

## *Government Relations*

### **Wisconsin Dental Association**

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**Challenge:** To develop a state-wide public awareness campaign to enhance the image of dentistry in Wisconsin.

**Target:** Consumers of all ages, especially women 18 to 45 years old who are key decision-makers on dental health issues; state and federal government officials; WDA member dentists; and the news media.

**Solution:** Bottom Line developed a media relations program to complement paid advertising messages and expand the positive image of dentistry. This program included media relations activities, spokesperson training sessions, crisis communications and special events and sponsorships. One sponsorship program, "Safe in the Seat," in collaboration with the Milwaukee Brewers, was designed to prevent children from becoming lost in the stadium by offering identification wristbands. Another successful alliance was the annual "Smile Contest" at State Fair. Our efforts to generate publicity for these sponsorships have included development of poster contests and other events which require children to register at their local dentist's office.

**Outcome:** This public awareness campaign has become the model for other professional associations throughout Wisconsin, as well as dental associations throughout the country. We generated hundreds of positive news stories about dentistry each year and built strong ties between dentists, their communities and public officials. The results of the program were proven through annual consumer telephone surveys which revealed steady improvements in the image of dentistry across all parameters measured.