



Dr. John P. O'Keefe

A Cool Eye to the Future

The last time we conducted a full readership survey, you told us that paper-based publications are preferred for most of your professional information needs, except for urgent news.

Knowing this, we introduced *CDAAlert*, a service that allows us to immediately distribute important breaking news. Respecting your expressed desire to not receive frivolous information, we are very careful when selecting the content for these communications.

We currently send *CDAAlert* bulletins to over 6,000 members who have provided their e-mail address, on the promise that we would never divulge this address to third parties. Since that last readership survey, we have been building our capacity to communicate electronically with members. As most members have access to the Internet and a growing number have access at the office, we are confident that the Internet will become an important business tool for dentists.

With the development of ITRANS™, I foresee that the majority of Canadian dental offices will become "ITRANS-enabled" over time. I also believe that the ratio of paper-based and Internet-based communications between CDA and its members will evolve. While paper publications are not going away, there will be an increasing emphasis on electronic communications.

With an eye to this future, we continue to upgrade our Internet-based communication infrastructure. The primary aim of these changes is to provide members with high-quality information that is easily accessible and always available upon request. We also have an eye to the needs of potential members, the dental profession worldwide and the Canadian public.

Central to this strategy is the launch of a new and improved CDA Web site (www.cda-adc.ca). The overall appearance of the site has been enhanced and it is now considerably easier to

find information. There are a wealth of resources aimed at CDA members and other groups. There is no doubt in my mind that the priority for current and future developments to the Web site is the information needs of our members.

To assist members in accessing premium "members-only" content, the new site includes an "Edit My Profile" feature, where personal information, such as a mailing or e-mail address, can be updated. The "Remember Me" check box has been added to provide quick access to the members' section. Members who provide their e-mail address can also retrieve their password electronically should they forget it.

New information services that support CDA members as clinicians and businesspeople will continue to be unveiled over the coming months. The most recent of these services is LEXI-COMP Online, an online drug information database available in real time to members with Internet access.

Membership surveys indicated that dentists want reliable, comprehensive drug information available at their fingertips, especially when so many patients are taking complex mixtures of prescription drugs.

A really nice feature of LEXI-COMP Online is that it is geared specifically to the needs of dentists. When you retrieve information about a particular drug, you can easily look up its potential impact on the delivery of dental treatment and how it might modify the choice of local anesthetic solution for a patient.

LEXI-COMP Online is a good example of the type of practical, reliable information that we are committed to delivering to our members. Another example is *Editors' Choice*, where JCDA editorial consultants and other experts sift through the recently published dental and medical literature and choose a selection of high-quality clinical review articles for members to receive via e-mail. Many private publishers are allowing us to bring the full text of articles to our members on a temporary basis. Members are signing on for this service in increasing numbers each month.

Our dream is that dentists will be proud to be members of a modern and responsive organization that provides timely, reliable, accessible and pertinent information. Maybe some will even think the "C" in CDA stands for "Cool."

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