

Case Study 2: Crest Whitestrips® Supreme and Practice Profitability

The practice of Phye Family Dentistry of Olathe, Kansas

Introducing Crest Whitestrips® Supreme into a dental practice can have a dramatic impact on practice performance. The following case study analyzes how its successful introduction can result in an important esthetic service to patients while creating notable increases in revenue and hygiene production.



Practice Profile

Phye Family Dentistry of Olathe, Kansas, has been open for six years. With two associates and ten staff members, this busy Midwest practice has been dispensing Crest whitening products for four years and has dispensed Crest Whitestrips® Supreme for the last year.

The practice felt the strongest advantage to dispensing Crest Whitestrips® Supreme as its whitening system of choice was its ease of use and the relatively fast results that are obtained. There was an economic consideration as well. Kari Barry, RDH, and Kim Resz, RDH, estimate dispensing Crest Whitestrips® Supreme has increased the amount of whitening performed by their practice approximately 25-30%.

Crest Whitestrips® Supreme

The decision to dispense Crest Whitestrips® Supreme was based largely on practical information shared by their Crest representative who explained how the product is used and how patients and the practice could benefit from its stronger active ingredient and more effective results than the over-the-counter version. “It just made sense to offer it to patients,” says Ms. Barry.

The practice has discovered that nearly all of their patients are aware of Crest’s over-the-counter whitening system. When presented with information about Crest Whitestrips® Supreme, patients are quick to understand and appreciate the pronounced difference in strength between Crest Whitestrips® Supreme and the retail version. “We didn’t have to do too much explaining from there!” says Ms. Resz.

An Important Contributor to Overall Whitening Services

Upon incorporation of Crest Whitestrips® Supreme, a surprising statistic quickly emerged—the whitening service mix changed radically. Crest Whitestrips® Supreme now accounts for approximately 80% of whitening while tray whitening represents the remaining 20%. “We encourage patients to use Crest Whitestrips® Supreme before they make a financial commitment to do the trays,” explains Ms. Barry. “If patients get a result they are happy with, they frequently will continue with the product. If they want to go a little bit stronger and get their teeth just a little bit whiter, then they will move on to the trays,” says Ms. Barry.

The response from patients who have used Crest Whitestrips® Supreme has been good. “Patients are generally very happy,” says Ms. Resz. “In fact, we sell Crest Whitestrips® Supreme as a maintenance kit to about 50% of patients who try Crest Whitestrips® Supreme or tray whitening.”

Patient Education

The success of Crest Whitestrips® Supreme is a direct result of effective patient education, management, and motivation. The hygienist speaks with the patient first before the doctor takes over during case presentations. Patient education is disseminated by everyone in the office, however, the hygienists explained they performed approximately 50% of this task, the doctor about 30%, and the remaining staff approximately 20%.

Patient word of mouth also advances whitening services for the practice. Dental assistants in the practice find that a significant number of patients ask them about whitening in general, or about Crest Whitestrips® Supreme if another

patient has recommended it to them. With the entire staff engaged in patient communication, it is important they understand and appreciate the product in order to recommend it. “Everyone in the office has tried Crest Whitestrips® Supreme. We definitely have the whole team’s support,” says Ms. Resz.

Candidates for Whitening

The practice has created a profile of patients that they consider to be ideal candidates for whitening with Crest Whitestrips® Supreme: orthodontic patients, patients with significant yellowing, patients with whom they have had a previous discussion about whitening, or patients scheduled for anterior restorations.

Certain times of the year naturally lend themselves to Crest Whitestrips® Supreme promotions and the practice has experienced great success promoting more heavily during the holiday season, spring/summer weddings, and graduation time.

The Priority of Cost

Many patients have a desire for whitening but do not feel they can afford it. For them, the price of Crest Whitestrips® Supreme has proved an attractive selling point. In fact, Ms. Barry is quick to point out the price of Crest Whitestrips® Supreme as a significant reason for its rapid acceptance by their patients. “For many middle class working families, it’s hard to justify the cost of trays. At \$55 per kit cost to the patient, Crest Whitestrips® Supreme is more easily within the range of what they are willing to spend.”

Interestingly, Crest Whitestrips® Supreme is often the first step for patients contemplating more comprehensive dental care. After experiencing success with Crest Whitestrips® Supreme, patients often look at other cosmetic options. “People move on to trays because they tested the water first with Crest Whitestrips® Supreme,” says Ms. Resz. “They see it works. They want to see what else they can do to enhance their oral appearance.”

Crest Whitestrips® Supreme vs. Other Whitening Systems

The practice has observed that Crest Whitestrips® Supreme often offer a distinct advantage over traditional whitening systems. “With whitening systems other than Crest Whitestrips® Supreme, people experience discomfort 65% of the time,” says Ms. Barry. “They quit because the extreme sensitivity hurts. They spend \$300 or \$400 and then quit because they can’t stand how it made their teeth feel.” The practice notes that there are few sensitivity issues associated with Crest Whitestrips® Supreme.

In addition to sensitivity issues with trays, the practice also noticed that many patients have unrealistic expectations about the results. “A problem we have witnessed with trays is that people will invest \$400 expecting to get a bright ‘Hollywood’ white smile and they become upset because they spent a lot of money and didn’t get anywhere near the inflated expectations they had.”

Conclusion

Crest Whitestrips® Supreme has proved to be a viable, profitable whitening option in this practice. With a respectable 25–30% increase in whitening due directly to the dispensing of Crest Whitestrips® Supreme, Phye Family Dentistry is expanding cosmetic dentistry potential by increasing patient interest in whitening through Crest Whitestrips® Supreme. “This product has been a real positive experience for our practice!” say the practice’s hygienists.