The mouth as construction site

Art 4 Your Practice offers handmade 3-D art for dentists

By Robin Goodman, Group Editor

How did this company get its start? Cathy Howard: The owner of the company, Mark Sanford, who is an audiologist, was at an audiology convention and met the German people who make this art for the hearing world and promote it worldwide, and he really liked the art. They were new in promoting and had done quite a bit in Europe, but had no representation in the U.S. Mark said that he wanted to promote this for them in the U.S. because he was already attending the major hearing shows.

I worked for Mark full-time as his bookkeeper, as we have five audiology offices in the Bay Area. He asked me to help with the project because he wanted to expand into the dentistry art because there are so many dentists. So that’s how we started in the dental business. He’s sent me to all these dental events and I’ve been having a fabulous time.

When I was in Chicago, our German partner joined us there, and taught me a lot of how they do things over there to produce the art.

How long have you worked with Mark then? It’s been 10 years already and I still do the bookkeeping. So this is so much fun for me to get out of my little office and meet with people.

How would you describe this art to a dentist who might say, “Why would I want 3-D art in my practice?” It’s completely different than what most people would call dental art, specifically because it’s 3-D. You have your shadowboxes, which you can hang on a wall, or your showcase pieces that can go on a counter or shelf or table.

The theme of this artwork is the mouth as a construction site, which is why there is scaffolding, men working and the plans or blueprints of the worksite. Thus, it’s akin to the dentist being the construction worker on someone’s teeth.

What I think makes it most unique is that it takes the dental business, which can be rather scary for some people, and makes it more consumer friendly, fun and light. They’re very well made and there is a considerable amount of detail in each one, which draws people to the piece and makes it easy to spend a lot of time looking at just one piece. General dentists and specialists buy them for their offices and homes, and dental labs buy them as well.

They are also a memorable gift and they can be personalized to a certain degree. For example, we can make these into business card holders and add a brass plate with the dentist’s name.