

High-Tech Comes to the Waiting Room

Dr. Frederick J. Hermanson, D.D.S.

Many like to claim it, but does your office really have the latest and greatest cutting-edge technology? You may have missed it, but the bar was just raised. The hottest new feature in the cutting-edge, modern dental practice is actually in the waiting room.

Plasma and LCD widescreen dynamic digital display technologies are replacing the brochure as the primary in-office marketing strategy for modern offices across the country. While video in the office is nothing new, these latest digital systems marry state-of-the-art broadband Web technologies with software to create a customized, dynamic display system that makes videotape and even DVDs obsolete.

Driving that obsolescence are the new technology's customizability and Internet connection which turn the widescreen into, essentially, a TV channel dedicated solely to your practice. The content that plays onscreen is created specifically for and about your practice – cosmetics, whitening, products, pages from your Web site, anything you wish – allowing for great diversity of message. The Internet connection allows the onscreen content to be modified easily via remote access, and, since the content plays continually, there's no need for staff to monitor a tape or DVD. Being digital, it naturally eliminates the extreme cost and inconveniences of printing.

Every practicing dentist is proud to display their “before and after” pictures because they serve as an example of the dentist's skill and accomplishment, and show patients the wonderful potential for their own transformations. Until now, the coffee-table album of before-and-after shots was the standard waiting room fixture to fulfill that need. Replacing it are digital display systems like *ExciteDental* that can play these images and accompanying text on widescreens, large and clear enough for the whole room to enjoy.

The leading purveyor of this technology in the dental industry, Excite Visual Systems, offers a complete *ExciteDental* system for under \$8,000 which includes a wide wall-mounted flat screen and animated visual content customized specifically to your practice. Not only are the onscreen content message possibilities virtually unlimited, but since the images and words are fed to the screen through a broadband Internet connection, they can be changed very easily, eliminating the costs and inconveniences of printing.

Widescreen technologies such as this are a compelling way of displaying successes, minimizing frustrations caused by the inevitable let-down once the excitement of a big case started to fade. The moment the patient walks out the door, the story of the case and some of the excitement of the achievement walks out the door with them. Now the plasma screen on the waiting room wall serves as a visual reminder to an entire staff of some of the greatest accomplishments. Also, having staff featured in some of the messages makes team members

more approachable, creating conversation starters between patients and staff.

Another benefit of the system is the “high-tech” statement the plasma screen makes in the waiting room, as proven by the compliments received regularly from patients. Commonly-heard patient comments refer to the reassurance of knowing that they are seeing the “right” or a “progressive” dentist. Many expressed interest in services they never knew the practice

offered. Others said they greatly appreciated just learning more about the practice – one patient even said she was disappointed that she was called back to the chair so soon after arriving because she wanted to view more!

Compliments alone wouldn't justify the costs but having tracked a 34% increase in production-per-patient during the first twelve months after installing the system, I feel that the *ExciteDental* system has easily paid for itself in the first year in my practice by building awareness of practice offerings and skill which helped improve case acceptance. The system takes the ROI-proven concept of internal marketing to a whole new level.

Additional ROI factors involve staff issues. The *ExciteDental* system eliminates concerns about message delivery and consistency. The exact message you want to deliver is played on the screen for every patient every day regardless of how new or old, shy or outgoing, involved or distant, happy or angry each frontline staff member may be on any given day. That message consistency assures that your offerings are being promoted to their fullest extent, greatly aiding in case presentation and acceptance.

After familiarizing myself with digital signage technologies, I recommend *ExciteDental* from Excite Visual Systems. They were the first entrants into the dental industry, have strong technological offerings, and are focused on creating professional content that's not too “salesy.” If you visit their Web site at www.excitedental.com you'll find much information and sample onscreen content to give you a sampling of their capabilities.

With endless custom content message possibilities that can be changed very easily, dynamic digital signage systems will be popping up in high tech offices all over the country. The waiting room brochure is about to receive its last dusting.



Dr. Frederick J. Hermanson has experienced great success with his digital signage system in his first 12 months of usage.