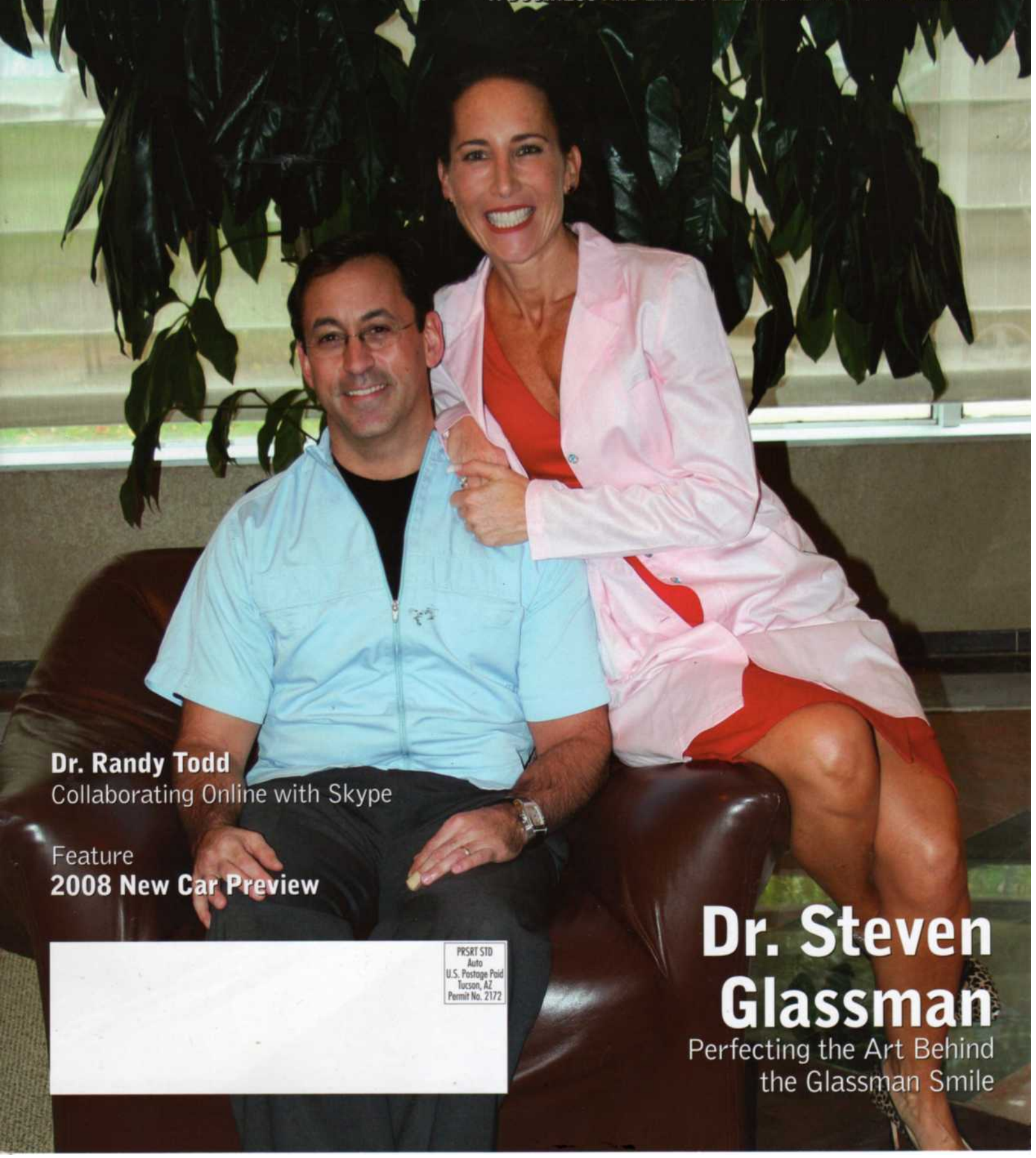


DOCTOR of DENTISTRY

A BUSINESS AND LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE FOR DENTISTS



Dr. Randy Todd
Collaborating Online with Skype

Feature
2008 New Car Preview

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**Dr. Steven
Glassman**

Perfecting the Art Behind
the Glassman Smile

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Dr. Steven Glassman

Perfecting the Art Behind the Glassman Smile

By Mark Ellis

If there were ever a dental award for the most successful smiles on television, stage and screen, it might go to Drs. Steven and Debra Glassman of Glassman Dental Care. With Tony, Emmy and Oscar winners wearing their smiles, few would argue that Glassman Dental Care is one of the most successful and highly respected dental practices in New York City. What is the secret behind this success? Well, the plan was to interview both doctors and feature them in this cover story. After interviewing just Dr. Steven Glassman alone, it was clear that their career stories could not be contained in a seven-page editorial feature. To remedy this, Dr. Steve Glassman will be the focus of this story and Dr. Debra Glassman will be featured in a future issue next year.

EARLY BEGINNINGS

It was very interesting to learn why Dr. Glassman made dentistry his career path. "Dentists in the community, I think they were role models for me," comments Dr. Glassman. He confessed that as a youth he was impressed by the success, lifestyle and respect that many dentists in his community had achieved. "There is always the joke, 'You couldn't get into medical school so you became a dentist,' but for me I had no interest in medicine. I liked the type of practice and lifestyle that dentists had."

Not many dentists can say that they knew early on which dental specialty they would choose as a career path. On the other hand, restorative cosmetic dentistry was the clear choice for Dr. Glassman. "In dental school, I always liked the restorative cosmetic end of it. It was always interesting to me. If anything, maybe I would have gone into orthodontics," Dr. Glassman said.

A TOUGH ROAD

During his dental school training, Dr. Glassman met his now wife of 23 years, Dr. Debra Glassman. Reflecting on the struggles they experienced early in their careers, Dr. Glassman said, "It was a difficult balancing act. We had our first son before she graduated dental school. She took the dental boards when she was eight months pregnant! When we look back on all this we



laugh and say, 'How in the hell did we make it through this?'" He later added, "In the beginning, to build a practice and have no real stay-at-home mom was very stressful. We simply had to figure things out as we went along."

LEARNING THE BUSINESS

One of the biggest challenges for a newly licensed dentist is starting a practice. Unfortunately, many dentists are ill prepared when it comes to managing a business since the focus in dental school is clinical training. "Courses like management and the business side were laughed on by the faculty," says Dr. Glassman. "Looking back now I don't think dentists still realize how important it is to learn the business side as well. If they really don't know how to run their businesses, well, they can't be profitable. If they are not profitable they can't give the best care to their patients, they can't invest in the best technology, they can't hire the best staff to treat their patients and they can't take continuing education courses because your learning



When you arrive in the waiting area you immediately feel like you've entered a day spa with the warm, cozy furnishings, scented candles and bottled water.

never ends. Those were things that I stumbled across and made mistakes, but I got smart early on."

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

"One of the most difficult things we faced developing our practice was finding and developing the right staff," says Dr. Glassman. "This is one area that I think is often overlooked today. Many front desk people you have today are converted dental assistants who have decided to make a little more money or who didn't like dealing with patients or seeing blood. Some do transition very well and others don't. I have found that some of the best front desk people are those that understand that this is a service business and know how to treat people. There are some people who have good attitudes that you can develop over

I don't think dentists still realize how important it is to learn the business side as well.

time. There are others who are gene bright, but they just can't deal well in a boss and employee environment. As a young dentist I didn't have this ability and didn't know what to look for, so I made some mistakes. I tell my staff, 'Get 1% better each week and by the end of the year you're 50% better.'"

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Dr. Glassman pointed out the important role that continuing education and networking played in building a successful practice. "Things are changing so rapidly that dental schools are only really preparing you for dentistry today and not for tomorrow," comments Dr. Glassman. "You really need to get involved with people in the field who have successful practices. Unfortunately when you are in a small village like New York City, where there is a more competitive climate, you don't always find dentists who are willing to talk about their practice. If you find someone successful in the Midwest or California, they are much more open to talk about why they are successful. So I learned a lot from the early guys in laser



A sunny and airy operator provides a relaxed and stress-free environment for patients.

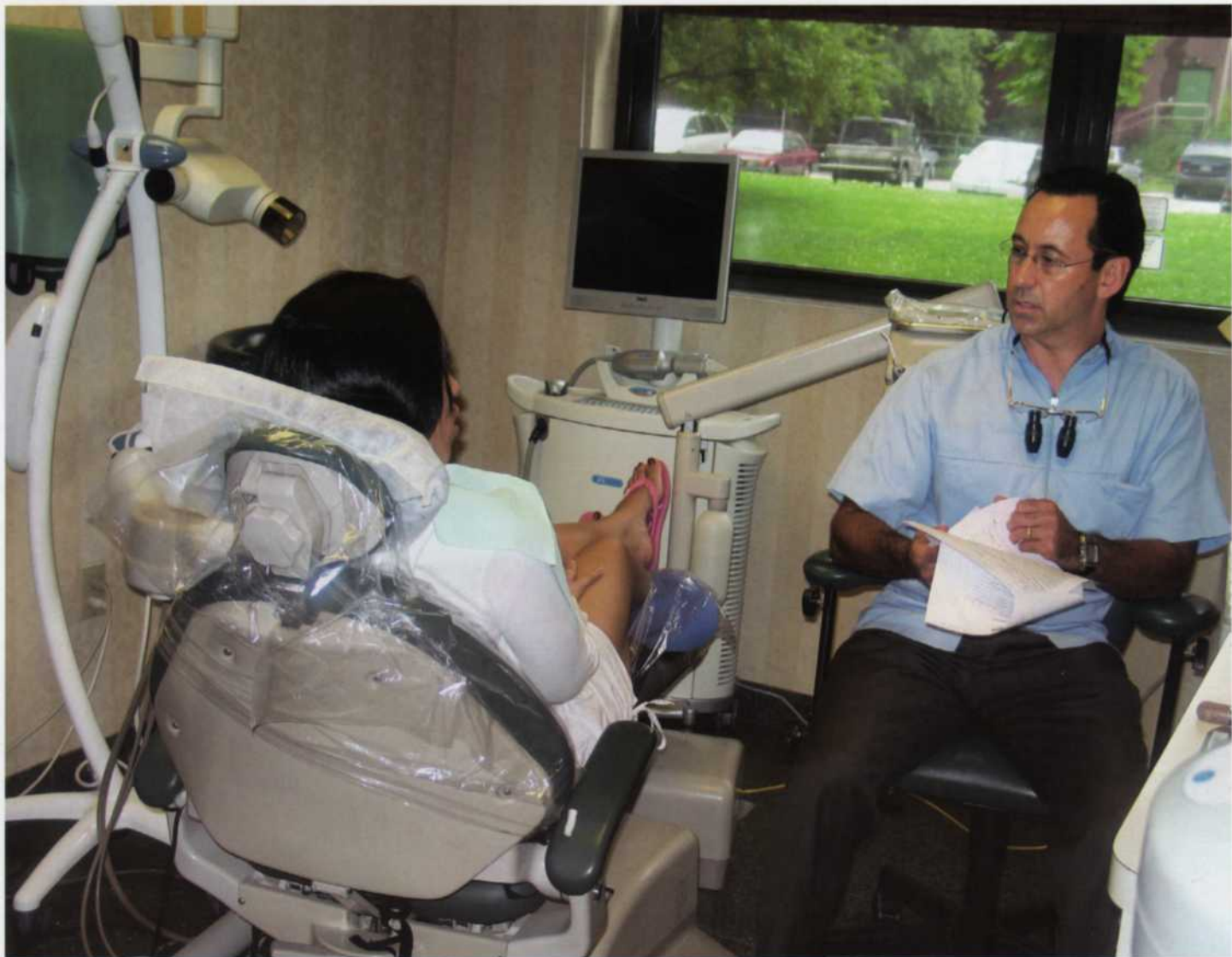
dentistry and other practices outside New York City. I would always take one big course over the weekend — Pete Dorsen was one big course that I took. I definitely learned a lot from many of the speakers at the courses I attended.”

STAYING ON TOP OF TECHNOLOGY

Dentistry, like many industries today, is becoming technology dependent. Dentists who don't embrace and invest in the current technology will go the way of the dinosaur. Dr. Steven Glassman, like many of his peers, has been an early adopter of dental technology. “I read in *Who Moved My Cheese?* that if you don't change you become extinct. There are dentists who are still practicing that have the same wallpaper since the '60s and '70s, the same old X-rays, they think things are a fad and they

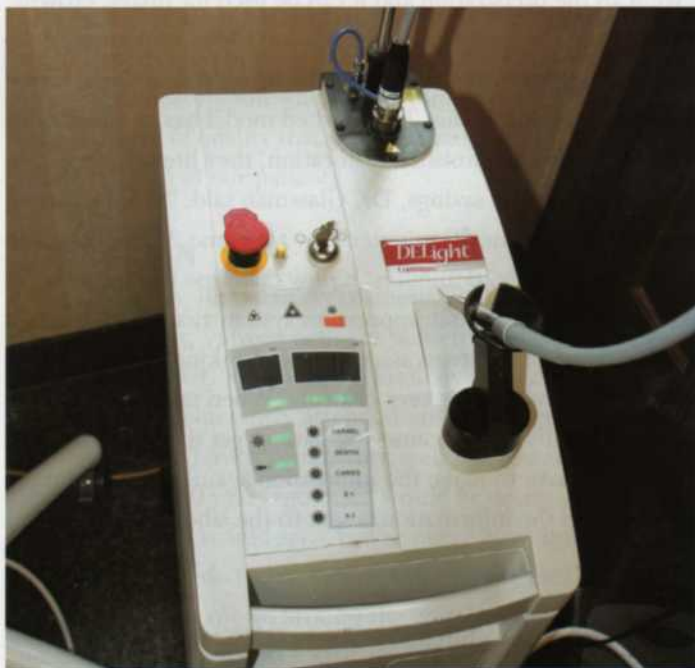
are wondering why their business is winding down and why they are not enjoying it as much. I think what I have learned — I used to be very bad in wanting to buy the newest and the best — sometimes you don't want to be the first. Now when I look

There are dentists who are still practicing that have the same wallpaper since the '60s and '70s, the same old X-rays, they think things are a fad and they are wondering why their business is winding down and why they are not enjoying it as much.



Dr. Glassman consults with patient on a suggested treatment plan.

Shown here is the DELight Er:YAG dental laser system that has FDA approval for both hard and soft tissue applications.



at technology, I will say, 'What is the benefit? Who is backing it? Are they a startup? Are they backed by a big distributor like a Patterson or Schein? What will happen if I don't like it? If it cost this much, how will I make the money back?' I only make the money back by doing the procedure much faster, attracting new patients or creating additional revenue that I didn't have before."

Commenting on some of the technology that he adopted early on, Dr. Glassman said, "We were definitely an early adopter with lasers, air abrasion and intraoral cameras. As for the technology that has really helped his practice, Dr. Glassman said, "Digital X-rays, digital cameras, Invisalign, CAD/CAM abutments and digital impressions have really changed our business."

One of the latest technologies that Dr. Glassman is currently using in his practice is Cadent iTero digital impression system. The system enables Dr. Glassman to take 3-D scans of the patient's mouth and use this data to perform a variety of restorations. Commenting on the benefits of the system, Dr. Glassman said, "Instead of using the messy impression goop, we use a

