was speaking at. It was an event predominantly made up of young dentists who are looking to purchase or open their first practice. It was a room full of late 20s, early 30s folks, a generation behind me. Some of them were young enough to be my kids almost,

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which I didn't realize I was getting that old, but when you're in a room like that, you realize that wow, time flies. Anyway, I have a very specific message for that group. I was asked to speak to them. I shared 21 facts from 21 years in dentistry. There's two or three of these that are really big. If we could maybe touch on two or three of those, David, I think for some, it's going to be a reiteration of where they need to have their head at. I think for others it's going to be something that they haven't really ... It hasn't been framed in the way I'm going to frame it before. It seem somewhat new.

I think the first thing really is as a dentist, as a solo practitioner, operator of your own practice or as a partner in a multi-doctor practice, regardless of what your status is, when you own that business, whether you're 100% owner or 50% or 30%, you have really one massive priority. That's to make sure there's an ass in every chair, at every opportunity all day long, every day. In other words, new patients are your priority. Like you said, without a butt in the seat, nothing happens. You can diagnose dentistry if you have someone in a chair, you have an opportunity to build a relationship if you have someone in a chair. You have an opportunity to generate a referral if you have someone in a chair. If you have nobody in the chair, your business is worthless. You're not going to produce squat.

We can talk about equipment, we can talk about technology, we can talk about you name it. Without a patient, without a butt in the seat, you got nothing. I want to remind folks again that it's your responsibility to have a rear end in that seat as the owner of that practice. If you're an associate, if you are being paid essentially on commission, on production or collections, you might think

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it's your owner doctor's responsibility, but guess what? I talked to about eight different doctors at this event last week, on Friday, or Saturday when I was speaking. Out of the eight, seven were associates, one was in a residency. The seven that were associates, each said to me that their doctors could not keep them busy enough. That is one of the reasons why they were being driven to open their own business.

If you're an associate doctor and you're in a situation where you don't have the patients coming to see you, get off your posterior, your rusty dusty, go somewhere and get in front of people and speak. Do something to get patients in the door. Start building relationships. Go to the Country Club. Go to Chamber of Commerce. Whatever it takes, don't sit on your duff and point fingers and complain. Nobody likes a whiner, especially a senior doctor whose got his life pretty much mapped out. He's hoping to bring you in and hoping that you're going to do well. Show that senior doctor some love and get off your butt and go do something. If you want to spend some money on marketing to bring some patients in, say, "Hey doc, how about we split this? You cover the cost, you take half of it out of my production." What doctor, David, would say no to that?

David Phelps: Absolutely. Go for it. All day long.

Jerry Jones: There's a lack of creativity too, on the part of the associates. There are so many ways to get things to happen. The point of this is don't sit still. If you got an empty chair, you're losing money by the second. You can't afford to sit still. New patients are really your biggest priority, no matter if you're an associate or you're the owner doctor. They've got to be your priority, because

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nothing else matters. Not a darn thing. I know, David, you deal with a lot of docs that are teetering on that area where their practice is doing okay. For some of them it's doing really well. Others, they're struggling a little bit, but they all know where they want to go and that usually is out of dentistry. They have a plan to escape. Rather than a plan to stay and prosper, they're looking to escape. For my curiosity, when these folks are coming to you, what is their biggest challenge? Is it new patients? Is it the people in their practice? What is their biggest challenge?

David Phelps: Jerry, that's a great question. I think you're absolutely right. You can't produce anything until you have a patient in a chair, no matter what CD courses you take, what new, bright, shiny technology you have that you may be very good at. Unless you've got a patient in the chair, you have nothing. I think you're right. New patients are critical. You also speak, and we listed it here, about retention. Retention of patients. You can have a good funnel of new patients coming in the door, but if you've got a lack of retention, you're missing a boat there. You got to plug those leaks. I think the biggest problem, though, for most dentists whether they are young or older, Jerry, is a lack of ability to really know how to lead in a business. I know that sounds trite, a little bit, because people think, "What's that all about?" What have you got in front of you? What are you looking at?

Jerry Jones: Guess what one of those 21 is? That was...

David Phelps: We agree. That's the key for every business. We're talking about dentists, but dentists would come out of school and we have all this head knowledge, all this training. We got the license. We don't have a clue as how to lead people, so we throw ourselves into the mix and we



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have typically all these women around us and they can be very good, competent women. We have no clue as how to lead. We try to control everything because we're controllers. That's how we're built, to control it all. We're really tight and edgy and we don't want to let anybody do anything except suck spit or basically answer a phone with a script. If doctors would learn, and again, this is not easy. If you take the time to learn how to be a leader and build a real team and empower a team, not just have people show up for a paycheck, but empower a team. Again, Jerry, you're not going to do a three day seminar on this. We're not going to dig deep, but I would say that's one of the biggest keys.

Then you start getting all the other tangential items, which you just already mentioned. Great marketing and you bring your technology in. Until you've got a team, if you're trying to do it all doctor, young or old, you're climbing the mountain with a sack on your back and you're trying to haul it up there, you're going to give out at some point. So much frustration is just born out of lack of leadership. I stole one of your 21, but to me, that's one of the keys.

Jerry Jones: You're right on the money. It's actually the fourth one on my list of 21. It really occurred to me when I asked the question in front of this room. I said, "How many of you had a job before you became a dentist?" There wasn't a single hand that was raised, David. Not one individual-

David Phelps: What? Are you kidding me?

Jerry Jones: Had had a job. No. They're lifelong students, David. They went from the birth canal right to the dental canal. I was hoping one person in that room would say, "I sold life insurance." Not a single person. I don't think that's



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representative, but it was odd to me that in this room, not a single person had had a job before they became a dentist. When you talk about leadership, if you've never had a job, you don't know what leadership is. By the way, I have a very simple question. Do you know any leaders, any great leaders that are broke?

David Phelps: Great leaders that are broke? Not if they're a great leader.

Jerry Jones: Nobody comes to mind, right? Let me ask you another question. Do you know any dentists that are broke?

David Phelps: Unfortunately, yeah.

Jerry Jones: I know a few that are on the brink of bankruptcy and unfortunately, come to me far too late. It's like, "I wish I could help you, but you should've called me two credit cards ago." Leadership ... What my notes here said is that leadership isn't a big deal, it's a fricking huge deal. You must be your practice's leader. People want leadership. A group of employees, whether you call them your team or an infection-like staff or whatever you call them, they crave a leader. If there is no leadership, somebody will emerge as a leader, and trust me, it won't be the one that you would pick. It's going to be the one who's got the loudest yell and the biggest not necessarily best personality. You don't have a choice. If you want to own a practice, if you want to own a business of any kind, if you even want to be the best parent, you have got to be a leader because kids need to be led also.

If you look at great parents, many of them are also by nature, good leaders because of the practice they've had in understanding and leading people. I got to tell you, this isn't meant to be derogatory towards employees, but I have to tell you, if you can lead your children and take

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good care of them and teach them and instruct them and go back to them when they make the same mistakes two, three, four times and correct them again and remind them and give them incentive to not make the errors again, you're doing the same thing with the people in your practice. You're doing the same thing with the folks that work for you that are on your payroll. It's leadership. Leadership is patience, it isn't blowing your top every time there's an issue. It's doing the right thing when nobody is watching, which if you ever wonder, "Am I a good leader?" When was the last time you had some self-reflection and thought, "Nobody's watching me right now. Am I doing the right thing? Am I doing something to be proud of or something I'd be embarrassed about?"

To me, all of those things mean leadership. You also, as a leader, you got to be willing to take risks, chances, and be ready to get an arrow in your rear end. That's leadership. Whether you love him or hate him or are on the fence, our president, Donald Trump, there is one thing he understands. It is that component, it is leadership. You may not like the way he leads, but I got to tell you, if you were to look at things that are happening in this country that are positive from an economic standpoint, no he is not graceful when it comes to social issues. He is not graceful at all. He sticks his foot in his mouth constantly. I'm not here to defend him or promote him. I'm just saying that gentleman obviously has and understands leadership. He gets it.

I'm not telling you also to look to him as an example. There's a lot of fine examples of leadership that are in your community that you know, maybe that you just don't see them as leaders. To me, David, it's huge. You've got to be willing to become a great leader. You've got to put

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yourself in that position. If you're wondering what to do or who to talk to or how to become a better leader, I'll send you to one place. I have no skin in the game. Go see John Maxwell. That guy gets leadership. He is a pro. He teaches it. He's somebody that you should be willing or interested in at least investigating. If nothing else, gets his free email and read it every day. There's a lot of great leaders out there that are teaching leadership. It's not something that most of us are born with.

David Phelps: Not at all.

Jerry Jones: It just isn't. The older you get, I think the better you get at it. I am 100 times better as a leader than I was a year ago, two years ago, three years ago. It is exercising the muscle. Like any muscle, you got to exercise it and use it. I think leadership is big. I think another one, David, is mindset. If you don't have the right mindset, if you approach everything from a "This'll never work." You hear that little doubtful voice in the back of your head, "You shouldn't be doing this. What makes you think you have a right to do this?" You got all this self doubt. Mindset is absolutely crucial, whether you're a young dentist, an old dentist. All this plays into what we do here at Jerry Jones Direct. The marketing side. If you believe your marketing is going to fail, guess what? It's going to fail.

David Phelps: It will.

Jerry Jones: Every time. If you believe you're a terrible leader, you are. You have to be willing to suspend your own personal disbelief for your own skill set in order to grow and to be able to see yourself as someone other than someone you see yourself right now. That self doubt, that visual that you have of yourself when you look in the mirror, if you

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look in the mirror and you don't see an individual who should be successful, you're never going to be successful. You've got to be able to look in the mirror and go, "I deserve it as well as anybody else. I'm a good human, I do the right things, I've got a great moral compass, I have strong values, I have strong morals."

If you're religious, great. Add that to the list. You've got to ... For sounding like the airy fairness, you got to love yourself, brother. You got to say, "I can get it done. I'm the guy to get this done and I'm going to go get it done. I am going to be the leader that my practice needs. I am going to have the right mindset to get done what needs to get done and I'm not going to let self doubt creep in." Mindset is ... All of these things go along. They build upon success. You look around at any successful individual, they all have strong mindsets. They're constantly playing mind games with themselves. They're strong leaders. They don't wait for things to happen. They make things happen. To me, if a dentist wants to be successful in their chosen career, they have to be willing to do, at a very minimum, those things. You won't find successful dentists who do not believe or do those things. That is a bare minimum requirement.

David Phelps: Jerry, our mindset is built in from early birth and the environment in which we grew up in. Our family structure first and then schools and teachers and people that we ... Kids that we ... ourselves with. You go to dental school and you get pummeled and hammered for four years. You're told never to make a mistake. If you make a mistake, that's the worst thing in the world. Don't risk anything. All these years of indoctrination in my opinion, of limiting beliefs, fear-based mentality, how the heck do you unravel that? How does one, how does a person

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unravel it? I think take consuming the right media, books, and right things, but what else? What else can help? You're exactly right. Mindset right along with leadership, I totally agree. These words are bandied about, so people are like, as you said, it sounds airy fairy, but why are you and I talking about this? Why are we so harping on this? Because we know it's the truth. Tell me, how do people fix their mindset? It'll damage the whole rest of their life if they don't.

Jerry Jones: I think there's two roots to this. One has to be internal and one has to be external. The internal is the conversations that you have with yourself. If you find self doubt creeping up, you have to push it down. If you find that external sources are influencing how you feel or how you think, you've got to get away from those things. One of the comments I made to this group of young doctors was your net worth is the sum, average rather, of those you hang out with. Aside from the internal conversations and the baffle that you have to exert ... In other words, your mind, which is not your brain, your mind has to control your brain's actions. Your mind has to say, "Shut the hell up. That's not how I'm thinking. This is the way I'm thinking. This is what I deserve. I don't deserve X. I deserve Y because I'm a good person" or whatever it is you want to say.

Your mind has to control your brain's auto output. There's garbage that your brain shoots out and if you're not able to stifle it or change the narrative or conversation that you're having with yourself, you're in a world of hurt. That's really step one. If you can't control that, step two will not have as great of an impact on fixing this, on stripping this crap from your mind. Whereas, I think it was Gary Halbert that said it's carbonized shit. Pardon my

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language for all these ... I usually let this stuff fly and I apologize. Bleep me out if you have to. The point is, if you can't control the narrative in your head, you have a hard time moving forward, the second part of that is of stripping away this, and undoing what was done to you in dental school, is surrounding yourself with the right people.

It's being around people like you, David. If I'm a dentist and I want to get where you are. I want to experience what you experience from a financial perspective. I want to have cash flow coming in whether I drill and fill and bill today or not, or maybe I want to be like Jerry. I want to own an office and not have to work in it. Whatever the goal or aspiration is, you've got to put yourself around the people that are doing what you want to do. By doing that, you replace some of these negative feelings and negative thoughts with, "Look at what he just did." If you have concrete evidence in front of you that you can't dispute that is processed through your eyes, your eyes, and it's irrefutable, you begin to unwind some of this self doubt.

I think if there was a third part to that, the third part I'd say would be to push yourself to the extreme when it comes to risk taking. I don't mean with patient care. Absolutely not. Patient care is not an area I know anything about, but it's certainly not an area that I, as a patient, would want to compromise. When it comes to business, it is taking risks that are calculated so you understand the downside, but you also understand the upside. The way I look at risks simply is this. Can I afford it in the next 30, 60, 90 days? Can I afford that screw up? If I can cover the screw up, if it does in fact end up being a screw up, if I can cover it with excess cash that I have in the next 30, 60, or 90 days, I'm probably going to go for it, David. If it's one of

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those things where it's going to change my lifestyle if it goes south or whatever, I'm going to probably pull back.

At 45, I already took my big plunge. Unfortunately, it didn't work out for me. I had to come back and spent eight years clawing my way back. Not quite eight, but almost. I would tell people, "You got to be willing to push the envelope a little bit." You got to start exercising your mind to say, "It's okay to take a risk. It's okay to mail 5,000 postcards. If nobody calls, it's not the end of the world." On the other hand, what if somebody calls? It's looking at the positive as opposed to the negative, but not ignoring the negative, just taking it into consideration. I don't know if that's helpful, but for me, if I were trying to undo bad habits and bad self talk, that's the direction I would go.

David Phelps: I think what you said about risk was really, really well said. We have to learn how to take risks. Even if things don't work out, I'd just say we're testing. We're just testing. You got to test different models, different things and put it out there. Again, I think the fear that we have built into us about not making a mistake ... I got to have everything succeed. If not everything succeeds then I'm a quote, "failure." That's how they made you feel in dental school, like you're an idiot, you're a failure. Don't color outside the circle because that's wrong, that's wrong, that's wrong. As you said, in patient care, absolutely.

I'm talking about working on mannequins or lab models. They should just give me the big old hand piece and say, "Go in there and just rip. Rip on that." No. Would they let you do that? They didn't let us do that. If you nick the wrong part of the tooth, it's like, "F." No. That's the time you got to get that stuff out of your system. You got to go for it. You got to see what it feels like to crank it up and go



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a full torque. No, you're not going to do that on a patient's mouth, but how do you know how it feels?

I think with risk too, Jerry, and you know this so well because you're a part of a mastermind. You facilitate a mastermind, but just like me, you're a part of different mastermind groups. Why do we do that? Why do we, as you said, why do we surround ourselves with other people who have a very different set of experiences and expertise, and most of the time are smarter than we are, at least in a number of different areas. Why do we do that? Because we can take our ideas, our fears, whatever they might be, and we all have them, our self limiting beliefs, and we can lay them out there, bare our soul in front of group of people who are just like us and have also gone through testing, if you want to call it downsides in their life and they'll say, "Either tweak it, do this, or just don't do it at all." That's how we can mitigate risk.

I think too many times we idolize people that we see. You mentioned a great person, John Maxwell. Some people put people on a pedestal and they go, "I could never be like that." Do you know that the John Maxwells and any of us of the people in this world that we see as successful, do we not know that their back story is they've got just as much crap and baggage and failures that everyone else have, but we don't see that. We only see the big success. When you're in a room with other people and you see this person, this person, great businesses, but when you get to hear their back story and go, "You mean it just didn't happen automatically?" They didn't come out of the gate, you hit ... No. It doesn't happen that way. You've got to put yourself out there.

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I think dentistry, particularly, we feel this need that we can't make a mistake. We have to look like it's all good. We go to the trade association meetings, like, "It's all good. It's all good." Inside we're feeling terrible because there's no one we can talk to about it. Do you think that's true?

Jerry Jones: Absolutely right. Usually the ones who look the most well put together are great actors. I appreciate doctors who come to us and they're like, "I'm in a mess. I'm in a world of hurt. This is what we need to have happen." Versus the doctor that comes to us and skirts around what the real issue is to try and get something out of us that may or may not fix their problem. Like any doctor patient relationship, if you don't tell the doctor your entire problem, there's a good chance you're going to get misdiagnosed. That happens all the time in marketing, because we don't know the full story. Mastermind groups to me, they should be required. They're so rewarding, because it's not just you have another person to talk to. You got 10, 15, maybe 20 other people in a room. It's the power of the combined brain that really births a secondary brain that is far stronger than the 20 even added together. It's a multiplier factor. It's geometric progression as opposed to arithmetic.

That's the power of a mastermind. If folks haven't experienced those, there's going to be all sorts of "I don't want to go to a group of people and talk about my problems." I got to tell you, having been through a few ... Several years, over a decade of mastermind groups, for me, that was one of the most refreshing times because I literally could go there and the people I would speak with understood what I was going through as opposed to talking to my wife about it, who's a wonderful lady, very

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smart, she just usually gives me spot on advice. Sometimes you need an ear and you need a fellow marketer, a fellow business person to put what you're thinking or saying into perspective, because there's a good chance in a room of 20 somebody else has already screwed that mistake up once or twice already and they're ready to help you. "No, no, no. Don't do that. Instead do this." Or "Here's seven things we did, pick one. They all worked." Masterminds are brilliant. They should be required, as you said.

David Phelps: I totally agree. Jerry, you're doing so many great things. I talk to people that you work with on a regular basis, helping them in so many ways. Give us an overview of the different areas that people can connect with you on different levels, different bases. The best way to contact or get inside your circle or your platform.

Jerry Jones: Best way is to start at our website. [Jerryjonesdirect.com](http://Jerryjonesdirect.com). Start there. There are a number of free and low risk, low priced ways you can get all the Jerry Jones Direct. Go to the website, look around, watch a few videos. I've got videos of some of our members on the website. There's so much information there, David. David, what we do is put butts in seats. That's really, at the end of the day, the bottom line. It doesn't matter if it's offline, old school, traditional market or it's online marketing, our company, Jerry Jones Direct covers the gamut. We've got a lot of different strategies. We have full blown plans. Depending on what a doctor wants to achieve, we look at every member a little differently because they want to achieve something different.

We've got doctors who are running multiple practices, one doctor has 14, 15 offices. We have another doctor who

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has two or three practices that are all local and a bunch of associates. We work with all models of business when it comes to the dental side. Go to [jerryjonesdirect.com](http://jerryjonesdirect.com), get on our email list, watch a few videos, subscribe to Dentistry Confidential. Get in tune with what marketing is all about and how it works in the dental space. One of the reasons, David, why I started that dental office 15 years ago was to have a research and development lab to be able to test what I felt should work to bring in new patients.

Literally, everything that Jerry Jones Direct is built upon has been created and tested, maybe with the exception of one or two things, in my own office. I've put my money where my mouth is and tested it so other docs don't have to. I've been around 20 years, David. My dental office has been around 15. We've got some really great ways and easy. A doc can say, "This is what I would like. What's it going to take?" We can sit down and create a plan for them in no time flat. That'd be the easiest way to get started, just head to our website.

David Phelps: Perfect. Jerry Jones, it's been a real pleasure as always. Thanks for coming on today. I know that our audience should definitely get some real pearls out of our conversation today. Thank you very much.

Jerry Jones: Absolutely. Thanks, David. Have a great one.

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