

EDITORIAL

“An Orthosaurus in social networks”

Is it worth looking without seeing?

Johann W. von Goethe

I bought my first computer in the early '90s, when I was a resident of the Orthodontics department at Centrinho, USP. However, although I consider myself at the vanguard, my reception to the WWW network took a little longer. It was partly Bill Gates' fault. He made me believe that this tool would not bring any personal or professional benefits. What a mistake ...

In the compass of Gates, I must confess that for a long time I was blind to the social networks. Prejudice, indeed: Guilty as charged, justified by the lack of time. Until one day an undergraduate student got me to know Orkut. After the first contact, I inferred that I should not fray my precious time line with that trinket, and I settled more-and-more to the principle of Gates. It would be my funeral if it were not this parenthesis I do now: here comes “Facebook” to remove myself from the bed of death. It was when I buried the epidermis of an *Orthosaurus odonthorrex* which lived in me right in the century of the communication revolution.

This time it was a graduate student. I staged disdain, again; an unfocused look, blurry vision typical of a dinosaur. The prejudice was implicit, something just unacceptable to an educator. After the initial repulsion, I asked him to introduce me to this “face”. At the beginning of the presentation it seemed an improved version of Orkut, but after much polishing - by curiosity - I ended up starting a journey full of news.

As anyone who uses social networks, I rediscovered friends who I for long didn't meet, people who I would never have had the opportunity to be in contact if it was not the creation of this powerful communication tool. I also recognized several renowned orthodontists, hooked by the social network. Professionals for whom I have effusive admiration. If all these people are in it, why would not I, this Mesozoic descendant? Then I broke the shackles of prejudice and my concealment of cyberspace. I left the park.

A little more snooping, I found a tool that could help me with my role as an educator, researcher, editor and clinician. There were the groups, space in which people are added with affinity to a particular theme. A kind of ghetto. In the dive, I realized the gap and created two of them. I already felt, by then, that my reptile skin had been tattooed in the past.

To the first group I gave the nickname of Brazilian Orthodontics, which came to a thousand members in one month, thanks to many friends. Now over 1,500 professionals. This group provides notifications with diverse interests within the specialty, such as disclosures of research and events, discussion of clinical cases and sometimes some personal struggles I have the arduous task of mediating.

I confess, however, that the favorite son is the second group, called pompously Brazilian Dental Research. It is close to 2,000 members and still full of deeply respected researchers, publishers, teachers and students from all states in this (in) finite Brazil. Research publications, editorials, information and interesting discussions of scientific methodology - including Biostatistics - public contests for professors and scientific events are constantly being released by the group. It was by the network, thanks to Prof. Saul Paiva - UFMG, by who I became aware, for example, of the meeting of the Brazilian Association of Scientific Editors, held in July of this year. One of the best events I attended in the last decade. Is there something more useful?

If today I remember that Jurassic time lived in the transition of my dinosaur dentition, it was to over myself from the prejudice, only in the metaphorical sense, thus, I apologize for those who do not participate in social networks; also for understanding that we live in the era of communication and we cannot, ever, renounce, for images and documents are spread in seconds. Much more is to come. Knowledge is power, and communication generates dissemination of knowledge; so, these events, interwoven, reduce inequalities and increase sociability in the anthropological sense. On the other hand, with so much access to information, we still cannot distance ourselves from the real meaning of reptile prejudice because it is stuck to a stereotype.

I would not like to advocate that every orthodontist should participate in the social network, or to abandon the pachydermal fossilization - never, ever. I'm just reporting this learning as a way of advising those who have not had the courage or sufficient stimulus for searching information on this attractive tool. Those who already know, I invite you to participate in the so interesting created groups and visit the information posted. You will notice that the time spent initially will be returned with interest, just click without having to roar. To paraphrase John Munsell: If content is king, communication is the queen; so, save the Queen.

Enjoy the reading!

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