

## Innovators 2014

*Bite* celebrates the visionaries, creators and entrepreneurs of the dental profession, including Dr Sigal Jacobson

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A passion for cosmetic dentistry, never giving up on her ideas and wanting to find a better solution for her patients, is what drove Dr Sigal Jacobson to invent a new type of veneer.

# Dr Sigal Jacobson

**N**ecessity may be the mother of invention, but perfectionism has a significant parenting role as well. That was the case with Dr Sigal Jacobson, who was driven to invent the Uvener system through her love of cosmetic dentistry, and her frustration at not being able to create the perfect direct veneer in a reasonable time.

"My passion was always cosmetic dentistry and I also believe in saving the tooth structure," says Melbourne-based Dr Jacobson, who moved to Australia with her husband and children from Israel in 2004. "I also love to work with the new generation composites. I think they're great. They have better physical properties with a lot of shades and nice effects. Although I'm a good cosmetic dentist and I do have the artistic ability, I find it always very challenging and struggle to get a perfect result with my composite veneers within a reasonable surgery time.

"The reason is that it takes time to create a perfect composite veneer. It takes about one to one-and-a-half hours to do a perfect one and as a dentist, I'm not getting paid enough to spend so much time with the patient. As a dentist, we are restricted by how much patients can pay. For composite veneers, patients pay from

\$250 to \$400. Composite veneers fit in with the 'minimally invasive' approach, and are affordable for patients. So I had to find a solution."

Training with the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry helped, but also showed her how difficult it was to replicate perfect results in the real world of the surgery. The solution, she figured, was

February this year, Uvener was launched at the Midwinter Meeting of the Chicago Dental Society.

"It was still hot from the oven, as it were," says Dr Jacobson. "We got a booth in the last minute and six of us flew over for it. I was so scared because Uvener was new. It was my baby, and I didn't know how people will accept it. When we

## Quote

Dr Sigal Jacobson, inventor of Uvener

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a template or mould—one that would be autoclavable, unbreakable, quick and easy to use. She took it to a local engineering firm. "I thought, this will take about a month," she says. "It took two years. We had a lot of obstacles along the way."

Those obstacles included finding a way to indicate positioning; making it from a material that would not attach to the composite; adding glass particles to the plastic to make it autoclavable and unbreakable. But she persevered—"I think that people should never give up believing in their ideas," she says—and in

went to the exhibition hall in Chicago, all the big companies had these flashy big beautiful booths and we got the worst location, next to the toilets. It was a small booth and I said, 'Oh my god, what did I do? What did I do?' But it was a big surprise because we were very, very busy. We were one of the busiest booths. It was highly accepted by both dentists and distributors. They loved it."

Uvener is now represented in 12 countries on three continents—a rapid growth that shows Dr Sigal Jacobson isn't the only perfectionist among us. □

