



## ***Frequently Asked Questions – Meeting and Membership Changes 2016***

The organization has an illustrious history and many dental laboratories in the Southeast have multiple generations of members that have participated in events over the years.

With that said, the Southeastern Conference of Dental Laboratories made some major changes in 2016.

The board of directors made the following decisions in 2016:

- 1) A new management company and location was chosen.
- 2) A new meeting city was chosen.
- 3) A new meeting and membership format was chosen.

It's certainly expected that there are some core questions that members, suppliers and others will have on the changes. This document is provided to help address such questions.

### **1) Why is Southeastern Conference of Dental Laboratories moving from Atlanta to Nashville?**

While the history of the meetings for Southeastern has been held in the Atlanta area, the charter of Southeastern is based on serving members across the Southeast.

Nashville is one of the hottest meeting locations in the country, according to a number of corporate and association meeting and event publications.

Further, Tennessee as a state is an underserved part of the Southeast in terms of dental laboratory association activity. Georgia has a well-respected state association that is delivering education on a regular basis throughout the year.

Nashville is the location for 2017. The Southeastern board will determine each year the appropriate location for its annual event; it could remain in Nashville or may move to other areas of the Southeast.

## **2) Why the change in meeting format and content focus?**

With the advent of online education, there has been a marked increase in access to technical education for dental laboratory technicians and owners.

Further, the dental laboratory industry has seen changes with consolidation that has also impacted previous providers of in person technical education.

In the U.S., there are now only a few non-profit shows that generate attendance of 250 or more technician attendees (those are CA, TX, FL and NC). At the same time, there has been consistent growth for the three profit shows offered by LMT Communications.

The board of directors looked at industry trends and member needs and believes there is still opportunity and need to deliver high quality business management education.

For many years, Peter Stein led case study sessions with dental laboratory owners from different parts of the U.S. A number of the participating dental laboratories were from the Southeast. For those owners that participated in those events, the learning and sharing helped transform their businesses.

In some respects, the new Southeastern format is based on what was offered for a number of years through NADL and Peter Stein.

## **3) What is the rationale on the change in the membership dues pricing model?**

The new membership model encompasses both membership dues and meeting registration (everything is built into one annual fee). Further, based on the format of the new annual event, the Executive Leadership Summit, only a limited number of attendees can participate each year.

The meeting format involves interactive case study scenario planning and analysis. The topics covered each year will be universal situations that are relevant to all size laboratories and all business models. Given the interactive nature of the event, the number of attendees has to be limited to the 75-85 range.

In order to deliver the high quality education and experience to attendees the board desires, a different pricing model is necessary to cover the meeting facilitator costs, course materials and dining/social events.

The Southeastern board is continuing discussions on offering a different tier membership that laboratories could choose, which would provide access to online learning resources that relate back to the case study scenarios; as well as other benefits.

**4) Will members be able to network with vendors at the annual event?**

Yes. However, there is no trade show associated with the new event. Vendor representatives will be in attendance at the meeting to network with attendees. The networking will be more intimate in terms of business interaction.

Vendors will have the opportunity to participate in the actual case study element of the meeting so they can learn as well. There will also be sponsored events during the meeting for further relationship building amongst vendors and attendees.

**5) NADL has Vision 21 each year and CAL LAB Group has its event each year primarily focused on business management, how is this different?**

NADL Vision 21 format tackles a number of high level business management topics each year. The topics are generally focused on current strategic and operational issues impacting dental laboratories. Each topic is at the 30,000 foot level and there is generally not a deep dive on one specific topic. There is no tradeshow at Vision 21. However, vendor sponsors are generally Key Account Managers, National Sales Managers or CEO's of respective vendor companies rather than local or regional sales representatives.

CAL LAB is similar to Vision 21 in terms of overall focus. Further, since the Mid-Winter meeting occurs concurrently the week of CAL LAB, attendees have the opportunity to attend other laboratory industry related events, such as Lab Day or attend clinical meetings to network with clients or prospect clients.

The Southeastern Conference of Dental Laboratories Executive Leadership Summit based on its format is intended to focus on specific topic each year. This enables attendees to gain a broad understanding of the issues surrounding a specific case study situation; collaborate with peers on strategic decision making related to the case study scenario; and ultimately, present an analysis with best practices for dental laboratories to consider when they themselves face such a scenario.

The scenarios addressed at the Executive Leadership Summit have been carefully reviewed and vetted to ensure that they apply to all dental laboratories. The scenarios selected will be faced by all dental laboratories at some point during the normal course of events of a life cycle of a dental laboratory business.