



Goodwill values remain buoyant despite the recession but, as Practice Financial Management's **Martyn Bradshaw** explains, using an agent to sell your practice can make all the difference

Exit strategy

Changes in market conditions and goodwill values

Our experience of selling practices in England and Wales reveals a buoyant market despite tough economic conditions.

The more favourable NHS funding position enjoyed by Scottish practices should result in a similarly buoyant market north of the Border. However, this is not necessarily the case.

We regularly come across the scenario where a practice simply closes or is sold for a very low value, compared with what might have been achieved with the help of a professional agent. Our experience shows that not using an agent can actually be counter productive, as they can significantly add to the realised value and facilitate an efficient and smooth practice sale.

Why should you use an agent?

A professional and successful dental practice agent will be able to demonstrate proven experience and should offer expert advice from the start to finish of the sales process. They should also provide professional marketing and negotiation to ensure that the administrative burden is taken from you.

So what should you expect from your agent?

An agent can help in a variety of ways.

Valuations

Professional assessment of the practice goodwill and equipment value is often a starting point for the sales process. A professional valuation ensures that the practice is marketed at the correct price, based on a detailed and thorough assessment.

Marketing

The aim of marketing your practice openly is to achieve the maximum price and gain as much interest as possible, from the 'right' buyer.

A professional sales agent should be able to match the most suitable potential buyers with your practice. We do this by retaining a list of serious potential buyers, including body corporates. PFM employs a range of techniques such as e-mailing or posting a professionally produced prospectus, advising on dental press advertising and taking advantage of online marketing.

Potential purchasers and viewings

Your time is precious and an agent should be in a position to answer queries from potential purchasers as well as arranging viewings on your behalf. As all enquiries and negotiations can be kept at arm's length through your agent, confidentiality can be maintained without upset to staff.

After a buyer is found

An experienced sales agent can deal with any issues at the outset and prevent delays to the sales process further down the line. Timescales to completion should be set and closely monitored to ensure that the legal work, bank finance of the purchaser, leases, etc are all arranged in a timely manner and any issues which may arise are dealt with swiftly. ■



Contact PFM's practice sales team on 01904 670 820, or visit www.pfmdental.co.uk.

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