





▶▶▶▶▶ Christopher and Zeynep begin in earnest by telling us a little about the origins of their forward-thinking organisation – and also how this differs from other dental teaching and treatment facilities. ‘We originally hoped to get 10 people to sign up for a year long programme,’ Zeynep recalls, ‘and we ended up with 30 people. We didn’t realise that the subject of cosmetic dentistry and aesthetic restorative dentistry was a new focus for people. We realised that 30 people were too many for just two of us, so we asked people if we could divide the group into two. We were looking to acquire a practice at the same time, but that fell through – so all of a sudden we had 30 people waiting to learn from us and no practice. Every session we met with them we told them that this was the first time we had done this, so we would welcome their feedback. They didn’t believe us and the following year, their husbands, wives, friends, colleagues signed up and we had 65 people. From then on it became more of a full-time job for us – the teaching really became a major part of our life and we needed a custom built teaching facility to continue and a state of the art private practice to do what we preach.’

In fact ADS has become one of the UK’s most popular postgraduate dental programmes, with over 500 participants in the past six years growing purely with ‘word of mouth’.

We should probably explain (just in case the ‘Dr’ prefixes didn’t give it away) that Chris and Zeynep are of course brilliantly qualified professionals in the field of dentistry. The idea of the seminar programme came when our doctors realised

that, despite the field moving forward rapidly, teaching methods and ideologies had remained rooted (no pun intended!) in the past. Chris and Zeynep were looking to provide a variety of courses and seminars in cosmetic dentistry and related subjects to dental professionals in varying stages of their careers. The approach would be much more holistic than the single tooth treatment that dentists had been taught previously.

Of course, without the practice that our intrepid dentistry duo had set their sights on, facilities for conducting such advanced teaching were something of a problem.

‘We were renting seminar facilities in the City,’ Zeynep continues, ‘and then we moved on to a hotel. The trouble with hotel and seminar facilities, of course, is that they do not have labs – and you need to have a lab when it comes to dentistry.’

‘The first idea of combining the seminars with the practice came when we looked at buying that original practice,’ Chris tells us. ‘There was a flat above and we thought we could use that. The logical next thing to do was to use conference facilities until we found something more permanent.’

‘We did a lot of groundwork and identified a few possible areas in London – areas that had good transport links for our participants and patients. Certainly, this area – London Bridge – has come on enormously in the last few years and has fantastic links. We then found this space.’

‘We thought about other areas. We weren’t, however, looking for a prestigious address such as Harley Street – I think that has had its day. It’s just an address. I’m not sure that a Georgian building is also right for what we want to portray here. I worked

there for three years myself, and I’m not sure it’s somewhere I’d want to go back to. Over the past 10 years or so everybody has realised that you have to create the right environment for your patients. People have realised that if you don’t do this, then you will get left behind. What’s more, we realised that we are going to be here for the majority of our waking hours, and therefore it would do us good to be in a much nicer environment as well.’

Only around 30% of ADS’ customers and 50% of ADP’s patients are London-based, therefore good transportation links were indeed imperative. Meanwhile, the new premises presented the business with more than enough space to move forward with both the teaching facility and the surgery. But first there was plenty of work to be done – and much of it quite specialist in nature. ‘This was just an empty shell,’ Chris explains. ‘All that was here apart from some bricks on the wall and some concrete on the floor was a number of bare columns. We spent a lot of time looking around various spaces to see how we could get a long, thin space to work for us – as dictated by the columns. The lecture room fits up to 20 people around the boardroom style table which is probably the least space efficient way of having a classroom, but people really like it. There is enough space for people to feel part of the group, for it to feel intimate and because you can get eye contact with one another, you can have a discussion – or it can allow you to blend more into the background. It’s much better than a traditional classroom seating.’

‘We realised that the columns naturally divided the space up on the ground floor▶▶▶▶▶



▶▶▶ into three zones – so we have the reception space, the lecture room and the lab sitting perfectly.’

The relationship with Guy and ODB began when the design and build firm were recommended by ADS’ commercial property agents. ‘They introduced us to a couple of companies – one of which was ODB,’ Zeynep tells us. ‘The thing that really got ODB the job was the column design here – which matched our company logo. We had these columns and knew they couldn’t be moved and ODB turned them into a real feature.

‘The other thing was the pricing. We were horrified to see prices going up and up and up, and ODB said to us that their job was to make this fit to our budgets and that they would find ways around the costs increasing – and they did. They were really great to work with, even though timescales were very tight due to a delay in being able to start – we only began work in July and needed to be ready for 1st October. If there was a problem, they would tell us – and also present us with a solution or an alternative. They took so much pride in their work. They looked like they really enjoyed the work as well.’

‘I think when you are given a chance to really show what you can do, like we were here, it makes a real difference,’ Guy agrees. ‘Our people were able to show their craft and their skills here. What it all boils down to, though, is the brief. The timescales were tight due to us having to wait for permissions on certain things here, but that time actually allowed an intricate understanding and chemistry to be formed. The delay actually became a positive in that

we were able to get this absolutely detailed and precise.’

Speaking of detailed and precise, we have taken up so much time discussing the origins of the company, ideals, relationships and schedules, that we can only give you a whistle-stop tour of this fantastic facility. As we have said, the ground floor is the Advanced Dental Seminars home. Sleek graphics, bold feature colours and clean, contemporary design dominate the reception space. Beyond is the equally clean classroom facility (shielded from view when in use by clever tinting glass) and beyond this, the amazing laboratory space – complete with models known as ‘phantom heads’ for students to work on, an amazing, all-important lighting system that adjusts itself automatically to the ambient light available and the kind of equipment and tools that could make a cage fighter go weak at the knees.

While we admire the design and detail of each space in turn, Guy is – quite rightly – quick to point out the phenomenal ‘behind-the-scenes’ work and facilities here. We do not cover many stories where so many varied mechanical and electrical services are integrated throughout, to such a huge degree. A quick peek at the plant in the core of the building tells us a great deal. It looks (we imagine) like the inner workings of a Bugatti Veron back there!

Moving up to the surgery, the slick branding is followed through, with just a subtle change in colour scheme demarking the change in facility. The original brickwork and leaded windows remain, and provide a brilliant contrast to the modern seating, angular white reception desk and

fantastic feature wall. Indeed, white dominates the reception space and continues through the smart corridors leading to the treatment rooms. The rooms themselves are minimal, functional and immaculately clean (in every aspect). We daren’t ask the price of the dentist chairs here, but let’s just say if they are as expensive as they look and feel, then there is certainly no lack of ‘back of house’ investment here. This space is enough to put a brilliant white smile on any design journalist’s face ●

essential ingredients

Client:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Dental Seminars & Practice
Design & Planning:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ODB Group 01252 704400
Furniture:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sedus 020 7566 3990 Howe 020 8673 9777 Frezza 020 7539 3451
Internal Windows:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smartglass 023 9257 1122
Floor Tiles:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domus Tiles 020 8481 9500
Glass Wall Panels:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chelsea Artisans 01372 469301
Flooring:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amtico 024 7686 1400 Forbo 01592 643777
Lighting:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deltalight 0870 757 7087